

# **LOK SABHA DEBATES**

## **(English Version)**

**Ninth Session**  
**(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)**



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# LOK SABHA DEBATES

## LOK SABHA

Wednesday, May 15, 2002/Vaisakha 25, 1924 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at  
Eleven of the Clock.*

(MR. SPEAKER in the Chair)

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, a resolution condemning the yesterday's incident of Jammu and Kashmir should be unanimously passed in the House. ...*(Interruptions)* Condemning the attack, this message should be communicated that the entire House is united in the war against terrorism. We should unanimously pass such a resolution in the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the entire House is ready to cooperate in the war against terrorism. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: We should pass a resolution that the entire House is against terrorism. ...*(Interruptions)* We should take this episode as a challenge.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (FIROZABAD): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is the surrender of the Government before terrorism. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You please, sit down. I know it is a serious matter. You can raise this question in Zero Hour if you want that a Resolution be brought on this subject, then the leader of the House can decide it in consultation with the leader of the opposition.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, if you want to take up this issue, then we have no objection. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (RATNAGIRI): All these activities are taking place from across the border. Hence, there is a need to take action across the border. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this

Government has completely failed in combating terrorism. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (CALCUTTA SOUTH): Sir, this is a serious matter. ...*(Interruptions)* The Prime Minister is here. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry it cannot be raised during the Question Hour.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, if you so feel that the Question Hour should be suspended for this. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats. I have already commenced the Question Hour. The issue that is being raised now would be allowed to be raised during the Zero Hour. I do not think that we should change the procedure. Now we can not proceed with any other business than the Question Hour.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Heaven will not fall if the Question Hour does not take place one day. Our army personnel have been killed there. ...*(Interruptions)* let a one line resolution be passed. ...*(Interruptions)* Question Hour is held everyday. It is not going to make any difference if the Question Hour is not held a day. Our army personnel, women and children have been killed here. Action must be taken in this regard.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we must bring a resolution condemning this act. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, this is a serious issue and if you feel that the Question Hour should be suspended. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, our army jawans, women and children are being made a target by the terrorists. This House unanimously condemns this Act. ...*(Interruptions)* This incident should be unanimously condemned by the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (SAMBHAL): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I don't want to say anything which could send a wrong message. *...(Interruptions)* I must be allowed to speak as I have been given the time to speak. Mr. Prime Minister, Sir, I am not indulging in politics. If you permit, I would like to make a few suggestions. It is the question of country and its security. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Prime Minister is on his feet. Kindly let him speak.

*...(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: First, let me complete my submission. I won't speak for more than a minute. I shall be allowed to speak. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will give you an opportunity to speak later on.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: A terrorist attack in Kaluchak took place in which the people were mercilessly killed. I would cooperate with you and the country in this regard, but I don't want to do anything which could cause harm to the country. I don't want to derive any mileage out of the incident. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Prime Minister is on his feet and he knows your views on the subject. Let him speak first.

*...(Interruptions)*

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday, the Home Minister had made a statement on the carnage that took place in Jammu. The Defence Minister has gone to that place to talk to the military and he will return back by tomorrow. This is not an issue to be decided on party lines. There is no need for Adjournment Motion on it because entire House is unanimous that whatever happened is extremely condemnable and we will have to take remedial measures in this regard. Tomorrow Defence Minister will come back and hon. Home Minister is also not here today. If you wish I can invite the leaders of opposition parties for discussing the overall scenario, but I have already said many a time that what is the need to disturb the Question Hour?

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: You have started repeating the same thing. It is the question of country's security. I don't want to utter a thing detrimental to national interest. Thank you for your gesture of taking the opposition leaders into confidence.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, we understand the constraints of the Prime Minister. We strongly feel that he should take stock of the situation in this regard and inform the House at appropriate time today or tomorrow. The House should be taken into confidence on the ultimate preparation of the Government to combat these terrorists. There is no difference of opinion in this regard in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Very good! Now I go to the Question Hour.

*...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is not right.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a good thing that the Prime Minister would call the leaders of all the opposition parties for discussion. He wants to take everybody into confidence, but the entire public of this country and its Army will have to be taken into confidence. Time and again I have reiterated that the meeting of the National Security Council be convened, because the entire country would have to be taken into confidence regarding the security of the country. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Don't deliver a speech.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: The hon. Prime Minister is responsible for all such incidents. Please do not leave it to the Home Minister and the Defence Minister. This is your failure. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is not so.

*...(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Leaving this issue to Minister of Home and Minister of Defence is not proper. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will not allow further discussion on this issue. Question Hour has already started. Shri Venkateshwarlu please put your Question.

*...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: The indications of the discontent brewing in the military have also been noticed.

It has to be viewed seriously. Activities of Pakistan must be viewed seriously. Pakistan has blamed Indian security forces for the terrorist attacks.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Mulayam Singh ji, you have started the debate. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member should ask his question.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: This matter reflects government's failure. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (LATUR): Whatever the Prime Minister has said is good. Let him talk to the leaders of parties also. Shrimati Sonia Gandhi is going to Kashmir today. We may discuss it, if necessary, after that in whatever fashion hon. Prime Minister, your goodself, and other leaders think proper. If we discuss that matter, there would probably be a better understanding. We need not stop the Question Hour now.

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Ummareddy Venkateswarlu, please ask your Supplementary.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN (TIRUNELVELI): Sir, Before calling the Leaders Meeting, let the House condemn this incident. ...*(Interruptions)*

## ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTIONS

11.11 hrs.

*[English]*

### Agreement with US Research Facility

\*701. PROF UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have concluded a long term research agreement with a US research facility called Brookhaven laboratories;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the agreement lays down special

emphasis on developing all round safety at our nuclear plants;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether as per the agreement any exchange of scientists between the research institutions of the two countries will be undertaken;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the benefits to accrue to the country as a result of the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (g) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

### Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) These agreements are essentially for research on Fundamental Science. Brookhaven National Laboratory in USA has set up a major basic research facility called Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC). This is primarily meant for fundamental research to study what happens when two heavy nuclei (for example, two gold nuclei) collide with each other at extremely high energies (in case of gold, each nucleus has about 40 TeV [Tera electron Volt] energy) and to find out if a new phase of nuclear matter, called "quark-gluon plasma" (QGP), gas created and to look for signatures of QGP. Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has been associated with this programme since 1994 under an Inter-Laboratory Agreement with the Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL). Under another Memorandum of Understanding, an Indian team coordinated by Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre (VECC), Kolkata will, in collaboration with the Solenoidal Tracker (STAR) team, carry out experiments at Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL).

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Not applicable.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) The mutual exchange of scientific visits take place as and when felt useful and necessary.

(g) The participation in these International collaboration programmes enables the Indian scientists to use the frontline accelerator facilities and advanced detector systems set up at the Brookhaven National Laboratory.

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Venkateswarlu, if you do not put your Supplementary, I will call the next Member.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I appreciate the stand taken by the Government in entering into the agreement essentially for taking up the fundamental research in certain vital and strategic areas with Brookhaven Laboratory in USA. But based on this agreement, it has been widely reported in the Press that the Government have firmed up to open up the nuclear power generation to private players, particularly, to those of foreign origin.

Sir, as per the 1962 Nuclear and Atomic Energy Act, all the powers with regard to regulatory functions, namely, acquisition, production, position, usage, disposal, import and export of all these strategic devices are vested with the Government.

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Venkateswarlu, please ask your Supplementary.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: So, in an attempt to safeguard, safety and security of the country, when the Government is contemplating to open up this area of nuclear generation to the private parties, particularly those of foreign origin, whether the Government is going to amend the 1962 Nuclear and Atomic Energy Act.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, as far as this question is concerned, it deals entirely and exclusively with the Government's agreement with Brookhaven Laboratory in US.

As far as the safety and safeguards are concerned, these are two different issues, and our discussions are restricted basically in this particular agreement and to the nuclear safety issues. There again, we have an equal relationship. There is no supervisory from any of the countries.

As far as the agreement that he is speaking about is concerned, he is welcome to give a fresh notice on this as it does not come under the purview of this particular question.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Sir, I think, I am not properly understood by the hon. Minister. Based on this agreement, it is now being contemplated in the

Press, particularly the Press in USA that the atomic power generation is going to be opened up to private parties. If that is so, my question is whether the Government is going to amend the Act, and whether the Government has firmed up to open this area of atomic power generation to private parties. This is my first Supplementary.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, I am again making it very clear that here we are talking about research facilities and the long-term research agreement with Brookhaven Laboratory. We cannot go on to opening up of nuclear power generation agreements, which does not come under the purview of this Question.

MR. SPEAKER: I agree with her. Therefore, I call the next Member to ask his Supplementary.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Sir, I have still to ask my second Supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, that is true. Please ask your second Supplementary now.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Sir, this has, in fact, got relevance. When the hon. Minister is saying that we will have to come up with the new question, all right, I do agree. Though it is related to this question, I agree with the sentiments of the hon. Minister.

Sir, keeping in view our strained relationship with Pakistan, while concluding the long-term research agreement with US based Brookhaven Laboratory, vital interests were kept in view. Pakistan planned to attack our nuclear stations etc., during the Kargil conflict also in 1999. They had planned to attack, particularly, Mumbai based nuclear plant.

Once again I insist on my question. May I know whether the safety and security of these areas are kept in view by the Government?

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, let me just speak a little bit about the Brookhaven National Laboratory. I think, that is very important to be able to speak about this so that this question is clarified once and for all.

The Laboratory is a multi-programme laboratory which is carrying out basic and applied research in physical, biomedical and environmental sciences in selective energy technology. This has absolutely no concern with any kind of nuclear energy.

What we are doing is this. We are getting into a collaborative agreement which was signed in May 1994 between Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and Brookhaven

National laboratory, for something called PHINIEs, which is Pioneering Heavy Ion Nuclear Interaction Experiments. There is also a memorandum of August 2001 in which the Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre, Kolkata signed up with Solenoidal Tracker, STAR team for another experiment in the Brookhaven National Laboratory.

We have an Indian team, which is consisting of various Universities of Punjab, Rajasthan, Jammu, Institute of Physics of Bhubaneswar and IIT, which are going into this. It is a purely fundamental science research programme.

I can tell you a little bit about research. It is basically to do with a facility called RHIC, which is Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider and it is the only such facility in the world, which is available in the Brookhaven National laboratory. Here, this unit has been set up to explore the ultimate constituents of matter.

As you know, the matter is made out of atoms which can be further sub-divided into electrons, protons and neutrons. This can be further broken up into something called quarks and gluons. Scientists here are looking to see that these gold nuclei which are travelling in opposite directions at the speed of light, that is at 99.995 per cent of the speed of light, collide. When they collide, they fragment and when they fragment, they make quarks and gluons. These produce a new signature called quark-gluon plasma phase.

What the Indian scientists are doing now is this. They are participating in an experiment called STAR and PHINIEs, to study those collisions. These collisions provide temperatures of several hundred billion degrees for a billionth of a second. The RHIC collision, though it is super hot and super fast, is too brief to be at all dangerous. Basically their interest here is connected with the notion that such a phase did exist - within a few microseconds after the creation of the Universe, which is a big bang theory.

The scientists hope to go back, through this experiment, to 30 billion years. Basically these are absolutely and purely academic studies. They have no practical consequences of energy production. There are a thousand scientists who are involved from 18 countries. This is a facility that only exists over there and it is a very expensive facility, which is the reason why it has not been able to be put up in India. As I said, 18 countries are participating. But as far as our costs are concerned, they are next to negligible. The facility that we are putting up on RHIC will remain the property of the Government of India.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Mr. Speaker, Sir,

as the Chairman of the Standing Committee looking after the subject of atomic energy, I had the privilege of visiting that place twice. I must congratulate and officially also, in our report, we have considered it and commended the Government about their achievement.

But in course of time, from various places, some of the scientists gave me some memoranda, which I got examined by sending one of our senior Members who is from Maharashtra. I got it yesterday and I have decided not to make it a part of the report.

I will meet the hon. Prime Minister personally and hand over the same. For the greater cause, I will not speak anything about it here. But since the issue came up now, I will only appeal to the hon. Prime Minister to personally look into it. It is not casting an aspersion on BARC. They are doing a wonderful job. In our report also we have said so. There are a few things here and there. But I would request the hon. Prime Minister to kindly look into it and sort it out before it drips too much. This is my only request.

MR. SPEAKER: Since there is no question on what he said, I take the name of the next hon. Member—Shri Kharabela Swain.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, the answer given by the hon. Minister is too complicated for a person like me to understand. I am not a student of Science, rather a student of Political Science. Anyway, I would just put a related question. After Pokhran, a lot of restrictions were put on India by the United States of America. My question is with regard to the restrictions put on the students. Previously, the Indian students were allowed to study any subject in the USA. Is there any such restriction or the restriction has been lifted?

With regard to the technologies which were restricted to India, which have been lifted, because of which the Bharat Electronics Limited has to suffer a lot, I would like to know whether such restrictions on technology transfer has been removed by the USA.

MR. SPEAKER: This supplementary is not arising out of it.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: There is no question of students coming into this. It is a very restricted question dealing with only Brookhaven Laboratory. However, if the hon. Member wants to know about the students, the transfer of technology and the ability to go, the Member is free to come and ask me.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a very important question but not arising out of the main question.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: If you insist to ask only the specific, primary question, I do not think anybody will be able to ask any supplementary on this question. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: But the question is specific. What can I do?

MR. SPEAKER: I am here to stop any question, which is not relevant, which any Member wants to ask.

SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL: Sir, his question is very relevant. ...*(Interruptions)* Why are they allowed to use our laboratories?

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: With regard to the technology transfer I would like to know whether there is any restriction or not.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, the hon. Member wants to know about the scientists. I am happy to tell him about the scientists. There has been some kind of a ban on scientists immediately after this. Since BNL itself is the Department of Energy of the US Government, there was this collaboration. Let us just talk about the Agreement.

The collaboration was affected by the Pokhran and BARC was also a part of the entity list of the US. Visas were cleared on a case to case basis for scientists. But scientists from both sides are eager to move forward and we have been holding discussions with the US Government and we hope that there will be no restriction on this movement, particularly in the field of pure fundamental applied science. In this question we are dealing with the applied science.

SHRI VARUN K. RADHAKRISHNAN: I understand that two Memoranda of Understanding have been entered into between our two centres. One of the centres is the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai. They have entered into an agreement with the Brookhaven National Laboratory for research work. I also understand that Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre at Kolkata have also entered into an agreement for carrying out experiments. I would like to know the nature of these two agreements. Are they doing the work in the similar field or is it only the research work or are they carrying out only experiments? Additionally, I may also be informed about the difficulties being faced by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai. When I had an occasion to be there, I could learn at that time that no proper research work was going on in Mumbai at present. They are also in financial difficulty. The Central Government is not funding them properly. I am subject to correction.

Lastly, there was a complaint that they are not properly staffed. If these things are correct, I would request the Central Government to remedy these matters and made this Centre fully successful.

MR. SPEAKER: It is just a request to you. There is no specific question.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, there is no specific question. As far as the collaboration and what we are getting out of it is concerned, I will explain what the experiment is all about. It is basically different ways of experiment looking up the Signatures of quark-gluon plasma. But basically we are supplying parts for neon-tracking detector for PHINIEs, and for STAR we are looking at something called the Proton-multiplicity detector, which is going to be given by the Indian scientists in Kolkata.

Our scientists are also developing software for analysing the results of these experiments. As far as BARC is concerned, I think we have done amazing research particularly, in these fields of sciences. As far as our atomic energy agency is concerned, we are among the 13 designated members of the international atomic energy agencies. Actually, I believe that this is a very major compliment for our scientists because there are only 13 designated members on this Board and since the inception of this agency in 1957, India has been a part of the 13-Member Board of Governors.

As far as BARC and its working is concerned, I am sorry to say that a separate question could be asked or the hon. Member would be welcome to ask us to provide for information and I would be happy to help him.

### Action Plan to Combat Poverty

\*702. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the meeting of the South Asian Financial and Planning Ministers held in Islamabad in April 2002, a 16 point action plan was adopted to combat poverty;

(b) If so, the details of the action plan; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to implement the same with respect to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) A statement is placed on the table of House.

### Statement

(a) to (c) An Action Plan was adopted in the South Asian Planning and Finance Ministers Conference in Islamabad. This Action Plan, recommended by the conference, is in two parts – Recommendations on (i) internal policies and (ii) external policies.

The recommendation on internal policies related to good governance, sound macro-economic policies, employment generation, decentralization and local government empowerment, and social safety nets for the vulnerable sections of society, amongst others.

On External policies the ministers recommended working closely with developed countries to increase the ODA levels, seeking increased market access for products, reducing the burden of external borrowings and debts, and preventing outflow of illegal and tax-evaded money from the region.

Most of the recommendation on Internal Policies are already being implemented by the Government of India under its various poverty alleviation and economic upliftment schemes.

On the external policies recommendations, there are efforts at the UN to appeal to developed countries to increase their ODA commitments; and at other international fora to seek increased market access for developing countries products. Regarding reduction on multilateral borrowings, external debts and prevention of outflow of illegal and tax evaded money, preventive measures are already in place in India.

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Sir, the total expenditure of the Union Government is Rs. 600,000 crore which works out to roughly Rs.1664 crore per day. With this backdrop in India, we still have 80 million children with no access to education, 400 million people living on Rs.50 per day, 700 million with no access to toilets and 50 per cent of the children between the age of one and five years still malnourished. With this backdrop, I would like to ask the following questions to the hon. Minister:

Firstly, during the SAARC meeting of Finance and Planning Ministers in Islamabad, was there a stock taken of the situation as to why we are nowhere close to the target that we have set earlier of eradicating poverty by the year 2002? This is specially important in the backdrop that 50 per cent of the world's poorest reside in the SAARC area.

Secondly, the population growth rate of our region

is one of the major impediments towards eradicating poverty. I want to know whether you are taking any steps specially considering that one billion out of the 1.4 billion people in the SAARC area reside in India.

Finally, our late Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi had indicated that – if I remember correctly – only 14 paise out of a single rupee reaches the actual poor in the communities. Are we doing anything to correct this aberration and plug such loopholes specially on account of yesterday's Question of Rs.2380 crore in the year 1998-99 still being unspent in the area of rural development?

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir both of them are young.

[English]

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: What is it, Sir?

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: He has not levelled any charge against you. He only said this much that both are young.

[English]

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: Sir, for all the three questions, the answer is 'yes'. Yes, the stock was taken of the present situation and what needs to be done about it. Yes, the cause of rapid population growth within our region being a contributing factor to poverty was also discussed in the course of the Conference. Yes, the statements that have been made by late Shri Rajiv Gandhi about the actual amount of money that flows down to the areas where it is needed is also a part of the Government's planning and it is also something that SAARC Conference looked at. If we look at the Action Plan that this Conference produced, you may find that it produced recommendations both for internal as well as external policies. Now, there are a number of policies that were discussed both internally and externally. The ones that would be relevant to what the hon. Member has asked, particularly in terms of internal policies are among the goals and objectives, namely, to recognise the importance of combating both rural and urban poverty. There are a number of recommendations in terms of access to micro finance, small and medium enterprise development and creation of rural infrastructure. Pursuance of sound macro management policies was another recommendation that this Conference came up with. There is an urgent need to invest in human capital and social sectors in order to make a dent in the overall poverty figures. This was also very much a part of what was discussed.

But, at the end of the day, one of the more important factors is empowerment of local and rural communities. This was a path that was very seriously taken up in the course of the SAARC meeting. Some of the recommendations which they have suggested - we will, of course, be taking them up internally - are the need to decentralise, the need for financial devolution right down to the grass-root level and the need to involve the community in development activities. Community participation in all forms of development activities is a necessity to make a dent in poverty figures. These were some of the discussions which took place in the course of this meeting. The Government of India is, of course, well aware of the situation and through the relevant Ministries, it is doing all that is necessary.

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: One of the areas that was identified during the SAARC meeting for not meeting the guidelines set for eradicating poverty by the year 2002 was cross-border fundamentalism, terrorism and militancy. I would like to ask the hon. Minister if any steps are being entertained in terms of curtailing this and whether this was discussed. This is part (a) of my question. Part (b) of my question is that the hon. Prime Minister himself made an announcement a couple of months ago about raising a Global Fund for Poverty Alleviation by imposing an international levy on capital flows between developed countries and capital repatriation. May I know from the hon. Minister the progress made with regard to that? Further, Shri K.C. Pant had already announced an independent Poverty Alleviation Commission being set up. So, we are hearing a lot of announcements about Funds and Commissions being set up. But what is the action plan in terms of taking this forward? We would like to know about this. Thank you.

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: As far as part (b) of the question is concerned, I would suggest that the question be placed either for the Ministry of Finance or for the Department of Poverty Alleviation. As far as Part (c) of the question is concerned, which is about Shri K.C. Pant's announcement, this question directly relates to the Planning Commission and it could be directed in that direction.

As far as cross-border fundamentalism and terrorism is concerned, that is a much broader question. Yes, it has had an effect on the discussions within the SAARC. It was not a part of the discussions because as far as SAARC is concerned, it is directly related to relations between Indian and Pakistan. Bilateral matters are not taken up. It was the decision that the Government of India took that no bilateral discussions would be entertained.

Having said that, our concerns with regard to cross-

border terrorism and the support it gets from Pakistan - more so in respect of yesterday's events - are well known not only to Pakistan but also to the international community. We continue to repeat these concerns at every forum available.

*[Translation]*

SHRI SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE: Mr. Speaker, Sir I am grateful to you for giving me a chance to ask question. In reply to part (a) and (b) of the question, the hon'ble Minister has stated that the recommendation on internal policies Inter-alia include matters relating to good governance, sound macro-economic policies, employment generation, decentralization, empowerment of local government and social safety nets for vulnerable sections of the society. I would like to know the details of items relating to social security nets for weaker sections included in it.

*[English]*

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: As far as the details of these are concerned, I suggest that the Ministry of External Affairs is not the Ministry that is empowered to set up either the social security nets or to discuss the details of these things. As far as we are concerned, this was a subject that came up for discussion in the course of this meeting in Islamabad. It is a recommendation that this meeting had made. This recommendation has been passed on to the relevant Ministry. Through the various Government plans and policies that you have seen in the course of the successive Budgets and plan documents, it is the endeavour of this Government to realise the aims that have been set out with regard to all the points which the hon. Member mentioned including good governance, macro economic policies as well as social safety nets for the weak and deserving sections in the society in our country today.

*[Translation]*

SHRI SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE: Do this Government provide protection to the poor?

*[English]*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: In the reply it has been stated:

"Regarding reduction of multilateral borrowings, external debts and prevention of outflow of illegal and tax-evaded money, preventive measures are already in place in India. "

I would like to know from the hon. Member whether it is not a fact that very recently a Swiss Ambassador

has commented that huge amounts of Indian money are being accumulated in the European banks, particularly in the Swiss banks and other tax-havens.

This has been corroborated again by a particular website where it has been stated that money belonging to the Indians is accumulating so fast and the amount is so huge that it should be a matter of concern to the Government of India. Very recently, studies have been made about the Avoidance of Double Taxation Treaty in respect of Mauritius, and OCB route. May I know from the Government and the hon. Minister whether any examination has been made about the outflow of Indian money through the OCB route because of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Treaty with Mauritius?

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: This is a question related to the Ministry of Finance. Hence, I would suggest that the hon. Member would place this question before them.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: In the reply given, the Government has said that most of the recommendations on the internal policies are already being implemented. I am interested to know as to what are the recommendations and as to how many recommendations on the internal and external policies are implemented. Has Government agitated over the point of dissent and work in this SAARC meeting? This point was raised in South Africa when a Conference on Anti-Racism and Casteism was held. In the Conference particularly, this point of dissent and work was agitated by a number of NGOs? The stand of the Government was that the Government of India is looking after this and thereby we, on behalf of the Government of India, assured those NGOs that we are trying to help these people. Still, there is a discrimination in the country but we are trying to support this particular community. On this point, has Government of India played an important part in the SAARC meeting? I want to know whether our stand has been placed before the SAARC Committee to get more funds. What is the situation? What exactly has happened on these two particular points?

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: Hon. Member was with me in Durban when I had the good fortune of leading the Indian Delegation on Racism Conference. That having been said, he knows full well as to what the Government of India's position is. In fact, I was privileged enough to have him supporting the Government of India's position with regard to the steps that the successive Governments since Independence have taken to bring the weaker and downtrodden sections of society up to a certain standard. That having been said, the question of work of dissent did not arise in the SAARC Conference. I think, that should suffice for the hon. Member.

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, policies for implementation of poverty alleviation, social security and other welfare schemes have been framed through SAARC Conferences in the past and good work has been done in this direction. The Government of India have played a commendable role for poverty alleviation in SAARC conferences. Yesterday also, it was being discussed that entire funds earmarked for poverty alleviation are not spent. Several obstacles come in the way of implementation of internal and external policies framed during SAARC conferences. In my view, administrative lapse is also one of the reasons. Despite financial constraints, entire funds are not spent. I would like to know whether efforts have been made to ponder over why schemes relating to poverty alleviation or social security nets for weaker sections could not be implemented either through SAARC conferences or at the Government of India level in letter and spirit during the last 50 years? Poverty was targeted to be alleviated by 2002 but we have not been able to succeed in it. Do the Government propose to bring administrative reforms for this purpose so that responsibility could be fixed for failure to implement poverty alleviation and social security nets schemes for weaker sections of society so that the officers holding responsible posts can be held responsible and poverty alleviation programmes could be implemented within a stipulated time frame. Did such policies come up for discussion during SAARC conference? Do the Government propose to take any decision in this regard?

[English]

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: As I mentioned earlier, this meeting did discuss the urgent need for poverty reduction and the steps that are necessary. Both steps of internal dimension and external dimension were discussed. Within the internal dimension, the discussion did touch upon the subject of good governance. It has a direct relevance to the supplementary that the hon. Member has asked. With the question of good governance does include transparent and effective problem-determine policies, effective monitoring of public expenditure, to prevent leakages, improve public sector management and delivery system, particularly in areas that affect the poor and steps to be taken to prevent domestic money-laundering, and development of information technology as a tool to provide for good governance. All these steps are steps that the Government of India has already been following through its various programmes and policies and they have not only begun to show the results, they would show even better results in the days ahead.

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had urged the hon. Minister to fix responsibility. Will the Government frame any rule for fixing responsibility on officers?

[English]

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I have listened to replies. Of course, the hon. Minister spoke about the vulnerable sections but nowhere in the Statement is there any specific reference to the question of women. We are 50 per cent of the population, and generally the weaker section as far as the poverty alleviation is concerned.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: It is 49 per cent.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: That is all right. That is because the female foetus is being destroyed even before birth because of your obsession with 'son-stroke'. You only want sons. But, I would like to inform the hon. Minister that several initiatives had been taken in the past in the SAARC region. In fact, India had taken the initiatives in SAARC for promoting the status of the girl child and for getting the women into focus. I am rather surprised or disappointed to note that in this Statement nowhere a mention is there of women being treated as a Special Target Group in the poverty alleviation programmes in the SAARC region. We are the weakest and the poorest among the various groups within SAARC. I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to what specific measures SAARC, as a group, has proposed to take. You can have no poverty alleviation unless the women's status and their problems, are specially focused on. I would like to know if there was any mention, any reference and if there is not, then, I must say that it has been slide back from the Eighties when we had taken several initiatives to implement programmes for them.

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: Sir, the initiatives taken by our country for programmes to uplift women continue. We continue remain committed to them, and we would continue to seek the results that they promised. That having been said, this was an overall plan for eradication of poverty and it was not broken up on the basis of male and female. The correct assumption that we went on is that no country would allow poverty alleviation schemes that are sexually biased. That is, the men will have their poverty levels reduced but women will not. So, these are overall policy plans. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: You cannot deal with poverty alleviation without targeting women. How can you do anything without targeting them, especially?

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: The overall directions that are given that would lift all weaker sections of society, including women. But in one of the crucial areas that they talked about, is to promote multi-culturalism, pluralism and mass education. It is true that one of the main points that was touched upon was gender equality and the empowerment of women. So, in no way, have we left the situation slide back from the Eighties. We remain committed to the positions that we had taken then and looking forward to the results beginning to show.

[Translation]

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, external policies especially have two divisions—

[English]

one is developed countries and another is SAARC countries.

[Translation]

The decision taken here that :

[English]

ODA levels to be increased and simultaneously increasing the market access.

[Translation]

Did the SAARC countries discuss something collectively and any follow up action taken up? Had the Ministry of External Affairs already taken up the matter relating to Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty with Nepal and Bangladesh and other issues. Was any follow up action taken on it during the meeting and whether India would take follow up action?

[English]

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: Sir, as far as the question of ODA was concerned, the document that had been produced at the end of this meeting was very clear. It says that SAARC will work with developed countries to increase ODA to 0.7 per cent of GNP. This is something that we took with us to the Conference that took place in Mexico at which we were represented by Shri Arun Shourie, Minister for Disinvestment. We made a very strong case there that developed countries that have the money must increase the quantum of ODA - that they made available - so that poverty alleviation schemes can have the necessary resources made available to them. Obviously, the position of SAARC, that we have taken, was a guiding factor in this.

Now, with regard to market access, yes, this remains a concern of the SAARC Member-Group countries. Prior to the WTO Ministerial meeting, we have had extensive

consultations with the concerned Ministries of Commerce and Industry that look after the WTO in their concerned countries so that we could take a common position on market access which has a direct relevance to our poverty alleviation programmes.

On the question of double taxation avoidance, I have already said that this is a question for the Ministry of Finance. The only sub-note I would like to add to that is that Mauritius is not the country in SAARC. Maldives is. There has not been a problem of any nature with regard to any Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty with Mauritius.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as has been made clear, a 16 Point Action Plan was discussed during SAARC conference and SAARC countries passed a resolution to implement the action plan. These different points were related to different departments. Just now, while replying to a written question, the hon'ble Minister stated that this question is not related to his department. He indicated towards 3-4 different departments. Implementation of these 16 points is the collective responsibility of the Government. Secondly, his department is directly related to these points, since he has signed the agreement. Therefore, I would like to know whether any monitoring system exists in his department to monitor the progress of implementation in respect of various points so that progress can be reviewed and there can be coordination for carrying out the work.

[English]

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: We have a System of regular interaction with the relevant Ministries as well as with the Planning Commission. All necessary figures are made available to us from time to time. But since the questions that were posed to me were of the nature of the working of those relevant Ministries, I was not in a position to get the necessary answers on those particular questions.

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Do you have a coordination system? ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have not got reply to my question. I asked whether there exists any mechanism in his Department?

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister has replied to it.

[English]

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH: Sir, I made it very clear

right in the beginning. We have a system of interaction both with the Planning Commission and with the relevant Ministries. There is a separate division called the SAARC Division which maintains contacts with these groups on a regular basis and the flow of information continues.

[Translation]

### Health Bond Scheme

\*703. SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN:

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had formulated "Health Bond" scheme for expansion and modernisation of medical services in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that Ministry of Finance has not cleared this scheme;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the objective of the said scheme was to attract the patients from the foreign countries by providing them latest medical facilities;

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

(f) the time by which the "Health Bond" scheme is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

### Statement

(a) to (f) The matter relating to formulation of a scheme for issue of Health Bonds was taken up by this Ministry with the Department of Economic Affairs for advice on the procedures to be followed for floating of the Bonds for strengthening Health infrastructure in the country. In response, the Department of Economic Affairs has advised the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to have further discussions with the Planning Commission for accommodation of this scheme regarding floating of the Bonds within the overall gross budgetary support to the Health sector made available by the Planning Commission.

If the scheme is to be covered within the overall budgetary support of the Health sector, the issue of Health

Infrastructure Bonds will not help in generating additional financial resources for setting up health infrastructure facilities in the country. The matter has once again been taken up with the Department of Economic Affairs for necessary instructions.

**SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask hon. Minister as to what percentage of total Budgetary allocation is spent on health sector and the efforts made by the Government for fulfilment targets of "Health for All" scheme. In addition, the yearly expenditure likely to be made on it.

*[English]*

**SHRI A. RAJA:** Sir, at the outset, I can say that the budgetary estimates towards health in all the three departments, namely, Departments of Health and Family Welfare, and Indian Systems of Medicine have increased year-wise.

In the Eighth Plan, the Department of Health was allotted a sum of Rs.1,800 crore only, wherein in the Ninth Plan, it was increased to Rs.5,000 and odd crore. In the Tenth Plan, it has been proposed that a sum of about Rs.14,000 crore should be given for the health sector, wherein the Finance Minister has given over Rs.9,000 crore.

Sir, though this question pertains to Health Bond System likely to be floated with the consent of the Finance Ministry, I can submit before the House that already we are having nationwide programmes on Malaria, TB, HIV-AIDS and Cancer. All the programmes are going on. Meanwhile, after countrywide interactions, we have devised a Health Policy 2002 and it is being worked out. With this policy, I hope, that the goals will be reached.

*[Translation]*

**SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN:** What are the salient features of the national health policy recently announced by the Government?

*[English]*

**SHRI A. RAJA:** There are many measures taken in the Health Policy, but in principle, I can say - of course it is a matter of great grievance for this country - that totally we are spending 5.2 per cent of the GDP towards health. When it is compared with the developed countries, it is very meagre where they are spending about 10 per cent to 12 per cent of their GDP. We are able to give only 5.2 per cent, wherein the Government is contributing only 0.9 per cent. The significance of the health policy can be gauged

from the fact that it should be improved from 0.9 per cent to two per cent before 2010. If allocation on health is enhanced to two per cent of GDP before 2010, we can do many marvellous things in the health sector. As such, I hope that it will be fulfilled.

*[Translation]*

**SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister has not given a proper reply to my question, he has given an evasive reply. Through you, I would like to tell the hon'ble Minister that the main objective of Health Bond Scheme is expansion and modernisation of medical and health service in the country. I would also like to add that the process of floating Health Bond is not yet completed. The Ministry of Health has sought permission from the Department of Economic Affairs and the Department of Economic Affairs have referred the matter to the Planning Commission. Lakhs of people in the country are suffering from one or the other disease. Disease is neither secular nor communal. Crores of people are dying of diseases but issue of floating Health Bonds is hanging fire between Health Ministry, the Department of Economic Affairs and Planning Commission. I would like to ask the hon. Minister by when a time bound programme of Health Bond would be chalked out and who are responsible for the delay?

*[English]*

**SHRI A. RAJA:** Sir, I have to appreciate the sentiments expressed by the hon. Member. I can say that there will not be two views in improving the health sector of this country. There are difficulties in Health Bond, as he put it. We have already approached the Department of Economic Affairs. The health sector is not a commercial sector. Just like other commercial sectors are floating the bonds, where is the indemnity here? As a Health Minister, the Ministry of Health cannot give indemnity to the bonds. So, indemnity is normally vested with the Department of Economic Affairs which is in the Ministry of Finance. In other words, I can say notwithstanding issue of this type of bonds, the Government is making all efforts and endeavours to satisfy the health sector. That is why, I had already submitted before the House that we are having three Departments—Health Department, Family Welfare Department and ISM Department. We have devised a New National Health Policy for Health Department, a National Population Policy, 2000 for the Family Welfare Department. We have set up a National Medicinal Plant Board for Indian System of Medicine. All these efforts are being made just to give adequate infrastructure in the health sector notwithstanding the Bond which has been proposed.

**SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY :** There was a slogan,

'Health for All by 2000 AD.' But this slogan ultimately could not be implemented. So, your reply has reflected that your issue of Health Bond was taken up by the Ministry with the Department of Economic Affairs. They suggested you to go back to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has again sent back your files to you and again it has asked you to initiate the matter with the Department of Economic Affairs. What is the actual amount of fund or the budgetary support you had asked for from the Government of India to implement your health policies? By way of these bonds, how much money you can collect from the market? What is your expectation? If this plan is sanctioned, I would like to know whether all your pending proposals or your Plan Budget proposals up to Rs.15,000 crore would have been implemented. With all the demands and requisitions made by different States, I would like to know whether your Health Policy could get a new life by implementation of these Health Bonds.

SHRI A. RAJA: As I already submitted, without reference to the Health Bond system, we have already devised a National Health Policy in which many promises have been contemplated. In the Health Policy, it has been contemplated to eradicate or eliminate polio and leprosy by 2005 and lymphatic filariasis by 2015, and kala-azar by 2010. These are the goals. We are tending towards that.

MR. SPEAKER: And necessary provision for money is made for this purpose.

SHRI A. RAJA: Yes, Sir.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is the most important thing. Any country's progress or development depends upon the knowledgeable and healthy society. If the society is healthy, the country's progress will be much. So, there is a policy of health for all by 2010. In this context, when compared to other developed countries, our Plan Budget is not sufficient for the thousand million population. Once the Planning Commission agrees for the Bonds, who will give the guarantee? What the Planning Commission's suggestion is that if the Health Ministry in its overall Budget gives guarantee, they will allow the Bonds. Our Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is sitting here. He should discuss this in the Cabinet meeting. If you enhance the Budget of the Ministry of Health, if the Government is ready to increase the Budget and if the Ministry of Health provides the guarantee, then the Planning Commission will allow the Bonds.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, I have already taken up this issue with the hon. Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister. If at all these bonds are not allowed on technical advice,

I can assure this House that for the same reasons, all the mottoes contemplated in the bonds would be taken up by the Department, under the National Health Policy laid before the House.

## WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS

### Surrender of Phones

\*704. DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether about 20 lakh subscribers of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) have surrendered their phones during the year 2001-2002;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) the reasons for such a large number of persons surrendering their phones;
- (d) the extent of revenue loss suffered as a result thereof; and
- (e) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) It has been estimated that nearly 20 lakh telephone connections would have been disconnected during the year 2001-2002 which include 725894 voluntarily surrendered telephones and remaining disconnected due to various reasons including non payment of bills or misuse of telephones, etc. The Telecom Circle-wise information of disconnected telephones is available upto January, 2002 and is given at statement-I. The information regarding voluntarily surrendered telephones upto March, 2002 is available at statement-II.

(c) While BSNL has been requested to conduct a survey to ascertain the reasons for such surrender/disconnections, as per available information the main reasons appear to be as follows:

- (i) The requirement to file income tax return. (This criteria has now been withdrawn).
- (ii) Easy availability of telephones leading to customers surrendering telephones at the old station and getting a new connection at the new station while shifting from one place to another instead of applying for All India Shift.

- (iii) Surrendering the second telephone because of improvement of services.
- (iv) Surrendering of OYT and Tatkal Category telephones consequent to taking up new telephone connections under Non-OYT category in areas where telephones are available on demand.
- (v) Non-payment of bills.
- (vi) Misuse of telephones.

(d) and (e) The average estimated annual loss due to rentals is about Rs. 241 crore. It is not feasible to identify with any degree of precision the revenue loss caused by such surrender of telephones in traffic because the traffic is redistributed among existing telephone connections.

#### Statement-I

*Circle-wise summary of disconnections including surrender (April, 2001 to January, 2002)*

| Sl.No | Circle/Metro Distt.         | Disconnections |
|-------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 1     | 2                           | 3              |
| 1.    | Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 1101           |
| 2.    | Andhra Pradesh              | 260390         |
| 3.    | Assam                       | 5302           |
| 4.    | Bihar                       | 36139          |
| 5.    | Chhattisgarh                | 12095          |
| 6.    | Gujarat                     | 104775         |
| 7.    | Haryana                     | 13603          |
| 8.    | Himachal Pradesh            | 12378          |
| 9.    | Jammu & Kashmir             | 6978           |
| 10.   | Jharkhand                   | 3237           |
| 11.   | Karnataka                   | 168743         |
| 12.   | Kerala                      | 18035          |
| 13.   | Madhya Pradesh              | 53328          |
| 14.   | Maharashtra                 | 305060         |
| 15.   | North East-I                | 27726          |

| 1          | 2                    | 3       |
|------------|----------------------|---------|
| 16.        | North East-II        | 11964   |
| 17.        | Orissa               | 15047   |
| 18.        | Punjab               | 21878   |
| 19.        | Rajasthan            | 38564   |
| 20.        | Tamil Nadu           | 122120  |
| 21.        | Uttaranchal          | 8926    |
| 22.        | Uttar Pradesh (East) | 340774  |
| 23.        | Uttar Pradesh (West) | 29161   |
| 24.        | West Bengal          | 7142    |
| 25.        | Kolkatta             | 28265   |
| 26.        | Chennai              | 27761   |
| Total BSNL |                      | 1680492 |

#### Note:

|                                                  |   |         |
|--------------------------------------------------|---|---------|
| Disconnections from April to January (10 Months) | = | 1680492 |
| Average Disconnections per month                 | = | 168049  |
| Estimated Disconnections for February and March  | = | 336098  |
| Total Expected Disconnections                    | = | 2016590 |

#### Statement-II

*State-wise details of Telephones surrendered during 2001-2002*

| Sl.No. | State/Union Territory | No. of Telephones surrendered |
|--------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1      | 2                     | 3                             |
| 1.     | Andhra Pradesh        | 21137                         |
| 2.     | Assam                 | 1012                          |
| 3.     | Bihar                 | 2350                          |
| 4.     | Chhattisgarh          | 13933                         |
| 5.     | Goa                   | 3282                          |
| 6.     | Gujarat               | 91551                         |
| 7.     | Haryana               | 6819                          |

| 1            | 2                                               | 3             |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 8.           | Himachal Pradesh                                | 1098          |
| 9.           | Jammu & Kashmir                                 | 2244          |
| 10.          | Jharkhand                                       | 3734          |
| 11.          | Karnataka                                       | 216753        |
| 12.          | Kerala including Lakshadweep                    | 8068          |
| 13.          | Madhya Pradesh                                  | 29525         |
| 14.          | Maharashtra                                     | 58117         |
| 15.          | Meghalaya                                       | 1822          |
| 16.          | NE-II (Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland) | Nil           |
| 17.          | Orissa                                          | 27*           |
| 18.          | Punjab                                          | 15686         |
| 19.          | Rajasthan                                       | 23062         |
| 20.          | Sikkim                                          | 34            |
| 21.          | Tamil Nadu including Chennai                    | 153908        |
| 22.          | Uttar Pradesh                                   | 24035         |
| 23.          | Uttaranchal                                     | 2056          |
| 24.          | West Bengal including Kolkatta                  | 26838         |
| 25.          | Mizoram                                         | Nil           |
| 26.          | Andaman & Nicobar Islands                       | 808           |
| 27.          | Pondicherry                                     | 17181         |
| 28.          | Tripura                                         | 814           |
| <b>Total</b> |                                                 | <b>725894</b> |

\* Estimated

*[English]***Software Technology Parks**

\*705. SHRI RAJAJIAH MALYALA:

DR. RAJESWARAMMA VUKKALA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether China has sought India's help to set up Software Technology Parks (STP) and Software Training Institutes;

(b) if so, the details of professional expertise proposed to be given; and

(c) the other facilities to be provided to boost co-operation between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Ministry of Information Technology, Government of India and Ministry of Information Industry, People's Republic of China in July, 2000 for cooperation in the field of Information Technology.

*[Translation]***Manufacturing of Low Cost Computer**

\*706 SHRI PADAM SEN CHOUDHRY :

SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and China have decided to cooperate in bridging the digital divide and to produce low cost computers for their rural masses as well as for exports;

(b) if so, whether a high-level Indian delegation visited China and discussed ways and means to enhance India-China cooperation in IT sector;

(c) whether India has launched an ambitious plan to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural people;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether India has urged China to pool in their expertise in the hardware sector to meet the requirements of the combined populations of the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) During the course of Minister's visit to China in July, 2000. a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for bilateral

cooperation in the IT sector was signed between India and China.

(b) Recently an official delegation was deputed to China to pursue the matter further.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The two major initiatives of Government of India in regard to bridging the digital divide, consist of setting up Media Lab Asia for delivering emerging technologies in direct services of masses; and setting up 487 Community Information Centres in the eight North Eastern States.

(e) The MoU signed with China in 2000, inter-alia, provides for establishing manufacturing joint venture of information technology equipment.

#### **Extradition Treaty between India and France**

\*707. DR. ASHOK PATEL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and France have agreed to sign an extradition treaty;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the date from which it is likely to come into force?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH) : (a) The text of the proposed extradition treaty with France has been finalized at the official level.

(b) and (c) The treaty can be signed only after both countries complete the requisite process of obtaining internal approvals. An extradition treaty normally enters into force on the date on which Instruments of Ratification are exchanged by the two countries.

[English]

#### **Visit of Sri Lankan President**

\*708. SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of bilateral and multilateral issues discussed by Sri Lankan President during her recent visit to India; and

(b) the agreements signed on the occasion including the terms of agreements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) The President of Sri Lanka H.E. Ms Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga visited New Delhi between 22-26 April, 2002 to deliver the first Madhav Rao Scindia memorial lecture.

During her visit, the Sri Lankan President held discussions with PM and called on the President. No agreement were signed during this visit. The Sri Lankan President apprised the Indian leadership of the current status of the process to end the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

The talks between the two sides were held in an atmosphere of cordiality and understanding and covered bilateral, regional and international matters of mutual interest. Both sides expressed great satisfaction at the excellent state of bilateral relations and the warmth and understanding that exist between the two countries.

#### **Robotic Centre at AIIMS**

\*709. DR. A.D.K. JAYASEELAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the AIIMS, New Delhi has a proposal to establish a robotic centre;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the time by which it is likely to start functioning;

(c) the benefits to be derived from such a centre by the general public;

(d) whether the Government propose to establish such robotic centre in other metros of the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) AIIMS, New Delhi has a First Generation Robotic Technology facility at the Cardio-Thoracic Centre which is functional. AIIMS also has a proposal to establish the Second Generation Robotic Technology facility at its Cardio-Thoracic Centre. It is still at conceptual stage and would need assessment by the various Technical Committees and also requisite approvals before it can be taken up for implementation.

The robot assisted surgery in the field of medicine is a new development. It is very cost intensive and even

in most developed countries, the technology is used in only special and emergent circumstances. It is expensive and a large percentage of the country's population may not be able to afford it.

#### Modernisation of Telephone Exchanges

\*710. SHRI SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges modernised during the last two years, State-wise;

(b) whether some states have been given priority in this regard; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) The modernisation of telecommunication network is an ongoing process. As part of this process, telephone exchanges of older technologies are constantly being replaced by digital electronic exchanges. The details of number of telephone exchanges modernized during the last two years, State-wise, are given in the statement enclosed.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

#### Statement

##### *Telephone Exchanges Modernised during Last Two years*

| Sl. No. | State                          | Year 2000-2001 | Year 2001-2002 |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1       | 2                              | 3              | 4              |
| 1       | Andaman & Nicobar Islands (UT) | 2              | 3              |
| 2       | Andhra Pradesh                 | 300            | 99             |
| 3       | Arunachal Pradesh              | 6              | 3              |
| 4       | Assam                          | 20             | 1              |
| 5       | Bihar                          | 75             | 7              |
| 6       | Goa                            | Nil            | Nil            |
| 7       | Gujarat                        | 2              | 100            |

| 1     | 2                | 3    | 4   |
|-------|------------------|------|-----|
| 8     | Haryana          | 17   | 1   |
| 9     | Himachal Pradesh | 101  | 6   |
| 10    | Jammu & Kashmir  | 64   | 7   |
| 11    | Karnataka        | 189  | 13  |
| 12    | Kerala           | 11   | 4   |
| 13    | Madhya Pradesh   | 119  | 206 |
| 14    | Maharashtra      | 404  | 181 |
| 15    | Manipur          | 8    | 3   |
| 16    | Meghalaya        | 1    | Nil |
| 17    | Mizoram          | 7    | 1   |
| 18    | Nagaland         | 10   | 5   |
| 19    | Orissa           | 96   | 20  |
| 20    | Punjab           | 59   | 2   |
| 21    | Rajasthan        | 408  | 59  |
| 22    | Sikkim           | Nil  | Nil |
| 23    | Tamil Nadu       | 29   | 6   |
| 24    | Tripura          | 2    | Nil |
| 25    | Uttar Pradesh    | 77   | 20  |
| 26    | West Bengal      | 8    | Nil |
| 27    | Uttaranchal      | 4    | 2   |
| 28    | Chhattisgarh     | 123  | 107 |
| 29    | Jharkhand        | 26   | 3   |
| 30    | Delhi            | 3    | Nil |
| Total |                  | 2171 | 859 |

#### Mobile Hospitals

\*711. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposals

to set up mobile hospitals in the country in the form of emergency clinics;

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the amount earmarked to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

#### **Patent for Traditional Medicines and Plants**

\*712. SHRI RAVINDERA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a digital Library containing a collection of 30,000 items of Ayurvedic and Unani Medicines, herbs, various food spices and plants has been set up to implement the scheme to get traditional medicines and plants patented;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be opened for common people; and

(c) the time by which the patent scheme is likely to be started on the basis of the collections contained in the library?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Government is establishing Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) covering 35000 Ayurvedic formulations, in the first phase. Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) will establish prior-art of the existing traditional knowledge and prevent patent of medicinal use of non-original inventions existing already in public domain. The Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) for Ayurveda is expected to be completed this year. Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) for Unani and Siddha will be taken up later.

#### **New National Health Policy**

\*713. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have approved a new National Health Policy;

(b) if so, the salient features of the new policy;

(c) the expenditure likely to be incurred on implementation of the scheme during 2002-2003; and

(d) the manner in which the out lay would be shared by the Union Government and the State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) A new health policy, the National Health Policy 2002 has been approved by the Government. The main objective of the new policy is to achieve an acceptable standard of good health amongst the general population, of the country. The new policy covers wide ranging issues related to health such as financial resources; equity; delivery of national public health programmes; health infrastructure; role of private sector, local self-Government institutions and NGOs; health education and manpower; health research; quality control of drugs and food; disease surveillance, impact of globalisation on the health sector, etc.

(c) and (d) As part of the implementation of the National Health Policy 2002, schemes with a total outlay of Rs.27 crores which include providing drugs to primary health sector with an outlay of Rs.14 crores; urban health with an outlay of Rs. 7 crores; medical grants commission with an outlay of Rs.5 crores and health accounts with an outlay of 1 crore have been initiated during 2002-03. In these schemes, there is no obligation on the part of the State Governments to share the expenses except in the scheme of urban health where sharing between Centre, State and local self-governments is stipulated in the ratio of 50:30:20 respectively. However, the policy envisages that the State Governments would increase their commitment of resources to 7% of the budget by 2005 and 8% of the budget by 2010.

[English]

#### **Assault on Indian High Commission Officials in Pakistan**

\*714. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the frequent misbehaviour and assault by Pakistani Police and High Commission officials on Indian High Commission officials in Islamabad and officials of commercial offices in Pakistan:

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, till date; and

(c) the steps taken to deal with the situation and to ensure safety of Indian High Commission officials in Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of incidents of harassment of personnel of Indian High Commission in Islamabad during the last three years are as follows:

|      |    |
|------|----|
| 1999 | 18 |
| 2000 | 22 |
| 2001 | 16 |

In 2002, till date, 9 cases of harassment/assault have been reported.

(c) Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961 and the bilateral "Code of Conduct for Treatment of Diplomatic/Consular Personnel in India and Pakistan" signed by the two countries in 1992, the responsibility for the safety and security of personnel of High Commission rests with the host Government. Government of India protests strongly to Government of Pakistan against all cases of harassment of officials of Indian High Commission in Islamabad and remind them of their obligations under the Vienna Convention and bilateral Code of Conduct. Government remains committed to taking all necessary measures for the safety and security of the personnel in Indian missions abroad.

#### **Tatkal Passport**

\*715. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Tatkal Passports issued in 2001-2002;

(b) the quantum of fees collected thereby;

(c) whether there is a proposal to bring down the cost of issue of such passports;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the steps taken/proposed to be taken for revamping the passport issuing procedure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The number of Tatkal passports issued in the year 2001-2002 Was 118500.

(b) The quantum of fees collected thereby in the year 2001-2002 was Rs. 16.12 crores.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

(e) The simplification of passport issuance procedure is a continuous process. A Committee to review the Passport Issue System was constituted by the Government and it has since submitted its recommendations which have been accepted. The recommendations include proposals for decentralisation of passport services to enable acceptance of Passport application forms at District level. Steps have been taken to implement this proposal. Application forms are already being accepted at the designated speed post passport collection centers. Another recommendation already implemented relates to the simplification of the police verification process which would enable certain categories of persons, whose identity and nationality are well established, to be issued passports without police verification.

#### **Uranium Smuggling**

\* 716. SHRI A.NARENDRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of uranium smuggling detected during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the number of cases filed in the courts and persons prosecuted during the above mentioned period, State-wise; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to prevent the recurrence of uranium smuggling activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No case of Uranium smuggling has been detected during the last 3 years.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Export of Nuclear Power  
Plants/Components**

\*717. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

SHRI Y.V. RAO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the atomic energy programme administrators have declared that India could export nuclear power plants or components to countries; which are in dire need of power;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any orders in this regard have been received from any country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) As of now, there is no specific proposal or plan to export nuclear power plants/the related packages of nuclear power plants to other countries.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Not applicable.

[Translation]

**National Population Stabilisation Fund**

\*718. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) by whom the National Population Stabilisation Fund is controlled;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a fight over the control of this fund between National Commission of Population and the Ministry;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether there was any lapse in allocation made for the fund last fiscal year;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the allocation made during the current financial year for the fund; and

(g) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for smooth functioning of the National Population Stabilisation Fund and implementation of population control programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Family Welfare, is administratively responsible for the National Population Stabilisation Fund (NPSF).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) to (g) A provision of Rs.50 crore each was made in the budget of Planning Commission for 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 towards contribution to the seed money of the National Population Stabilisation Fund. The provision of Rs.50 Crore made in 2000-2001 was transferred to the Public Accounts. The provision of Rs. 50 Crore in the year 2001-2002 has lapsed because of non-completion of formalities for setting up of NPSF.

National Population Stabilisation Fund is to provide a window for canalizing monies from national voluntary sources to specifically aid projects designed to contribute to population stabilisation.

In order to achieve population stabilisation in the country at the earliest, Government adopted the National Population Policy (NPP), in February 2000. NPP lists certain socio-demographic goals to be achieved by 2010. These are:

(1) Address the unmet needs for basic reproductive and child health services, supplies and infrastructure.

(2) Make school education upto age 14 free and compulsory and reduce dropouts at primary and secondary school levels to below 20 percent for both boys and girls.

(3) Reduce infant mortality rate to below 30 per 1000 live births.

(4) Reduce maternal mortality ratio to below 100 per 100,000 live births.

(5) Achieve universal immunization of children against all vaccine preventable diseases.

(6) Promote delayed marriage for girls, not earlier than age 18 and preferably after 20 years of age.

(7) Achieve 80 percent institutional deliveries and 100 percent deliveries by trained persons.

(8) Achieve universal access to information/ counseling and services for fertility regulation and contraception with a wide basket of choices.

(9) Achieve 100 per cent registration of births, deaths, marriages and pregnancy.

(10) Contain the spread of Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and promote greater integration between the management of Reproductive Tract Infection (RTI) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and the National AIDS Control Organisation.

(11) Prevent and control communicable diseases.

(12) Integrate Indian Systems of Medicines (ISM) in the provision of reproductive and child health services and in reaching out of households.

(13) Promote vigorously the small family/norm to achieve replacement levels of TFR.

(14) Bring about convergence in implementation of related social sector programmes so that family welfare becomes a people centered programme.

The major steps taken to implement the NPP, 2000 are as under:

- State Governments have been advised to formulate State Population Policy with state specific strategies while maintaining the general spirit of National Population Policy, 2000 and also to constitute State Population Commission under the chairmanship of Chief Minister of respective State to review, monitor and give directions for the implementation of the State Population Policy with a view to meeting the goals set out in the National Population Policy, 2000.
- The State Governments have also been advised to prepare firm and detailed action plan taking into account the ground realities and their area specific problems (region wise/ district wise) for effective implementation of family welfare programme.
- To enhance and accelerate performance in states with currently below average socio-demographic indices, an Empowered Action Group (EAG) has been constituted in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for preparation of area specific programmes with special emphasis on states that

are lagging behind. A detailed database for eight states i.e. MP, UP, Bihar, Rajasthan, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Uttaranchal and Jharkhand has been compiled by the Department of Family Welfare to help guide the assessment of community needs.

[English]

#### Foreign Direct Investment Agencies

\*719. SHRI N. T. SHANMUGAM: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received representations from Foreign Direct Investment Agencies for setting up of small scale industries in various States;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Union Government to ensure approval of the same within the time bound period; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (d) All proposals relating to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the Small Scale Industries (SSI) Sector, including the representations received from Foreign Direct Investment Agencies are decided as per the declared Government policy. The policy allows FDI upto 24% in the SSI sector via the automatic route. In all other cases, prior Government approval is mandatory. Further, if the item of manufacture is reserved for the SSI sector, the investor has to obtain an industrial licence and also undertake an export obligation of 50% on such products. Any SSI company will lose its SSI status as and when more, than 24% of its equity, including FDI, is held by another Industrial Undertaking. All investments made under the automatic route need to be only notified to Reserve Bank of India (RBI) within 30 days of receiving inward remittance and again within 30 days of issue of shares. In case of proposals requiring prior approval of the Government, the investor needs to file an application before Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) which is disposed of keeping in view the time frame of 30 days for communicating Government decision.

[Translation]

### I.D. Caller Facility

\*720. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the States where I.D. Caller facility has been provided at present;

(b) whether all consumers of Delhi and Mumbai have been provided this facility;

(c) if not, the time by which this facility is likely to be provided by which exchanges and on what level of number in these metro cities;

(d) whether Government propose to provide this facility at all levels in these metro cities in future;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether this facility will be provided on demand or automatically to every subscriber; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) The I.D. Caller facility is available in all the States. However, due to technical constraints, some of the telephone exchanges and access network equipment do not support this facility.

(b) Sir, this facility is available in all the exchanges/ access network equipment of MTNL except for the following:

#### Delhi

1. Wireless in Local Loop (WLL-Motorola make).
2. Digital Loop Carrier (DLC) of HTL & HFCL make.
3. Cordect system at Nazafergarh & Badli.

#### Mumbai

1. Fetex 150 (limited availability).
2. DLC (HTL make).
3. Wireless in Local Loop (Fujitsu make).

(c) to (e) It is not possible to extend Calling Line Identification (CLI) facility to the subscribers connected to

the equipments specified in (b) above. However, the feasibility of doing so in WLL (Motorola make), is being explored. In all future orders of equipment, this facility will be asked for. The subscribers of Fetex 150 exchange at Mumbai will be extended the CLI facility on replacement of the Switch which is likely to be completed in three years time.

(f) and (g) This facility is provided on the specific request of subscribers presently on monthly payment of Rs. 50/- and a one time processing fee of Rs. 50/-.

[English]

### Simplification of Passport Issuing Procedure

7280. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has finalised expediting the passport issuing process;

(b) whether in various cities including Mumbai the applicants are not able to get passport in 3-4 months;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the action proposed thereon;

(e) whether in the Affidavit Form 'G' an educated/ literate person studied upto 9th standard has to put his thumb impression on the passport form;

(f) whether he has to declare himself illiterate in the passport form;

(g) whether a person has to pass minimum SSC to qualify himself as literate for this formality;

(h) if so, the norms, rules and regulations laid down in this regard;

(i) whether the Government propose to do away with this formality and will treat a person as literate if he has studied up to 8th/9th standard;

(j) if so, the details thereof; and

(k) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Government has recently exempted some categories of passport applicants from police verification and has also launched a scheme of machine writing of passports to expedite the passport issue process.

(b) and (c) The passports are normally issued within ten days after a clear police verification report is received and all the other documents are in order. The time taken in issue of passports, therefore, varies for different Passport Offices depending on the time in which the police verification report is received. In Mumbai, about 60% of the police reports are received within 30-35 days and these passports are issued in about 45 days.

(d) Government has launched a scheme of decentralisation of acceptance of passport applications at the District level. This is expected to reduce the time taken in police verification.

(e) Annexure-F of the passport application form gives the specimen affidavit to be submitted by illiterate applicants as proof of date of birth in case the birth certificate is not available. As normally Class X School Leaving Certificate in most States carries the date of birth of the applicant, it is accepted as the proof of date of birth. There is no requirement for the applicant to place his thumb impression on the present passport form.

(f) to (k) There is no entry in the passport form requiring the applicant to declare himself literate or illiterate. However, there is a column for declaring the educational qualifications as a graduate is automatically entitled for the grant of "Emigration Check Not Required" stamp on the passport.

#### **Task Force on Traditional Knowledge Digital Library**

7281. SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a task force on Traditional Knowledge Digital Library has been constituted under Department of Indian Systems of Medicine;

(b) if so, the details of its members, task assigned and completed and total grant allotted and spent during the last two years;

(c) whether National Institute of Science Communication has been designated as implementing agency for setting up Traditional Knowledge Digital Library;

(d) if so, the grant allotted and staff associated from institute;

(e) whether CSIR has provided data in digital form;

(f) whether above data has been published in CD marked, copy right in 1977; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (g) A task force was constituted to work out the modalities for establishment of Traditional Knowledge Digital Library comprising of scientists and experts of National Informatics Centre, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, Patent & Design Office and Ayurveda.

National Institute of Science Communications (NISCOM) has been designated as implementing agency for Traditional Knowledge Digital Library.

They are being assisted by Ayurvedic experts, patent examiners, information technology experts. So far Rs.86 lakhs have been released for the project.

The work has not been completed so far. It is expected to be completed by the year and data will be available in digital form.

#### **Opening of Chemist Shops in AIIMS/Safdarjung Hospitals**

7282. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to open authorized chemists shops in AIIMS and Safdarjung Hospitals in lieu of chemists shops being run by Super Bazar earlier to enable the patients to get standard drugs and equipments which is not available in private shops running nearby; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) There is a proposal for opening of drug stores in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi Campus. A tender has been issued in this regard. There is no proposal with Safdarjung Hospital to open a drug stores. Though the Institute/hospital currently do not have their own drug outlet, some private drug store chemists who are located in the proximity of the Institute/hospital are meeting the demand of the patients.

[Translation]

#### **Licence for Import of Medicines**

7283. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have made it mandatory to get a licence for import of medicines; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An Import Licence in Form 10 or Form 10-A is required for the import of a drug specified in Schedule 'C' & 'C1' or Schedule X as the case may be. For such an Import Licence an importer has to apply to the Licensing Authority in Form 8 or Form 8-A mentioning the name of drug to be imported along with prescribed fee and an undertaking in Form 9 duly signed by or on behalf of the manufacturer. If the applicant satisfies the conditions for the issue of said Import Licences by providing suitable storage premises, valid sale licences manufacturing licences issued under the provisions of Drugs, and Cosmetics Rules, Import Licence in Form 10 or Form 10-A is issued to him.

Recently, vide GSR No. 604(e) dated 24.8.2001 Government of India has made it mandatory that from 1.1.2003 Import Licence in Form 10 shall be required for all categories of drugs. For such an Import Licence, the importers shall have to apply in the same manner as stated above along with a copy of Registration Certificate specifically issued to the concerned foreign manufacturer of the drugs. If the importer could satisfy the conditions for import of drug as mentioned above. Import Licence in Form 10 or Form 10-A shall be issued to him.

An application for issue of a Registration Certificate shall be made in Form 40 by an Indian Authorized Agent of the foreign manufacturer who shall have a valid sale manufacturing licence. The application shall accompany with the prescribed fees and requisite information specified in Schedules D-I & D-II of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules. If the foreign manufacturer would follow the conditions of the Registration Certificate by fulfilling the Good Manufacturing Practices and labelling conditions prescribed for the purpose. Registration Certificate in Form 41 shall be issued to the foreign manufacturer.

[Translation]

#### Promotion of SSI in J&K and Jharkhand

7284. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN:

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are implementing any schemes to promote small scale industries in Jammu and Kashmir and Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have observed any improvement after implementation of these schemes in these States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) For the promotion of Small Scale Industries (SSI) in the country including the States of Jammu & Kashmir and Jharkhand, the Government is implementing various schemes/programmes viz. Integrated Infrastructural Development Scheme (IID), Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana for setting up micro enterprises, Entrepreneurial, Managerial Training Programmes and Technical Skill Development Programmes through Small Industries Service Institutes (SISIs), Tool Rooms etc. Besides, Government has also announced a Comprehensive Policy Package on 30.8.2000, which inter-alia includes enhanced fiscal and credit support, better infrastructure, marketing facilities and incentives for Technology upgradation. A Credit Guarantee Trust Fund has also been created which provides guarantee for bank loans to SSI Units upto Rs.25.00 lakhs without collaterals. A scheme to provide 12% back ended capital subsidy on projects of Technology Upgradation by SSI units in the specified sectors/sub sectors is also being implemented. The State of J&K has its SISI in Jammu and an IID Centre at Village Battal Ballian, District Udhampur. The State of Jharkhand has its SISI in Ranchi and a Tool Room at Jamshedpur.

(c) and (d) While the development of small scale industries is primarily the concern of respective State Governments/Union Territories, the Central Government supports and supplements the efforts of the State Governments/Union Territories through implementation of its various programmes and schemes. The estimated number of registered SSI Units was 24829 in 1995 and 31848 in 2001 in the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The estimated number of registered SSI Units in the areas now forming the State of Jharkhand was 31331 in 1995 and 40324 in 2001.

### Laying of OFC in Madhya Pradesh

7285. SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether departmental irregularities have been committed at several places and contracts have been awarded to the inexperienced persons for laying the optical fiber cable at various places in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action being taken by the Government in the above matter for committing such irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) No departmental irregularities have been committed in connection with laying of Optical Fibre Cable in Madhya Pradesh circle. 38 contracts for a total route length of 102.35 kms of optical fibre cable have been awarded to inexperienced contractors. This is as per the existing guidelines for developing adequate base of experienced contractors.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

[English]

### Roads between Chandigarh and Panchkula

7286. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a pressing necessity of constructing more roads between U.T. Chandigarh and Panchkula to cope with the ever increasing traffic rush; and

(b) if so, the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b) This Ministry is responsible for development of National Highways. There is no proposal to construct a National Highway between Chandigarh and Panchkula.

### CGHS Dispensary/Hospitals

7287. SHRI T. GOVINDAN:

DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposals from Kerala and Rajasthan Governments for opening of CGHS dispensaries/Hospitals in the respective States;

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

(c) the decision taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) In view of (a) above, the questions do not arise.

### National Highway-37

7288. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the All Assam Students Union in a memorandum recently submitted to the Government have exposed gross anomalies in the execution of the work on NH-37 between Jalukbari and Guwahati Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the projects in question and their cost; and

(c) the reaction of the Government's thereto alongwith the steps taken to ensure smooth execution of work and to prevent leakage of funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) to (c) All Assam Students Union had submitted a memorandum dated 6.4.2002 about the poor quality in the execution of work of strengthening including paved shoulders from km 143.75 to km 145.75 on National Highway No.37 in Assam, sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs. 494 lakhs. However, subsequently they intimated vide their letter dated 12.4.2002 that they were misinformed earlier about the work done in the above reach and requested that their earlier letter dated 6.4.2002 may be treated as cancelled.

### Launching of SPY Satellites

7289. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to launch Spy satellites to protect the country's interest; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

#### **WLL Connection in Sundarban**

7290. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of WLL telephone sanctioned for the Sundarban areas alongwith their places of installations;

(b) whether the Government have issued any guidelines for their installations;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have come across any irregularities in the installation of WLL telephone for the Sundarban areas;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to take action against those who have been involved in such irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) 508 WLL telephone connections have been sanctioned for Sunderban areas at the following locations:

| Location of BTS | No. of WLL telephone Sanctioned | No. of WLL telephone installed |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Canning         | 158                             | 144                            |
| Rasirhat        | 150                             | 95                             |
| Raidighi        | 200                             | 95                             |

(b) and (c) Priority for providing WLL telephone connection is as under:

| Sl. No. | Priority (in the coverage area)                                  |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | New VPTs                                                         |
| 2       | Old pending cases, priority & MP cases for telephone connections |
| 3       | Replacement of faulty MARR VPTs                                  |
| 4       | New telephone connections                                        |

(d) The Government has not come across any irregularity in the installation of WLL telephones for the Sunderban areas.

(e) and (f) Do not arise in view of (d) above.

#### **Excess Payment**

7291. SHRI G. S. BASAVARAJ: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chennai Port Trust made an excess payment of Rs. 8.72 crore to the contractor by incorrect computation of cost escalation without deducting the cost of rocks supplied at fixed rate from the value of the work;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to recover the excess amount?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) The Ennore coal port project was executed by Chennai Port Trust as an executing agency. As a part of this project, a contract was awarded to M/s Hindustan Construction Company Ltd. and Van Oord Acz. JV for the construction of two breakwaters at a cost of Rs. 232.87 crores. As per the contract agreement, Chennai Port Trust was to supply rocks at a fixed cost of Rs. 250.00 per tonne. The contract agreement also had an escalation clause as per guidelines of Asian Development Bank (ADB), the funding agency. There was no provision in the escalation clause to exclude the cost of rocks from the gross value of the work to calculate escalation amount. Hence, while calculating the escalation payable for the work done, the cost of the rocks supplied at fixed rate was not deducted by the Chennai Port and the contractor was paid as recommended by the Consultant M/s Haskoning, a Royal Dutch Consulting Engineers for the project. However, the Accountant General (Audit) is of the view that the cost of the rock supplied at fixed rate should have been deducted while considering the gross value of the work executed to calculate the escalation amount.

The Audit has accordingly stated in Para 9.1 of its Report No.4 of 2002 (Civil) that incorrect computation of cost escalation without deducting the cost of rocks supplied at fixed rate from the value of work done resulted in excess payment of Rs. 8.72 crores.

(c) The Chennai port encashed the bank guarantee for Rs. 2.41 crores and withheld Rs. 6.39 crores from the running bills. The contractors obtained an interim injunction from the High Court against such encashment and the case is presently pending with the Arbitral Tribunal.

#### **Out Break of Measles in Gujarat**

7292. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the measles has broke out in one camp at Godhra, Gujarat where more than 40 children were infected as reported in the 'Times of India' dated April 24, 2002;

(b) if so, whether the Government have issued instructions to State Government for centralize distribution of medicines to them;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to send Central Team to the affected camps to help the victims?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir. From 10th to 27th April, 2002 a total of 49 cases of measles were detected.

(b) to (d) The Centrai medical team consisting of four pediatricians visited the Godhra relief camp along with the State and district health officials on 27th April, 2002. On examination of the children in the camp, one case was found to be having chicken-pox and two cases rubella infection. Six children with active measles were detected. Overall, upto 27th April, 2002, a total of 49 measles cases were detected by the State health authorities.

The process of immunization against measles was started on 12th April, 2002 to the children who are in the age group of 9 to 59 months by the State Health authorities. Till 27th April, 2002, 107 children have been immunized. The usual complications associated with measles are broncho-pneumonia, otitis media, diarrhoea, conjunctivitis etc. for which basic life support and emergency medicines along with

ambulance facilities are available at the camp site. No death has been reported due to measles from this camp.

The State Govt. has deputed adequate number of medical and para-medical personal to this camp.

[Translation]

#### **Notification Regarding the Registration of Doctors**

7293. SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the notification relating to code of conduct about cancellation of registration of doctors issued by the Government on April 6, 2002;

(b) the circumstances under which the registration of doctors is likely to be cancelled;

(c) whether this has been implemented in all the States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) As per the provisions of section 20 A of the Act read with section 33 (power to make regulations), the Council with the approval of the Central Government have notified in the Official Gazette on 6th April, 2002 the Indian Medical Council (Professional conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002. Copies of these Regulations have also been sent to all the State Governments and the State Medical Councils for ensuring compliance. These Regulations, inter-alia, indicate the acts of commission or omission on the part of a doctor which shall constitute professional misconduct or unethical acts rendering him/her liable for disciplinary action. As per the provisions of the Regulations, the Medical Council of India or the State Medical Councils are empowered to award such punishment as deemed necessary or even removal of the name of any registered practitioner from the register altogether or for a specified period in respect of any act of violation of the provisions of the Regulations which may be brought before it, after conducting an enquiry.

[English]

#### **Anti AIDS Medicine List**

7294. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that the WHO has added 10 anti-retroviral medicines for treatment of HIV infections to its list of "essential medicines" for all countries;

(b) if so, whether the Government are also considering to include these drugs in its list;

(c) whether the Government have sought scientific evidence about these medicines effectiveness in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present, Government does not provide Anti Retroviral Drugs under the National AIDS Control Programme because of prohibitive cost of Anti-Retroviral Therapy as it has to be taken life long and also needs expensive laboratory tests for monitoring the response of therapy.

(c) and (d) The effectiveness of Anti Retroviral Drugs in management of HIV/AIDS disease has been demonstrated worldwide. In a feasibility study conducted by Government of India in 11 centres in the country, the Anti Retroviral Drugs Zidovudine (AZT) was found effective in prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV.

#### **Telephone Exchanges in Uttaranchal**

7295. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBHA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telephone exchange of Beironkhal Uttaranchal is not functioning satisfactorily and the consumers are unable to get STD line connection from/to this exchange;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the functioning of exchanges has switch off frequently;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to improve the services of said exchange?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Beironkhal

Exchange is Functioning satisfactorily. The exchange is parented to Syunsi. However, STD line connections sometimes get affected due to channel limitations in MCPC-VSAT at its parent exchange.

(c) and (d) The exchange is switched off to avoid damage of equipment due to heavy thunder and lightning on rare occasions only.

(e) To improve the services of said exchange OFC is planned in the year 2002-2003.

#### **Violation of Geneva Convention**

7296. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:

SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

SHRI C. SREENIVASAN:

SHRI AMBAREESHA:

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan has been violating the Geneva Convention regarding treatment of Diplomats and particularly treatment of Indian Diplomats;

(b) if so, the cases of maltreatment of Indian Diplomats by the Pakistan Government in recent years;

(c) whether the Government have lodged any protest against violation of Geneva Convention;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH):

(a) Pakistan has been violating Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961 in its treatment of personnel of Indian High Commission.

(b) There have been 18 cases of harassment of personnel of Indian High Commission in Islamabad in 1999; 22 cases in Year 2000 and 16 cases in 2001. In 2002, so far, nine cases of harassment/torture have been reported.

(c) to (e) Government of India conveys its strong protest to Government of Pakistan at all cases of torture/harassment

of officials of Indian High Commission in Islamabad reminding them of their obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the bilateral "Code of Conduct for Treatment of Diplomatic/Consular Personnel In India & Pakistan". Government remains committed to taking all appropriate measures to ensure the welfare and well-being of its personnel in Missions abroad.

#### **Alleged Passport Scandal**

7297. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:

SHRI PRABODH PANDA:

SHRI KAMAL NATH:

SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:

DR. B.B. RAMAIAH:

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:

SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI:

SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO:

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Passport Scandal in Houston Consulate" appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated January 21, 2002;

(b) whether similar scandals have also been reported in other Missions at San Francisco, Chicago, New York etc.;

(c) if so, the details in this regard including the total number of entries in respect of passports in these Missions missing;

(d) whether any inquiry has been made by the Government in this regard;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to avoid such recurrence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. Government conducted an internal inquiry into the matter and found that the allegations levelled in the newspaper report were false.

(f) Ministry has issued instructions on safe custody of blank passport booklets, which are reiterated from time to time.

[Translation]

#### **News Bulletins and Magazines**

7298. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of News bulletins and Magazines being published from India and abroad on cultural relations;

(b) the amount allocated in the Budget for this purpose during the last three years along with the total number of News bulletins and Magazines published during this period; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) 1. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and a number of missions abroad regularly bring out news letters, magazines and special publications with specific cultural content, which are aimed at furthering the goals of India's cultural diplomacy. The total number of such publications as computed on the basis of data received from India's missions abroad, the ICCR and the External Publicity Division of the MEA is 54.

2. The total budget allocated for this purpose during the last three years is estimated at Rs. 12.6 crores.

3. The total number of publications on cultural relations brought out during the same period both at Headquarters and missions abroad was 1126, according to information consolidated by the Ministry of External Affairs.

4. The details of the publications are as follows:

| No. | Name of the Issuing Authority                                     | Title of Publication with specific cultural content | Total no. of publications issued in last 3 years |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | 2                                                                 | 3                                                   | 4                                                |
| 1.  | MEA (Ministry of External Affairs)<br>External Publicity Division | India Perspectives                                  | 37                                               |
|     |                                                                   | MEA Newswire<br>(Started in February 2002)          | 14                                               |
|     | ICCR (Indian Council of<br>Cultural Relations)                    | Indian Horizons<br>Africa Quarterly                 | 70                                               |
|     |                                                                   | Gagnanchal                                          |                                                  |
|     |                                                                   | Thaqafat-ul-Hind                                    |                                                  |
|     |                                                                   | Rencontre Avec l'Inde                               |                                                  |
|     |                                                                   | Papeles de la India                                 |                                                  |
| 2.  | Embassy of India, Ankara                                          | Hindustana Bakis                                    | 26                                               |
|     |                                                                   | News Bulletins                                      | 40                                               |
| 3.  | Embassy of India, Beijing                                         | Jin Ri Yindu                                        | 11                                               |
| 4.  | Embassy of India, Berlin                                          | Programme Asia                                      | 1                                                |
|     |                                                                   | Pacific Week 2001                                   | 1                                                |
| 5.  | Embassy of India, Berne                                           | News Bulletin                                       | 108                                              |
| 6.  | Embassy of India, Bishkek                                         | Indian Panorama                                     | 22                                               |
| 7.  | High Commission of India, Brunei                                  | India News                                          | 36                                               |
| 8.  | Embassy of India, Cairo                                           | News Bulletins of India                             | 36                                               |
|     |                                                                   | Sawtul Sharq                                        | 6                                                |
| 9.  | Embassy of India, Damascus                                        | Al-Hind                                             | 18                                               |
|     |                                                                   | Embassy's News Letter                               | 72                                               |
| 10. | Embassy of India, Doha                                            | India Business Review                               | 1                                                |
| 11. | Consulate Genral of India, Dubai                                  | Mahatma Gandhi 1869-1948                            | 1                                                |
| 12. | Consulate General of India, Hong Kong                             | India News                                          | 72                                               |
| 13. | Embassy of India, Jakarta                                         | Warta India                                         | 36                                               |
| 14. | Embassy of India, Kathmandu                                       | Vividh Bharat                                       | 9                                                |
| 15. | High Commission of India, Lagos                                   | India News                                          | 36                                               |
| 16. | High Commission of India, Mahe                                    | Samudra Manthan                                     | 12                                               |
| 17. | High Commission of India, Male                                    | India News                                          | 58                                               |
| 18. | Embassy of India, Moscow                                          | Indisky Vestnik                                     | 36                                               |
|     |                                                                   | India 1947-2000                                     | 1                                                |

| 1   | 2                                    | 3                                                                              | 4  |
|-----|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
|     |                                      | India Today (2000)                                                             | 1  |
|     |                                      | India Today (2001)                                                             | 1  |
|     |                                      | Indo-Russian relations                                                         | 1  |
|     |                                      | India Traditional & Future Partner of Russia                                   | 1  |
|     |                                      | Indian Land                                                                    | 1  |
|     |                                      | Special Souvenir on India Perspectives during Prime Minister's visit to Russia | 1  |
| 19. | Embassy of India, Panama             | Esta Es India                                                                  | 6  |
| 20. | Embassy of India, Paris              | Nouvelle de L'inde                                                             | 72 |
|     |                                      | Agenda Culturel                                                                | 36 |
|     |                                      | India Digest                                                                   | 36 |
| 21. | High Commission of India, Pretoria   | India Bulletins                                                                | 1  |
| 22. | Embassy of India, Rome               | Revista Indiana                                                                | 12 |
|     |                                      | Doing Business with India Explore IT in India                                  |    |
| 23. | Consulate General of India, Shanghai | India News                                                                     | 36 |
| 24. | High Commission of Singapore         | India News                                                                     | 21 |
|     |                                      | India Travel Digest                                                            | 1  |
| 25. | Embassy of India, Sofia              | Svetilink                                                                      | 1  |
| 26. | Embassy of India, Tehran             | Ain-e-Hind                                                                     | 7  |
| 27. | Embassy of India, Tel Aviv           | Embassy's News Letter                                                          | 8  |
| 28. | Embassy of India, Tokyo              | India News                                                                     | 36 |
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[English]

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

**Medical Research**

(c) the allocations made for this purpose for the year 2002-2003?

7299. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

YOGI ADITYA NATH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to pay special attention on medical and medicinal research in the country;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Draft National Health Policy proposes to increase the level of Government funding for medical research to a level of 1% of total health spending by 2005 and thereafter up to 2% by 2010.

(c) The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is the principal body responsible for conducting and supporting

medical research in the country. The plan allocation made to the Council during the year 2002-2003 is Rs.130 crores.

[Translation]

#### STD Facility in Jharkhand

7300. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the effective steps taken to ensure the satisfactory functioning of STD services and preventing them from becoming non functional in Jharkhand State;

(b) whether there is a provision for registering complaints regarding non functioning of STD Services in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and the Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the Government have taken any effective steps for making available regular telephone service in every telephone exchange of Jharkhand State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR):

(a) Following steps have been taken to ensure the satisfactory functioning of STD services and preventing them from becoming non functioning in Jharkhand State:

- i) As on 31st March 2002, all 372 exchanges working in Jharkhand Telecom Circle have STD facility, out of which 363 exchanges are on reliable media and the remaining 9 exchanges working on unreliable media are planned to be provided with reliable media during the current financial year subject to the availability of resources.
- ii) Expansion/Augmentation of Trunk Automatic Exchange (TAX) junction capacity as per traffic justification and commissioning of new technology TAXs at Jameshedpur, Dhanbad and Hazaribagh for providing smooth STD service.
- iii) For better maintenance of STD services, adequate spare transmission media equipment is kept.
- iv) Monitoring of STD functioning at Secondary Switching Area (SSA) as Circle level.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Complaints of non-functioning of STD service

can be lodged to the concerned TAXs by dialing 182. Apart from this, such complaints can also be lodged at the Grievance cell functioning at SSAs and in the Circle office.

(d) Yes, Sir. Following steps have been taken for making available regular telephone services in Jharkhand State:

- i) All exchanges have been upgraded/replaced by reliable digital Electronic Exchanges.
- ii) Providing reliable transmission media (OFC/UHF) to more and more number of exchanges in a phased manner.
- iii) Maintenance staff has been posted for each exchange for smooth operation and maintenance of the exchanges.
- iv) Opening of more and more remote lines units in order to reduce the size of the outdoor cable network plan up to the subscriber premises which is a main contributor to the fault rate.
- v) Introduction of wireless in local loop technology and digital line concentrator in the network.
- vi) Use of 5 pair PIJF cable in place of drop wire to reach the subscriber premises.
- vii) Computerization of fault repair services in more and more exchanges for better monitoring of faults.
- viii) Providing maintenance free battery sets and stand-by generators/portable generators in rural exchanges to overcome the long duration power breakdown.

#### MODEMS in Bihar

7301. SHRI BRAHMA NAND MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Modems installed in Telecommunication Division, Sasaram (Bihar) are working;

(b) if so, whether the payments for the Modems verified by concerned SDO was made to the supplier; and

(c) if not, the details of action taken against the accountable official?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Modem were used to create a network for collecting meter reading, etc. from rural exchanges of a central point. These modems were working upto July 2001. However, due to change of software version of exchange, the modems are not in use.

(b) Yes, Sir. 80% payment has been made after getting reports from SDOs regarding satisfactory performance of the modems.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

[English]

#### **Diversifications of Postal Programme**

7302. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Posts proposes to diversify its activities; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Department is aiming to utilize its countrywide network of post offices for retailing new products and services through postal counters and delivery system. New initiatives introduced so far in this respect are:

- 1) International Money Transfer Service enabling transmission of Money orders from abroad to India.
- 2) Distribution of Mutual fund schemes for different companies.
- 3) Domestic Electronic Fund Transfer for business/ commercial sector.
- 4) Payment of warrants and dividends through post offices.
- 5) E-Post, providing internet access to postal customers.
- 6) Greetings Post.
- 7) Pension Payment for Employees Provident Fund Organization.
- 8) Speed Post Passport Service.

- 9) Data Post to help business/ commercial organizations with relevant market information.

#### **Stagnation of Export and Import Items in Chennai Port**

7303. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that in Chennai Port, after leasing it to a Private Agency for loading and unloading, the export and import items are stagnated inordinately resulting in heavy losses to Government and Private Agencies which transport through Chennai Port;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ease the situation?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) The Chennai Port's Container Terminal was handed over to M/s Chennai Container Terminal Limited (CCTL) on 30th November, 2001, and CCTL commenced their operation rightaway. During the initial period, the CCTL faced certain teething problems but due to the effective measures taken by CCTL and Chennai Port, now the situation is that "The Berths Are Waiting for Ships" in the Container Terminal.

(c) The following measures have been taken by M/s CCTL and the Chennai Port Trust to ease the congestion:

- En bloc movement of containers from the yard and even from the hook point to CONCOR CFS at Tondiarpet.
- The Port has made available an additional gate, i.e., Gate-2 for movement of containers.
- The Port has made available a buffer area of 7000 Sq. Mtrs. for parking of trailers for containers.
- CCTL has hired 2 reach stackers from the local parties and have also arranged for another 2 reach stackers and 1 Top Lift Truck (TLT) from Mumbai.
- To reduce the congestion, CFS operators were requested to move the export boxes into the Port only between 6.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. on obtaining CCTL's concurrence.
- Gate No.1 is reserved exclusively for CCTL to ensure uninterrupted movement of containers.

### Encroachment of Land

7304. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mumbai Port Trust land has been encroached and unauthorized construction taken place during 1998-99;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry has been made to find out the officials responsible for the same; and

(d) if so, the details of the findings and the action taken against those officials found responsible?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) There have been encroachments and unauthorized constructions on Mumbai Port Trust prior to 1998-99 and even thereafter.

(b) Presently, there are encroachments at 25 spots, which include 4 large pockets of censused slums. Other encroachments are on vacant plots, roads, railway sidings and at bunders, which are unrestricted and open to Public.

(c) and (d) Encroachments are made by the slumlords and others often during holidays, night-time and elections. Connivance of port trust officials is not established.

### CBI Report on Hijacking of IC-814

7305. SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH:

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in its internal report the CBI has pointed out serious lapses in the entire operations handling the hijacking of IC-814 plane;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) No Sir. No such internal report has been prepared by CBI.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

### Demolition of Unauthorised Structures on NH-8

7306. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Will the Minister

of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi High Court has recently ordered the demolition of unauthorised structures that have come up on NH-8 in violation of norms laid down by the NHAI;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) No order of the Delhi High Court regarding demolition of unauthorised structures on NH-8 has been received.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

### Extradition on Kuwaiti Girl

7307. SHRI P. KUMARASAMY:

DR. N. VENKATASWAMY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Kuwait Government has sought extradition of a Kuwaiti girl who fled to India with her fiancé; and

(b) if so, the stand of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

### Indian Workers in Gulf Countries

7308. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Indian workers in various Gulf Countries and the number of those hailing from Kerala;

(b) whether Indian embassies in these countries have received representations from these workers regarding harassment by employers during 2001-2002; and

(c) if so, the nature of the complaints received and the action taken to redress their grievances?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Over 3 million Indian workers are employed in various Gulf countries and more than 50 percent of them belong to Kerala.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. However, from time to time our Embassies in Gulf countries do receive complaints from Indian workers there relating to violation of contractual obligations by their employer(s) such as non-payment or delayed payment of salaries, long working hours, inadequate accommodation/food, refusal to grant permission to visit India on leave or for emergencies etc.

Such complaints are promptly attended to by our Embassies with the employer(s) and, if necessary, with the concerned authorities through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The response of the Gulf authorities in case of labour complaints is generally sympathetic.

#### **Amount Spent by Civil Wing**

7309. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3902 dated April 17, 2002 and state:

(a) whether the expenditure incurred by the Civil Wing to the tune of crores of rupees during the last three years were in accordance with the norms fixed by the CPWD;

(b) whether any offices in MTNL has power to spend the funds in excess of the norms laid down by CPWD under the Head 'Maintenance' and after the earlier norms in the this regard;

(c) whether the laid down norms in regard to requirement/requisition have been violated; and

(d) if so, the measures being taken by the Government to check the unnecessary expenditure of crores of rupees being incurred in the name of maintenance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Sir, the CPWD norms are not directly applicable as the buildings being maintained by MTNL are of different nature than those maintained by CPWD and maintenance requirements are also different.

The maintenance expenditure includes expenditure on maintenance of Air-conditioning, Generators, Service Station, Fire Fighting, Duct work, Tower work, conservancy etc. which are not included in the CPWD norms. The

expenditure also includes expenditure incurred on addition, alteration, replacement and special repairs etc.

(c) and (d) Sir, the expenditure is being incurred as per the actual requirement/requisition. However, steps are being taken to formulate and prescribe suitable guidelines/norms for the MTNL.

[Translation]

#### **Delay in Distribution of Dak**

7310. SHRI RAMSHAKAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether dak in the country is not being distributed by the postal employees in time;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure timely distribution of dak;

(d) whether complaints have been received during the last three years for delay in delivery of dak to Very Important Persons;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir, The delivery of mail in the country is generally satisfactory. As per the results of the Live Mail Survey conducted in September 2001, 79.0% of the mail in urban areas and 80.2% in rural areas is delivered as per norms prescribed by the Department. The occasional instances of delay to mail are due to various reasons which are beyond the control of the Department like cancellation/ late running of mail carrying buses/ trains/ flights, strikes, bundhs, natural calamities and sudden and unexpected spurt in the mail volume. Besides this there are other reasons also like wrong/incomplete address or pin code, shifting of addressee, to new address without intimation to post office, non availability of addressees, or human failure etc.

(c) The Department constantly monitors at different levels, the delivery of mail through Live Mail Surveys and posting of Test Letters and necessary corrective steps are taken, wherever shortcomings are noticed.

(d) and (e) The complaints received about delay in delivery of unregistered mail are documented and no separate category of receipt from Very Important Person is maintained. Details of complaints received during the last three years are as under:

| Year      | No. of complaints regarding delay in delivery of unregistered mail |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1998-1999 | 10260                                                              |
| 1999-2000 | 7999                                                               |
| 2000-2001 | 7510                                                               |

(f) The Department has taken the following steps to improve delivery of mails:

- i) Segmentation of mails into various channels like Metro, Rajdhani, Green Channel and Patrika Channel for faster transmission and speedy delivery.
- ii) Regular monitoring of mail routing and delivery by posting Test Letters and Trial Cards.
- iii) Rationalization/restructuring of delivery with a view to deploying adequate manpower in the expanding urban conglomeration.
- iv) Sanctioning of additional posts of postmen to strengthen delivery.
- v) Surprise checks on delivery of mails by supervisory staff and visiting officers.
- vi) Live Mail Survey at regular intervals both in rural and urban areas to identify weak links and streamline the mail transmission and delivery system.
- vii) Encouraging pre-sorting of mails by bulk mailers by providing incentive by way of discount in postage.
- viii) Educating the customers to install Mail Boxes on the ground floor in multi-storeyed buildings.
- ix) Opening of separate centres with adequate manpower to handle seasonal mails.

[English]

#### **Assistance to Afghanistan in Electronic Media**

7311. SHRI B.V.N. REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to help Afghanistan in reviving its TV & Radio services;

(b) if so, the details of the help to be extended; and

(c) the amount to be spent thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) Government of India has extended humanitarian relief and reconstruction assistance to the Interim Administration of Afghanistan. During the visit of H.E. Hamid Karzai to India on 26-27 February, 2002 several areas of bilateral cooperation were identified. These included Health, Education, Information Technology, Industrial development, Public Transport and Training. As part of our commitment to assist Afghanistan, government is also considering proposals for cooperation in other areas, including in electronic media.

#### **Clearance to Nuclear Projects**

7312. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has recently cleared certain nuclear projects as reported in the 'Economic Times' dated March 25, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the action taken by the Government to that effect; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) Approval was accorded by the Government of India in March 2002 for:

(i) Downward revision of completion cost estimate of Kaiga Atomic Power Project Unit 3&4 (2x220 MWe) from Rs.4213 crore to Rs.3282 crore, advancing the schedule for commencement of commercial operation from October 2008 (Kaiga 3) and October 2009 (Kaiga 4) to March 2007 and September 2009 respectively and change in the debt: equity ratio from 1:1 to 2:1.

(ii) Setting up of Rajasthan Atomic Power Project

Units(2x220 MWe) at an estimated completion cost of Rs.3072 crore with scheduled commencement of commercial operation in August 2007 (RAPP-5) and February 2008 (RAPP-6).

(c) and (d) construction of Kaiga 3 & 4 is in progress. The first pour of reactor building raft concrete was achieved in March 2002. Civil construction and procurement actions for supply-cum-erection packages are in progress. The project is on schedule.

The excavation work for RAPP 5 & 6 is in progress. Main plant civil work package has been ordered and the first pour of reactor building raft concrete is expected to be achieved as planned. The project is on schedule.

#### Special Drive for Recruitment of SCs

7313. SHRI S. MURUGESAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a special drive for the recruitment of scheduled castes in government services/public sector undertakings has virtually stopped on account of freeze on filling up of vacancies;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to implement the special drive to fill up the reserved vacancies meant for them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) After the 81st amendment to the Constitution and consequent O.M. No. 36012/5/97- Estt.(Res.) Vol. II dated 20.7.2000 issued by the Department of Personnel and Training, backlog/carried forward reserved vacancies for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes can be filled up by way of special drive. All the Ministries/Departments have been requested to assess the backlog vacancies in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and make concerted efforts to fill them up.

#### Revision of Curricula of Pharmacy Courses

7314. SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to revise

the curricula of pharmacy courses at the under-graduate level;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the revised syllabus is likely to come into force;

(d) whether any Committee has been constituted for this purpose;

(e) if so, the names of the members of the Committee; and

(f) the number of representatives from Pharmacy Colleges in Karnataka have been included in the above committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (f) Do not arise.

#### Import of Space Components and Services from India by other countries

7315. SHRI KALAVA SRINIVASULU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether several countries have shown interest in importing India's space components and services;

(b) if so, the countries which have started buying space equipment from India;

(c) the details of items being exported; and

(d) the steps taken to boost the export of these items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Customers in the United States of America (USA), Japan, France, Norway, Germany etc. have started buying space equipment from India.

(c) The items being exported include components for satellites, the ground systems for providing access to

Indian Remote Sensing satellites and services for mission support to foreign satellites.

(d) The steps taken to boost the exports of space components and services include extensive marketing efforts by Antrix Corporation, which is established by the Department of Space for marketing space products and services in global market, collaboration with established space industries for worldwide marketing and expanding bilateral cooperation with other countries.

#### **Establishment of Major Ports at Gopalpur in Orissa**

7316. SHRIMATI KUMUDINI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have given clearance for establishment of a major port at Gopalpur in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the estimated cost likely to be incurred thereon; and

(c) the time by which the port is likely to be established?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

#### **Information Technology in Hindi**

7317. SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for providing the latest information with regard to information technology in Hindi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether setting up of transcription cell in Hindi Advisory Committee was deliberated in the recent past;

(d) if so, whether this cell has been set up; and

(e) the details of works carried out by the same?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. Upon recommendation of the Hindi Advisory Committee, a Transcription Cell has been recently setup. Under the

Cell, it is planned (i) to get books, monographs on future technologies in Information Technology in Hindi under *Samjaniki* publication scheme and (ii) to prepare guidelines for IT enabled services in Hindi under *Jnana Udyog* instructions scheme.

#### **Production of Typhoid Vaccine**

7318. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposals from State Government of Maharashtra to grant permission to Haffkine Bio-Pharmaceutical Corporation Ltd. to restart production of Typhoid Vaccine;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) A proposal has been received in the Government for grant of permission to Haffkine Bio-Pharmaceutical Corporation Limited (HBPCL), Mumbai to restart production of Whole Cell Killed Typhoid (AKD) Vaccine. The Government has decided in principle to permit the production of Whole Cell Killed Typhoid (AKD) Vaccine by HBPCL, Mumbai to meet the requirement of typhoid vaccine for the Armed Forces. HBPCL, Mumbai has been requested to send its application to Drug Controller General of India for seeking licence for production of AKD vaccine.

[Translation]

#### **Breast Cancer Scheme**

7319. SHRI RAM SINGH KASWAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether breast cancer scheme aiming at "Early Detection-Effective Cure" being implemented by the Government has not achieved a remarkable success;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the amount spent on implementation of the above scheme during the last one year; and

(d) the number of women benefited during the above said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to

(d) "Early Detection-Effective Cure" is a slogan and not a scheme as such. This slogan was used on the National Cancer Awareness pay observed on 7th November, 2001.

[English]

#### Issuance of Passports

7320. DR.(SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI:

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the normal time taken/prescribed to get the Police verification done for issue of passports to persons whose verifications are required from two or more places; and

(b) the time by which passports are issued if verification reports are not received within stipulated time from police authorities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The guidelines issued to the State Governments in this regard are that police verification reports should be sent within a period of four weeks from the date of the reference from the Regional Passport Offices. However, the actual time taken in police verification differs from state to state.

(b) Because of the security considerations, passports are being issued on police report overdue basis in 10 passport offices only out of the 28 passport offices. Such passport offices issue passports on police report overdue basis after 35 days of making the reference to the respective police authorities. In other states passports are issued only after police verification report is received.

#### Adoption Leave

7321. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether 5th Pay Commission recommended "adoption leave" to government employees to adopt a child;

(b) if so, whether the recommendation has been accepted; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF

SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The questions do not arise.

#### Setting up of Passport Offices at Surat and Rajkot

7322. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have been consistently receiving requests for opening of passport offices at Surat and Rajkot in Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been decided to open a Passport Office at Surat. Staff for deployment at Passport Office, Surat have also been earmarked. State Government of Gujarat has been approached to provide a suitable building to open the new office.

[Translation]

#### Population Control

7323. SHRIMATI JAS KAUR MEENA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to effect changes in the present population policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any target has been fixed in regard to population control under the present population policy; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) National Population Policy, 2000 does not mention about fixing of targets but lists certain socio-demographic goals to be achieved by 2010. These are:

- 1) Address the unmet needs for basic reproductive and child health services, supplies and infrastructure.
- 2) Make school education upto age 14 free and compulsory and reduce dropouts at primary and secondary school levels to below 20 percent for both boys and girls.
- 3) Reduce infant mortality rate to below 30 per 1000 live births.
- 4) Reduce maternal mortality ratio to below 100 per 100,000 live births.
- 5) Achieve universal immunization of children against all vaccine preventable diseases.
- 6) Promote delayed marriage for girls, not earlier than age 18 and preferably after 20 years of age.
- 7) Achieve 80 percent institutional deliveries and 100 percent deliveries by trained persons.
- 8) Achieve universal access to information/counseling and services for fertility regulation and contraception with a wide basket of choices.
- 9) Achieve 100 per cent registration of births, deaths, marriages and pregnancy.
- 10) Contain the spread of Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and promote greater integration between the management of Reproductive Tract Infection (RTI) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and the National AIDS Control Organisation.
- 11) Prevent and control communicable diseases.
- 12) Integrate Indian System of Medicines (ISMN) in the provision of reproductive and child health services and in reaching out of households.
- 13) Promote vigorously the small family norm to achieve replacement levels of Total Fertility Rate (TFR.)
- 14) Bring about convergence in implementation of related social sector programmes so that family welfare becomes a people centered programme.

### **Population Control**

7324. SHRI RAMDAS RUPALA GAVIT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated and implemented any strategy for population control;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the results thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to disseminate the message of family welfare and population control through electronic media on prime time; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) In order to achieve population stabilisation in the country at the earliest with a holistic approach, Government of India has adopted the National Population Policy (NPP), in Feb. 2000. NPP lists certain socio-demographic goals to be achieved by 2010. These are:

- 1) Address the unmet needs for basic reproductive and child health services, supplies and infrastructure.
- 2) Make school education upto age 14 free and compulsory and reduce dropouts at primary and secondary school levels to below 20 percent for both boys and girls.
- 3) Reduce infant mortality rate to below 30 per 1000 live births.
- 4) Reduce maternal mortality ratio to below 100 per 100,000 live births.
- 5) Achieve universal immunization of children against all vaccine preventable diseases.
- 6) Promote delayed marriage for girls, not earlier than age 18 and preferably after 20 years of age.
- 7) Achieve 80 percent institutional deliveries and 100 percent deliveries by trained persons.
- 8) Achieve universal access to information/counseling and services for fertility regulation and contraception with a wide basket of choices.
- 9) Achieve 100 percent registration of births, deaths, marriages and pregnancy.

- 10) Contain the spread of Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and promote greater integration between the management of Reproductive Tract Infection (RTI) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and the National AIDS Control Organisation.
- 11) Prevent and control communicable diseases.
- 12) Integrate Indian System of Medicines (ISMN) in the provision of reproductive and child health services and in reaching out of households.
- 13) Promote vigorously the small family norm to achieve replacement levels of TFR.
- 14) Bring about convergence in implementation of related social sector programmes so that family welfare becomes a people centered programme.

The following steps have been taken by Government for increasing awareness by vigorous publicity through use of Electronic and other Media:

- (i) An intensive campaign has been launched to create knowledge on family planning methods and techniques through electronic and print media.
- (ii) The 'healthy mother-healthy child' messages are broadcast from AIR in the form of audio jingle spots before the Morning and Evening National news. Before and after Regional News one spot on 'No Scalpel Vasectomy' is broadcast in the afternoon.
- (iii) 36 kendras of All India Radio have been asked to broadcast the messages of Reproductive and Child Health. Video spots on Reproductive and Child Health (R.C.H.) are being telecast before the national news at 8.00 p.m. also a 30 minute based programme "Lok Jhankar" is broadcast on every Thursday and Sunday through 22 Vividh Bharti Kendras of AIR.
- (iv) Films on Reproductive & Child Health have been made by eminent producers to improve mass awareness on family welfare programme. Regular articles on RCH themes are being published in in-house publications- 'Hamara Ghar' in Hindi and 'Reproductive & Child Health Newsletter' in English.
- (v) The media units viz. Directorate of Audio Visual Publicity and Song & Drama Division and Directorate of Field Publicity are also carrying

out publicity on Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) themes through exhibition, theatre plays, seminars/workshops and video programmes.

- (vi) Parivar Kalyan and Swasthya Health Melas are also being organised in different states of the country to increase awareness and provide medical services to the people at their doorsteps.

A Core Group on Behavioral Change Strategies for the demographically weaker states/regions for which an Empowered Action Group (EAG) has been constituted in October 2001 with the objective of developing structures capacities and systems in these States to plan, develop and manage strategies for behaviour change for family welfare.

[English]

#### JNPT Project

7325. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of persons affected by JNPT project and the number out of them were given jobs in JNPT;
- (b) the time by which the remaining persons will be given jobs; and
- (c) the rate at which land was procured from the people for JNPT project along with the market value of the said land at that time?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) A total of 3016 landowners were affected by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Project. Out of this, the port has provided direct employment to 903 and indirect employment to 1648 Project Affected Persons (PAPs).

- (b) It will not be possible to specify a time frame for giving employment to the remaining PAPs.

(c) The port acquired the land from the landowners at the rate of Rs.30,000 per acre in the year 1984. During that time the City Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra Ltd. has been acquiring land at the rate of Rs.15,000 per acre around the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Area.

[Translation]

#### Supply of Medicines to CGHS Beneficiaries

7326. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the expenditure incurred on the medicines indented for the beneficiaries of CGHS in Delhi during the last three years, Year-wise/Chemist-wise;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The information is given in the statement enclosed.

(b) whether the chemists have not supplied the indented medicines due to strike during this period;

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) the details of demands and dates on which the chemists went on strike; and

(c) The Authorised Local Chemists of CGHS Delhi did not supply the indented medicines during the period indicated below along with the details of their demands:

(d) the steps taken by the Government to solve the problems arisen out of the strike?

| S.No. | Period of strike by chemists | Details of demands of chemists                                                                                        |
|-------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i)    | 1/12/99 to 5/12/99           | Delayed payment of their bills by the CGHS                                                                            |
| ii)   | 21/1/2002 to 25/1/2002       | (a) with-holding of 10% of their bills submitted to the CGHS, and<br>(b) delayed payments of their bills by the CGHS. |
| iii)  | 1/4/2002 to 12/4/2002        | -do-                                                                                                                  |

(d) Ten percent of the bill amount preferred by the Chemists is being withheld by the CGHS in view of the matter relating to charging of sales tax by the chemists. These matters are now under reference to the C&AG. As regards delayed payment of bills, this was due to non-availability of funds with the CGHS during the close of the Financial Year. However, the payment against the pending

bills of the local chemists have since been released and their bills are being cleared regularly.

During the strike period, to avoid any difficulties to the CGHS beneficiaries, they were allowed to purchase medicines from the open market and get reimbursement from the respective offices in the case of serving employees and from the CGHS in the case of pensioner beneficiaries.

#### Statement

##### *Dispensary-wise Expenditure on Local Purchase from 01.04.2001 - 31.03.2002*

| S.No. | Name of Chemist       | Dispensary    | Amount (Rs.) |
|-------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1     | 2                     | 3             | 4            |
| 1     | Adarsh Medical Stores | C.G. Road     | 7242764      |
| 2     | Agarwal Gen. Store    | Malviya Nagar | 9998775      |
| 3     | Agrawal Medicos       | Pushp Vihar   | 5844427      |
|       |                       | MB Road       | 10717671     |
| 4     | Agarwal Medicos       | RK Puram - VI | 7175421      |
| 5     | Ajay Med. Agencies    | Noida         | 19905035     |
| 6     | Ajay Med. Store       | Naraina Vihar | 3467758      |

| 1  | 2                  | 3                     | 4        |
|----|--------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| 7  | Amit Medicos       | Paharganj             | 5493022  |
|    |                    | Minto Road            | 7560808  |
|    |                    | Chandni Chowk         | 2155645  |
|    |                    | Darya Ganj            | 16858436 |
| 8  | Angeera Chemists   | Pul Bangesh           | 2743682  |
| 9  | Ankay Mediways     | Ghaziabad             | 11089457 |
| 10 | Ankay Medicos      | Mayur Vihar           | 12571550 |
|    |                    | Laxmi Nagar           | 14078736 |
| 11 | Balaji Medicos     | Nangal Rai            | 11159172 |
| 12 | Batra Medicos      | Kali Bari Marg        | 8968210  |
|    |                    | Gole Market           | 12278666 |
| 13 | Bhatia Med. Store  | Patel Nagar - II      | 5928161  |
| 14 | Bhutani Med. Store | L. Bai Nagar          | 10698215 |
|    |                    | Kidwai Nagar          | 7008648  |
| 15 | The Chemist Corner | Timarpur              | 9044479  |
|    |                    | Kingsway Camp         | 14820250 |
|    |                    | Rajpur Rd. Dispensary | 2635355  |
|    |                    | Timarpur Hospital     | 11448    |
|    |                    | Kingsway Camp Hosp.   | 1119854  |
| 16 | Dinesh Medicos     | Nanakpura             | 10094335 |
|    |                    | R.K. Puram-III        | 8843336  |
|    |                    | R.K. Puram-I          | 8611724  |
|    |                    | R.K. Puram-IV         | 17429703 |
|    |                    | RKP M.G. Hospital     | 2674631  |
| 17 | Gupta Bros.        | Constitution House    | 3737049  |
|    |                    | Telegraph Lane        | 3082359  |
| 18 | Gupta Medicos      | Sarojini Nagar - I    | 3341800  |
|    |                    | R.K. Puram-V          | 7365139  |

| 1  | 2                         | 3                     | 4        |
|----|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| 19 | Gurunanak Med. Hall       | Hari Nagar            | 9724704  |
| 20 | Jasmeen Med. & Gen. Store | R.K. Puram-II         | 6586272  |
|    |                           | Munirka               | 4289604  |
| 21 | Kailash Chemists & Drug   | Moti Bagh             | 6112449  |
|    |                           | North Avenue          | 12740976 |
|    |                           | President Estate      | 3755265  |
|    |                           | South Avenue          | 9350809  |
| 22 | Kukreja Medicos           | Tilak Nagar           | 12306725 |
|    |                           | Sunder Vihar          | 9136784  |
| 23 | Laisons                   | Janakpuri - II        | 13250284 |
| 24 | Lifeline Medicos          | Lodhi Road - I        | 7227287  |
|    |                           | Lodhi Road - II       | 8389227  |
|    |                           | Pragati Vihar         | 2637975  |
|    |                           | Kasturba Nagar - I    | 3901815  |
|    |                           | Kasturba Nagar - II   | 3366352  |
| 25 | Live Aid Chemist          | Janakpuri-I           | 40100383 |
| 26 | Medicine Cell             | Ashok Vihar           | 14353175 |
| 27 | Milan Medicos             | Kalkaji - I           | 11441103 |
|    |                           | Kalkaji - II          | 4915730  |
| 28 | Mohan Sons                | Chanakyapuri          | 4829322  |
| 29 | Mohit Medical Corner      | Rajouri Garden        | 15360695 |
|    |                           | Paschim Vihar         | 12783017 |
| 30 | NM Medical Store          | Andrews Ganj          | 5224516  |
|    |                           | Sadiq Nagar           | 9283353  |
| 31 | Oberoi Medicos            | Patel Nagar - I       | 10159754 |
| 32 | Plus Point                | Sarojini Nagar Market | 5850645  |
| 33 | Prakash Medicos           | Palam Colony          | 13811817 |
|    |                           | Delhi Cantt.          | 5642864  |

| 1     | 2                       | 3                        | 4         |
|-------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| 34    | Preet Med. & Gen. Store | Pandra Road              | 7051798   |
|       |                         | FAP Parliament House     | 3104825   |
|       |                         | Dr. Z.H. Road            | 7531044   |
|       |                         | Lab. Bills/Various Disp. | 1412715   |
|       |                         | M.S.D.                   | 1044469   |
|       |                         | PHA, KN-I                | 133988    |
| 35    | Prince Medicos          | Tri Nagar                | 4466449   |
| 36    | Raj Medicos             | New Rajinder Nagar       | 11055841  |
|       |                         | Pusa Road                | 4170981   |
|       |                         | Karol Bagh               | 2530419   |
|       |                         | Dev Nagar                | 3757663   |
| 37    | Sachdeva Store          | Netaji Nagar             | 4572749   |
|       |                         | Nauroji Nagar            | 5785792   |
| 38    | Sachin Med. Store       | Yamuna Vihar             | 8448864   |
|       |                         | Shahdara                 | 9042604   |
|       |                         | Vivek Vihar              | 11044149  |
|       |                         | Dilshad Garden           | 4629597   |
| 39    | Satnam Sons             | S.N. Puri                | 12291226  |
|       |                         | Lajpat Nagar             | 6137492   |
|       |                         | Jungpura                 | 2993191   |
| 40    | Satnam Sons Agencies    | Hauz Khas                | 13929779  |
| 41    | Semwal Medicos          | Sarojini Nagar - II      | 2854783   |
| 42    | Sethi Medicos           | Subzi Mandi              | 6345833   |
| 43    | Tayal Medicos           | G.K.G.                   | 7370064   |
| 44    | Vijaya Laxmi M. Store   | Faridabad                | 5820080   |
| 45    | Vikas Chemist           | Inderpuri                | 4763953   |
| 46    | Ravi Medicos            | Gurgaon                  | 1706314   |
| 47    | Pratik Pharma           | Rohini                   | 8926219   |
| 48    | Super Medicos           | Pitampura                | 17830657  |
| 49    | Madhu Medicos           | Shakur Basti             | 9121821   |
| Total |                         |                          | 742163982 |

*Dispensary-wise Expenditure on Local Purchase from 1999-2001*

| S.No. | Name of Chemist             | Dispensary               | Amount (Rs.)<br>1999-2000 | Amount (Rs.)<br>2000-2001 |
|-------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1     | 2                           | 3                        | 4                         | 5                         |
| 1     | Kailash Chemist             | South Avenue             | 14698432                  | 4607889                   |
|       |                             | Chanakyapuri             | 2041715                   | 2960929                   |
|       |                             | Nanakpura                | 3815841                   | 4643163                   |
|       |                             | Rama Krishnan Puram - V  | 3612162                   | 3905881                   |
|       |                             | Rama Krishnan Puram - IV | 6582077                   | 12326264                  |
| 2     | Kuldeep Medicos             | Faridabad                | 2894491                   | 3451619                   |
| 3     | Kavita Medicos              | Kali Bari                | 5169359                   | 5892872                   |
|       |                             | Karol Bagh               | 2842706                   | 2367531                   |
| 4     | Sachdeva Store              | Aliganj (Lodhi Road - I) | 4399415                   | 3681532                   |
|       |                             | Laxmi Bai Nagar          | 4077869                   | 6136133                   |
|       |                             | Lodi Road -II            | 4789996                   | 3489118                   |
| 5     | Satnam Sons                 | Andrews Ganj             | 4072119                   | 5293381                   |
|       |                             | Lajpat Nagar             | 3856531                   | 5015088                   |
|       |                             | Kidwai Nagar             | 3525973                   | 4992353                   |
| 6     | Batra Medicos               | Gole Market - I          | 6922868                   | 9225508                   |
|       |                             | Subzi Mandi              | 4903083                   | 4697136                   |
|       |                             | Pahar Ganj               | 4078883                   | 4533712                   |
|       |                             | Chitragupta Road         | 6377537                   | 6119288                   |
| 7     | Ajay Medical Store          | Noida                    | 8122257                   | 11430192                  |
| 8     | Preet Medical & Gen. Stores | Pandara Road             | 4277343                   | 4765786                   |
|       |                             | Dr. Zakir Hussain Road   | 4256527                   | 6191936                   |
|       |                             | President Estate         | 3663651                   | 3228655                   |
|       |                             | Medical Store Depot      | 1575334                   | 392652                    |
|       |                             | Parliament House Annexe  | 2121700                   | 2662826                   |
| 9     | Satnam Sons Agency          | Pragati Vihar            | 1421085                   | 1358012                   |

| 1  | 2                   | 3                                      | 4        | 5        |
|----|---------------------|----------------------------------------|----------|----------|
|    |                     | Jungpura                               | 1718613  | 1823169  |
|    |                     | Sadiq Nagar                            | 4278695  | 4156486  |
| 10 | Gupta Brother       | Telegraph Line                         | 2074426  | 2830973  |
|    |                     | Constitution House                     | 17567988 | 4704110  |
| 11 | Milan Medicos       | Pushp Vihar                            | 3991737  | 5507524  |
|    |                     | Hauz Khas                              | 6260394  | 10021584 |
| 12 | Life Line Medicos   | Malviya Nagar                          | 5567274  | 9305151  |
| 13 | Issar Medicos       | Kalkaji - I                            | 1085464  | 9845631  |
|    |                     | Kalkaji - II                           | 3426917  | 4013926  |
| 14 | Mohan Sons          | Kasturba Nagar - I                     | 1972279  | 4374473  |
|    |                     | Sarojini Nagar - II                    | 1759608  | 2899858  |
|    |                     | Sarojini Nagar Market                  | 2255136  | 3495829  |
|    |                     | Sriniwaspuri                           | 6815510  | 10406924 |
| 15 | M.M. Medical Store  | Kasturba Nagar -II                     | 1664849  | 2414588  |
| 16 | Gupta Medicos       | Moti Bagh                              | 2877634  | 532976   |
|    |                     | Netaji Nagar                           | 3696059  | 5152286  |
|    |                     | Nauroji Nagar                          | 4315945  | 4411471  |
|    |                     | North Avenue                           | 10587558 | 9047215  |
| 17 | Jasmine Medicos     | Munirka                                | 2593630  | 3529302  |
| 18 | Agarwal Medicos     | MB Road                                | 7456109  | 8231144  |
| 19 | Dinesh Medicos      | Maternity & Gynae Hospital, R.K. Puram |          | 1825800  |
|    |                     | Rama Krishna Puram - I                 | 4661192  | 7538081  |
|    |                     | Rama Krishna Puram - II                | 5428471  | 6531584  |
|    |                     | Rama Krishna Puram - III               | 5965072  | 7164753  |
|    |                     | Rama Krishna Puram - VI                | 4039750  | 5655530  |
| 20 | Plus Point          | Sarojini Nagar - I                     | 2012246  | 3539322  |
| 21 | Satnam & Co.        | Chandni Chowk                          | 1647531  | 1568841  |
| 22 | Super Medical Store | Daryaganj                              | 2068592  | 4524633  |

| 1  | 2                    | 3                                | 4        | 5        |
|----|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------|----------|
|    |                      | Minto Road                       | 5878097  | 6341274  |
| 23 | Ankey Medicos        | Laxmi Nagar                      | 7251145  | 9471447  |
|    |                      | G.K.G.                           | 4543245  | 6040124  |
|    |                      | Mayur Vihar                      | 8241893  | 9316034  |
|    |                      | Yamuna Vihar                     | 5007516  | 8439517  |
| 24 | Angeera Chemist      | Pul Bangash                      | 1967198  | 2328799  |
| 25 | Jain Medicos         | Rajpur Road                      | 1631620  | 2275584  |
| 26 | Friends Medicos      | Timarpur                         | 4172551  | 5031424  |
|    |                      | Kingsway Camp                    | 3704224  | 10612939 |
|    |                      | Timarpur Hospital                |          | 312491   |
| 27 | Sachin Medical Store | Vivek Vihar                      | 7204482  | 9156608  |
|    |                      | Shahdara                         | 5304100  | 5973740  |
|    |                      | Ghaziabad                        | 3691928  | 7463122  |
| 28 | Tayal Medical Store  | Dilshad Garden                   | 2439311  | 4202783  |
| 29 | Medicine Cell        | Ashok Vihar                      | 7727637  | 8334287  |
| 30 | Ankur Medicos        | Delhi Cantt.                     | 3849497  | 4496407  |
| 31 | Amit Medicos         | Dev Nagar                        | 4233228  | 4699179  |
|    |                      | Pusa Road                        | 2048881  | 2781866  |
| 32 | Mohit Medical Corner | Hari Nagar                       | 6614805  | 8941861  |
|    |                      | Sunder Nagar                     | 5309223  | 5318272  |
| 33 | Ajay Medical Store   | Naraina                          | 2392682  | 3101158  |
| 34 | Lal Sons             | Janakpuri - I                    | 17819523 | 16111281 |
| 35 | Live Aid Chemist     | Janakpuri - II                   | 10489133 | 10969298 |
| 36 | Vikas Chemist        | Inder Puri                       | 2926487  | 3430110  |
|    |                      | Rajouri Garden                   | 8373893  | 9818272  |
| 37 | Sanjeev Medicos      | Nangal Rai                       | 7921669  | 8033963  |
| 38 | Oberoi Medicos       | East Patel Nagar (Patel Nagar-I) | 4991108  | 7747658  |
|    |                      | New Rajinder Nagar               | 5476722  | 5915638  |

| 1     | 2                       | 3                                   | 4         | 5         |
|-------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 39    | Bhatia Medical Store    | West Patel Nagar (Patel Nagar - II) | 3936241   | 4465750   |
| 40    | Ravi Medicos            | Palam Colony                        | 5402309   | 5722189   |
|       |                         | Gurgaon                             | 3248270   | 5227860   |
| 41    | Super Medicos           | Pitampura                           | 6449056   | 8299908   |
| 42    | Guru Nanak Medical Hall | Tilak Nagar                         | 6528168   | 7420921   |
| 43    | Madhu Medicos           | Shakur Basti                        | 5840517   | 6642093   |
| 44    | Prateek Pharma          | Rohini                              | 5658031   | 5773342   |
|       |                         | Paschim Vihar                       | 7587239   | 9871201   |
| 45    | Prince Medicos          | Tri Nagar                           | 4299097   | 5324893   |
| 46    | Sawan Medicos           | Sakur Basti                         |           |           |
|       |                         | Pitampura                           |           |           |
|       |                         | Rohini                              |           |           |
| Total |                         |                                     | 432048359 | 518964093 |

*[English]***Coastal Highways in Gujarat**

7327. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Coastal Highways along Gujarat coast has not been upgraded to National Highway;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to upgrade the highways along Gujarat coast to National Highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) to (c) The declaration of any road as National Highway depends not only on the consideration that it runs along the coast but on several other considerations including traffic needs, inter-se priority on all India basis and availability of resources. Notwithstanding the above, a length of approximately 362 kms. running along the coast line in Gujarat has already been converted into National Highway.

*[Translation]***Categories of Poor People**

7328. DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have classified the poor people into two categories of the poor and the poorest;

(b) if so, the basis of the said classification and the definitions of the said categories; and

(c) the number of people in each of the said category, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

*[English]***4-Laning of National Highways**

7329. SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of National Highways which have been converted in 4-lane and from which point to which point in the year 2001-02;

(b) the National Highways which are under consideration to be converted in 4-lane and by when; and

(c) the details thereof?

B.C. KHANDURI: (a) The detail of 4 laning of NH sections completed in 2001-2002 are given in the statement-I enclosed.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF  
ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ.GEN. (RETD.))

(b) and (c) The details are at statement-II enclosed.

**Statement-I***Details of National Highways completed into 4-lane during 2001-2002*

| Sl.No. | Name of State  | NH No.         | Section of National Highway                                                                 |
|--------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.     | Chhattisgarh   | 6              | Km 340/40 to km 344/80                                                                      |
| 2.     | Gujarat        | 8A             | Km 14/0 to 24/0 & Km 346/0 to 362/16                                                        |
|        |                | 8B             | Km 160/0 to 175/0                                                                           |
|        |                | 14             | Km 340/0 to 350/0                                                                           |
| 3.     | Haryana        | 1              | Km 132/0 to 212/2                                                                           |
|        |                | 1              | Km 29/300 to 44/300 (Converted from 4 lane to 6 lane)                                       |
|        |                | 8              | Km 36/63 to 107/80                                                                          |
| 4.     | Jharkhand      | 2              | Km 398.75 to 442/00                                                                         |
| 5.     | Karnataka      | 4              | Km 116/00 to 122/00(Sira Bypass)                                                            |
|        |                | 7              | Km 524/00 to 527/00 & Km 535/00 to 539/00 (Converted from 2 lane to 6 lane)                 |
| 6.     | Madhya Pradesh | 3              | Km 227/0 to 229/0, Indore Bypass (32.60 km) & Km 573/00 to Km 590/60 (Indore-Dewas section) |
| 7.     | Maharashtra    | 7              | Km.9/200 to 22/850 and Km 22/850 to km 36/600                                               |
|        |                | 3              | Km 0/115 to 23/509                                                                          |
|        |                | 8              | Km 439/00 to 497/00                                                                         |
| 8.     | Orissa         | 5              | Km 0/00 to 27/800                                                                           |
| 9.     | Punjab         | 1              | Km 212/2 to 252/25                                                                          |
|        |                | 10             | Km 344/54 to 348/55                                                                         |
| 10.    | Rajasthan      | 8              | Km 107/80 to 162/50                                                                         |
| 11.    | Tamil Nadu     | Chennai Bypass | Km 28/000 of NH-45 to Km 13/800 of NH-4                                                     |
| 12.    | Uttar Pradesh  | 3              | Km 8/00 to 24/00                                                                            |
| 13.    | West Bengal    | 2              | Km 474/00 to 516/00                                                                         |
|        |                | 34             | Km 329/814 to 332/06                                                                        |
|        |                | 35             | Km 56/403 to 58/300                                                                         |

Note: The works of 4 laning in above mentioned sections were in progress before 2001-2002 and were finally completed in 2001-2002.

**Statement-II***National Highways under consideration  
for conversion to 4-lane*

| Detail of NH Section                                                                                                                                  | Target                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>(A) National Highway Development Project (NHDP)</b>                                                                                                |                                            |
| (i) <b>Golden Quadrilateral</b><br>4772 Km. of NH 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,<br>46, 60, 76 & 79                                                                | December, 2003<br>(substantial completion) |
| (ii) <b>North-South &amp; East-West Corridors</b><br>6527 Km of NH 1, 1A, 2, 3, 7,<br>8A, 8B, 14, 15, 25, 26, 28, 31,<br>31C, 36, 37, 47, 54, 75 & 76 | December, 2007                             |
| <b>(B) Other than NHDP</b>                                                                                                                            |                                            |
| (i) NH-15 (4 km) in Rajasthan                                                                                                                         | March, 2003                                |
| (ii) NH-12 (3.4 km) in Rajasthan                                                                                                                      | March, 2004                                |
| (iii) NH-8A (3.3 km) in Gujarat                                                                                                                       | May, 2003                                  |
| (iv) NH-8A (25 km) in Gujarat                                                                                                                         | March, 2004                                |
| (v) NH-10 (2.7 km) in Haryana                                                                                                                         | March, 2003                                |
| (vi) Lucknow Bypass (11 Km) in<br>Uttar Pradesh                                                                                                       | October, 2004                              |
| (vii) NH- 72 (3 km) in Uttranchal                                                                                                                     | September, 2003                            |
| (viii) NH-10 (1.5 km) in Punjab                                                                                                                       | March, 2003                                |

*[Translation]***Agro and Rural Industries Development  
Projects in Bihar**

7330. SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of ongoing Agro and Rural Industries development projects in the country, particularly in Bihar;

(b) the details of increase in production and generation of employment in these industries; and

(c) the details of financial assistance provided by the Government for this purpose during last three years?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES  
(SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) The Khadi and Village Industries

Commission (KVIC) is implementing the Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP) for the development of Khadi and Village Industries including agro and rural industries throughout the country including the state of Bihar. Under this scheme, the KVIC provides margin money assistance at the rate of 25% of the project cost upto Rs. 10 lakhs and for the project above Rs. 10 lakhs and upto Rs. 25 lakhs, rate of margin money is 25% of Rs. 10 lakhs plus 10% on remaining cost of the project. In the case of SC/ST/ OBC/Women/ Physically Handicapped/Ex-Servicemen and Minority Community beneficiary/institution and for hill border and tribal areas, North Eastern Region, Sikkim, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep, the margin money grant is 30% of the project cost upto Rs. 10 lakhs. Under the Scheme, the beneficiary's contribution is at least 10% of the project cost. In case of SC/ST and other weaker sections, beneficiary's contribution is 5% of the project cost. This scheme is being implemented through Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks and on a selective basis through Cooperative Banks and Private Sector Scheduled Commercial Banks. Balance funds for the projects are provided by banks in the form of term loans.

(b) The details of production and employment generated during the last three years under Khadi and Village Industries Sector in respect of Bihar are given as under:

| Year      | Production<br>(Rs. in lakhs) | Employment<br>(Persons in lakhs) |
|-----------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1998-1999 | 18901.19                     | 3.80                             |
| 1999-2000 | 19035.43                     | 3.26                             |
| 2000-2001 | 18200.21                     | 2.84                             |

(c) The Government does not release funds directly to States for the promotion and development of Khadi and Village Industries. However, the Government provided funds to the Khadi and Village Industries Commission for the promotion and development of such industries. These funds are released on the basis of requirement. The loans and grants disbursed by the KVIC to Bihar for the development of the KVI sector during the last three years are as under:

| (Rs. in lakhs) |        |         |
|----------------|--------|---------|
| Year           | Loan   | Grant   |
| 1998-1999      | 60.85  | 1230.49 |
| 1999-2000      | 26.37  | 349.84  |
| 2000-2001      | 112.72 | 326.28  |

### **Proper Utilisation of Central Road Fund**

7331. **PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT:** Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Road Fund has not been utilized properly and the works executed thereunder are also not satisfactory;

(b) the reaction of the Government in this regard; and

(c) the efforts made by the Government to ensure proper utilisation of the said fund and satisfactory execution of works thereunder?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) to (c) Central Road Fund (CRF) is a non-lapsable fund. Central Government determines accruals and allocation of funds to various States under CRF. Central Government allocates the funds, out of the entitled allocation to various States and gives administrative approvals to the proposals of State Governments. After accord of administrative approvals to proposals by this Ministry, the project estimates for the proposals are approved technically and financially by the State Governments and works are executed by them. The quality control and proper utilization of funds is the responsibility of the State Governments. One third of the accrual was released initially in November, 2000. Thereafter funds are released based on utilization of funds by the States. Most of the States have not made full utilisation of the funds released to them. State Governments are being pursued at various levels including at the level of Chief Ministers for expediting completion of works and utilization of funds.

### **Cancer Control Programme**

7332. **DR. M.P. JAISWAL:**

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the performance of National Cancer Control Programme has been unsatisfactory particularly owing to misuse of its funds;

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

(c) whether the Government have conducted any probe into it; and

(d) if so, the details of the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJ A): (a) to (d) The evaluation of the National Cancer Control Programme has been entrusted to the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi. The report is awaited.

[English]

### **GRAMSAT Network**

7333. **SHRI Y.V. RAO:** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a countrywide satellite based GRAMSAT Network for developmental applications is proposed to be set up; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. GRAMSAT networks are being set up in the States of Karnataka, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh for the purposes of education, training and development communication. Similar networks are also planned for North-Eastern region, West Bengal, Rajasthan, etc.

### **Internet Facilities**

7334. **DR. SAHIB SINGH VERMA:** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether internet is a biggest library in the world; and

(b) if so, the manner in which the Government propose to increase its use in the next 5 years in the fields of Urban & Rural settlements, Schools, Colleges, Shopping centres, Industrial areas, Agricultural fields and Tourist centres?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Internet is a network of networks encompassing the entire

globe. It is a virtual information store and the information available on internet is far more than any Single Library in the world. Today people and businesses around the world can use the internet to retrieve the information, communicate and conduct business globally and access a vast array of services and resources online.

(b) Government has taken several steps to increase the use of Internet in the fields of urban & rural settlements, schools, colleges, Shopping centres, industrial areas, Agricultural fields, Tourist centres, as per the details given in the statement enclosed. Most of the activities mentioned in the statement will continue for next five years to increase the use of Internet.

#### **Statement**

Government has taken several steps both in terms of policy and infrastructure creation to increase the use of internet, which are as follows:

1. Number of Internet nodes installed in the country—427
2. Internet facility has been made available in all District Headquarters of the country.
3. Internet facility has been extended to the customers on local call charge basis to the nearest node.
4. Internet facility has been extended to 5625 Block Headquarters of the country.
5. Internet nodes have been set up in Remote & Hilly areas like Shillong, Agartala, R.K. Pur, Aizwal, Dimapur, Itanagar, Passighat, Imphal, Kohima, Almora, Pithoragarh, Gopeshwar, Solan Ooty, Namchi, Geyzing, Rangpo etc.
6. BSNL, through the scheme of Internet Dhabas set up through franchises has provided Internet Dial-up connections to 3051 Internet Dhabas.
7. To promote proliferation of Internet in Rural Areas, BSNL is offering free Internet access for the Internet Dhabas in the Rural Block Headquarters.
8. The Internet Dhaba Franchises are also eligible for 25 percent of the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) access charges as commission.
9. Communicate Information Centre (CIC) network in 487 Blocks of North East is being established to provide Internet connectivity.
10. ISP License is one of the most liberal License, wherein no license fee has been levied on the ISPs.
11. There is no restriction on the number of Service Providers in all the three categories i.e. 'A', 'B', 'C'.
12. ISPs have been permitted to set up International Gateways by having business arrangements with Foreign Satellites Providers and Collaborators.
13. ISPs have been permitted to provide last mile access using Radio and Fiber Optics.
14. ISPs have been permitted to provide ISP Services through Cable TV Infrastructure/Operators.
15. The Government has initiated an ambitious plan to develop National Internet Backbone (NIB) in the country.
16. 100% FDI allowed through automatic route to the ISP (without gateways), 74% in case of ISPs setting up International Gateways.
17. ISP's permitted to set up Submarine Cable Landing Stations either singly or jointly in collaboration with International Undersea Bandwidth Carriers.
18. ERNET India, a Society under Department of Information Technology, is providing Internet services to Education & Research community in India. ERNET India has signed an MOU with UGC & AICTE for providing Internet connectivity to Indian universities and engineering colleges. Department of Information Technology and ERNET India have also drawn up plans for setting up Gayavahini and Vidyavahini projects for extending Internet/Intranet services to the institutions of higher education and also schools in the country.
19. Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), a Society under Department of Information Technology, with 35 centers all over the country, is a category 'A' Internet Service Provider for providing Internet Services in the software industry.

#### **Detecting Remnants of Radioactive Material in Georgia**

7335. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to join hands with nuclear experts from the United States and France to detect remnants of radioactive material in Georgia; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In recent years, orphaned radioactive sources have been found in Georgia following which International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is in the process of preparing a comprehensive plan to locate such sources suspected to be present in Georgia. India, along with Georgia, France, Japan, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and U.S.A., is cooperating with IAEA in this exercise.

#### **NGOs in Health Sector in Gujarat**

7336. SHRI G.J. JAVIYA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Non-Governmental Organisations engaged in implementation of health programmes in Gujarat, district-wise;

(b) the details of the amount provided by Government to each organisation during the last three years;

(c) whether these organizations have submitted their accounts to the Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

#### **Reorganisation of Ministries**

7337. SHRI J.S. BRAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of privatisation, decontrol and computerisation, the work in the Ministries/Departments have considerably decreased;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to reorganise the Departments/Ministries to reduce their number to cut down expenditure;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Information in this regard is not centrally available.

(b) to (d) Restructuring of the Ministries and Departments is an ongoing exercise. The Rules for the Allocation of Business of the Government are made by the President under Clause (3) of Article 77 of the Constitution for convenient transaction of business of the Government. The business to be transacted in various Ministries and Departments is specified in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961. The number of Ministries/Departments at a given point of time is thus based on the administrative convenience of the Government.

The Government has been seized to the need to reduce the expenditure on the establishment and some of the steps taken in the recent past include:

- (i) The Department of Personnel and Training has issued instructions on 16 May, 2001 to limit the direct recruitment to one-third of the direct recruitment vacancies arising in a year subject to a further ceiling that this does not exceed 1 per cent of the total sanctioned strength of the Ministry/Department.
- (ii) The Expenditure Reforms Commission set up by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) has submitted 10 Reports containing its recommendations on rightsizing/restructuring the various Ministries/Departments. The respective Ministries/Departments have been requested to take follow up action on the Commission's recommendations. On the basis of the Commission's recommendations, approximately 17,200 posts have so far been abolished/identified for abolition.
- (iii) The Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) has issued instructions in 1999 to all the Ministries/Departments etc. requesting them, inter alia, to undertake a review of all the posts which were lying vacant in consultation with the Ministry of Finance. These instructions further envisage that till the review is completed, no vacant post will be filled up, except with the approval of the Ministry of Finance.

**T.B. Control Programme**

7338. SHRI AMBAREESHA:

SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the States which are having a highest number of T.B. patients in the country;

(b) whether some States including Karnataka have submitted a detailed project proposals to the Union Government for the expansion of National T.B. Control Programme and have asked for financial assistance;

(c) if so, the details of such proposals received during the last three years, State-wise; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) TB is spread mainly by air. Occurrence of tuberculosis is more or less uniform throughout the country.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. States have been requesting for coverage of all their districts under Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP).

(d) National TB Control Programme is being implemented throughout the country since 1962. With an objective to achieve 85% cure rate for new sputum positive patients and to detect 70% of such cases, a revised strategy (RNTCP) widely known as DOTS was initiated in 1997 to be implemented in a phased manner. Against an originally approved population of 271 million, a coverage of about 460 million has already been achieved. Coverage of 800 million population by 2004 under RNTCP has been approved. It is envisaged to cover the whole country under the revised strategy by 2005. A statement indicating State-wise expansion of RNTCP is enclosed.

**Statement***State-wise status of RNTCP expansion in India*

| Sl.No. | State/Union Territory | Total Population (millions) | Total number of districts | Approved RNTCP population (millions) | Approved RNTCP districts | Population implementing RNTCP (millions) | Number of Districts implementing RNTCP | Population not yet approved for RNTCP implementation |
|--------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1      | 2                     | 3                           | 4                         | 5                                    | 6                        | 7                                        | 8                                      | 9                                                    |
| 1.     | A & N Islands         | 0.4                         | 2                         | 0.3                                  | 1                        | 0                                        | 0                                      | 0.1                                                  |
| 2.     | Andhra Pradesh        | 75.7                        | 23                        | 75.7                                 | 23                       | 25.5                                     | 8                                      | 0                                                    |
| 3.     | Arunachal Pradesh     | 1.1                         | 13                        | 1.1                                  | 13                       | 0                                        | 0                                      | 0                                                    |
| 4.     | Assam                 | 27.2                        | 23                        | 11.9                                 | 9                        | 1.2                                      | 1                                      | 15.3                                                 |
| 5.     | Bihar                 | 82.9                        | 38                        | 24.6                                 | 8                        | 11.2                                     | 3                                      | 58.3                                                 |
| 6.     | Chandigarh            | 0.9                         | 1                         | 0.9                                  | 1                        | 0.9                                      | 1                                      | 0.0                                                  |
| 7.     | Chhattisgarh          | 20.8                        | 16                        | 9.1                                  | 4                        | 0.0                                      | 0                                      | 11.7                                                 |
| 8.     | Dadra & Nagar Haveli  | 0.2                         | 1                         | 0                                    | 0                        | 0                                        | 0                                      | 0.2                                                  |
| 9.     | Daman & Diu           | 0.2                         | 2                         | 0                                    | 0                        | 0                                        | 0                                      | 0.2                                                  |
| 10.    | Delhi                 | 13.8                        | 9                         | 13.8                                 | 9                        | 13.8                                     | 9                                      | 0.0                                                  |
| 11.    | Goa                   | 1.3                         | 2                         | 1.3                                  | 2                        | 0                                        | 0                                      | 0.0                                                  |
| 12.    | Gujarat               | 50.6                        | 25                        | 50.6                                 | 25                       | 47.8                                     | 23                                     | 0.0                                                  |

| 1     | 2                | 3      | 4   | 5     | 6   | 7     | 8   | 9    |
|-------|------------------|--------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|------|
| 13.   | Haryana          | 21.1   | 19  | 7.6   | 5   | 5.1   | 3   | 13.5 |
| 14.   | Himachal Pradesh | 6.1    | 12  | 6.1   | 12  | 6.1   | 12  | 0.0  |
| 15.   | Jammu & Kashmir  | 10.1   | 14  | 6.3   | 7   | 0.0   | 0   | 3.7  |
| 16.   | Jharkhand        | 26.9   | 18  | 11.5  | 6   | 4.9   | 2   | 15.4 |
| 17.   | Karnataka        | 52.7   | 27  | 47.3  | 22  | 21.8  | 10  | 5.4  |
| 18.   | Kerala           | 31.8   | 14  | 31.8  | 14  | 31.8  | 14  | 0.0  |
| 19.   | Lakshadweep      | 0.1    | 1   | 0.1   | 1   | 0.0   | 0   | 0.0  |
| 20.   | Madhya Pradesh   | 60.4   | 45  | 45.5  | 34  | 6.5   | 5   | 14.9 |
| 21.   | Maharashtra      | 96.8   | 35  | 96.8  | 35  | 69.8  | 21  | 0.0  |
| 22.   | Manipur          | 2.4    | 9   | 2.4   | 9   | 2.4   | 9   | 0.0  |
| 23.   | Meghalaya        | 2.3    | 7   | 1.6   | 4   | 0.0   | 0   | 0.7  |
| 24.   | Mizoram          | 0.9    | 8   | 0.8   | 7   | 0.0   | 0   | 0.1  |
| 25.   | Nagaland         | 2.0    | 8   | 2.0   | 8   | 0.0   | 0   | 0.0  |
| 26.   | Orissa*          | 36.7   | 30  | 13.9  | 14  | 10.8  | 10  | 22.8 |
| 27.   | Pondicherry      | 1.0    | 4   | 0.7   | 1   | 0.0   | 0   | 0.2  |
| 28.   | Punjab           | 24.3   | 17  | 14.8  | 9   | 1.8   | 1   | 9.5  |
| 29.   | Rajasthan        | 56.4   | 32  | 56.4  | 32  | 56.4  | 32  | 0.0  |
| 30.   | Sikkim           | 0.5    | 4   | 0.5   | 4   | 0.5   | 4   | 0.0  |
| 31.   | Tamil Nadu       | 62.1   | 30  | 62.1  | 30  | 62.1  | 30  | 0.0  |
| 32.   | Tripura          | 3.2    | 4   | 2.3   | 2   | 0.0   | 0   | 0.9  |
| 33.   | Uttar Pradesh    | 166.1  | 70  | 107.7 | 39  | 20.6  | 8   | 58.4 |
| 34.   | Uttaranchal      | 8.5    | 13  | 1.9   | 2   | 0     | 0   | 6.6  |
| 35.   | West Bengal      | 80.2   | 19  | 80.2  | 19  | 60.0  | 12  | 0.0  |
| Total |                  | 1027.5 | 595 | 789.6 | 411 | 461.1 | 218 | 238  |

\* Whole of Orissa is likely to be taken up by DANDIA

#### **Development of Western Ghats**

7339. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the allocation made by the Government for the Western Ghats Development Programme, till date;

(b) the amount actually spent on the development programme;

(c) whether there is tardy progress in the said programme;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (e) Western Ghats Development Programme was launched in the Fifth Five Year Plan covering specified talukas of the Western Ghats Region of five States viz., Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Goa. This programme is fully funded by the Central Government. Special Central Assistance is made available to these State Governments to supplement their efforts in achieving the objectives of integrated development on compact watershed basis keeping in view the over riding priorities of eco-development and eco-restoration as well as the basic needs of the people like food, fodder, fuel and safe drinking water. A statement showing the approved allocations for the programme since the Fifth Year Plan and expenditure reported against the same is enclosed. As may be seen from the statement, the expenditure reported by the State Governments has been 97.50 % of the allocation.

#### Statement

*Planwise approved allocation of Special Central Assistance and Expenditure under Western Ghats Development Programme since its inception*

(Rs. in crore)

| Plan                     | Allocation | Expenditure |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 1                        | 2          | 3           |
| Fifth Plan (1974-1979)   | 19.92      | 18.25       |
| Sixth Plan (1980-1985)   | 76.26      | 74.99       |
| Seventh Plan (1985-1990) | 144.44     | 138.65      |
| 1990-91                  | 37.81      | 37.06       |
| 1991-92                  | 37.81      | 36.82       |
| Eighth Plan ( 1992-1997) | 214.99     | 213.33      |

| 1                      | 2      | 3        |
|------------------------|--------|----------|
| Ninth Plan (1997-2002) | 302.79 | 234.10** |
| Total                  | 834.02 | 813.20   |

\*\* Anticipated expenditure

#### Investigation by FBI

7340. SHRI GUNIPATI RAMAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Federal Bureau of Investigation can conduct investigation into offences committed in India;

(b) if so, the parameters laid down in this regard;

(c) the number of FBI officers and staff posted in India at present;

(d) whether the permission of the Government is necessary before such staff is posted in India; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) The Legal Attache Office in the Embassy of the United States, manned by FBI officials, does not carry out independent investigations into offences committed in India as per parameters laid down by Government.

(c) The Legal Attache Office in the US Embassy in New Delhi is manned by two FBI officers.

(d) and (e) The posting of such officers to India is processed as per standard diplomatic procedures for posting and accreditation of diplomatic officials of foreign mission in India.

#### Indo-Nepal Trade Treaty

7341. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Nepal have renewed the existing trade treaty;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the same is different from the earlier treaty of 1996?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c)

The India-Nepal Trade Treaty was renewed on March 2, 2002 for a period of five years with mutually agreed amendments to the Protocol to the Treaty without changing its basic framework.

In the revised Trade Treaty, a minimum domestic value addition of 25% for the first year and 30% thereafter has been prescribed. Ceilings have been fixed for duty-free import of vanaspati, acrylic yarn, copper products and zinc oxide, in such a manner as to avoid disrupting Nepal's existing exports to India while addressing the concerns of Indian industry. There is no ceiling on exports of these commodities on MFN basis.

#### **Conversion of State Roads to National Highways**

7342. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the requests received from various States during the last three years for raising the status of State-run roads to National Highways in the country;

(b) the specific requests made by the State Government of Orissa;

(c) whether Phulanakhara-Puri Road in Orissa is one of these proposals;

(d) if so, the steps taken to accord sanction to the above proposal; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) Government has received 307 proposals

aggregating to about 49,500 km for declaration of new National Highways from various States.

(b) 13 proposals aggregating to length of about 2100 km have been received from the State of Orissa.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The proposal would be considered along with similar proposals received from other State Governments after the finalisation of the Tenth Five year Plan and availability of funds, keeping in view the revised criteria for declaration of new National Highways, traffic needs and inter-se priority.

#### **Work Packages on National Highways**

7343. SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the work packages tendered so far and the successful bidders of those work packages National Highways-wise, the East West Corridor project and the Golden Quadrilateral project;

(b) whether the Government have decided to debar some of the road contractors entrusted with four-laning works, previously; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) Details are given in the statement.

(b) and (c) M/s PT Sumber Mitra Jaya has been debarred in October, 2001, from participating in any bidding process due to non-adherence of contract conditions.

#### **Statement**

*Details of work packages tendered so far and the successful bidders for East-West Corridor Project and Golden Quadrilateral Project*

#### **Golden Quadrilateral Project (Completed Stretches)**

| Sl.No. | Stretch                                  | NH | Length | State     | Name of the Contractor |
|--------|------------------------------------------|----|--------|-----------|------------------------|
| 1      | 2                                        | 3  | 4      | 5         | 6                      |
| 1      | Batwa Adda-Barakar<br>Km 398.75 - km 442 | 2  | 43.00  | Jharkhand | BSC-RBM-PATI (JV)      |

| 1 | 2                                                              | 3 | 4      | 5                               | 6                                       |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------|---|--------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 2 | Raniganj-Panagarh<br>Km 475- km 517                            | 2 | 42.00  | West Bengal                     | BSC-RBM-PATI (JV)                       |
| 3 | Sira Bypass<br>Km 122 - km 116                                 | 4 | 5.80   | Karnataka                       | Maytas Infrastrucure Ltd.               |
| 4 | Vijayawada-Rajamundry<br>Section (near Eluru)<br>Km 75 - km 80 | 5 | 5.00   | Andhra Pradesh                  | Madhucon Projects Ltd.                  |
| 5 | Gurgaon-Kotptli<br>Km 36 - km 162                              | 8 | 126.00 | Haryana (55)/<br>Rajasthan (71) | BSC-RBM-PATI (JV)                       |
| 6 | Jaipur Bypass Phase-I<br>Km 283 - km 297                       | 8 | 14.00  | Rajasthan                       | IRCON International Ltd.                |
| 7 | ROB at Kishangarh                                              | 8 | 1.00   | Rajasthan                       | M/s MSK (Project) Pvt. Ltd.<br>Vadodara |

**Golden Quadrilateral Project (On-going works)**

| Sl.No. | Contract, Stretch and State                                                                                                                 | NH No. | Length<br>(in Km) | Name of the Contractor                                     |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1      | 2                                                                                                                                           | 3      | 4                 | 5                                                          |
| 1      | Agra-Shikohabad<br>Km 199.66- km 250.50<br>Contract-IA of Agra-Sikandara<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b>                                            | 2      | 51                | M/s Oriental Structural Engineers Ltd.- Gammon             |
| 2      | Shikohabad-Etawah<br>Km 250.5 - km 307.5<br>Contract IB of Agra-Sikandara<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b>                                           | 2      | 59                | China Coal Ltd.                                            |
| 3      | Etawah Bypass<br>Km 307.5- km 321.1<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b>                                                                                 | 2      | 14                | Bhageeratha Engg. India & Ashwini Construction<br>Co. (JV) |
| 4      | Etawah-Rajpur<br>Km 321.1 -km 393<br>Contract IC of Agra-Sikandara<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b>                                                  | 2      | 73                | M/s PATI-BEL                                               |
| 5      | Sikandara-Bhaunti<br>Km 393-km 470 through MDR<br>route 16 km shorter<br>Contract-IIA of Sikandara-Khaga<br>Stretch<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b> | 2      | 62                | IT Thai & Som Dutt Builders India (JV)                     |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                               | 3 | 4  | 5                                                          |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6  | Kanpur-Fatehpur<br>Km 470- km 483 (0) km 0-km 38<br>Contract IIB of Sikandara-Khaga<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b>                     | 2 | 51 | Ms Somdutt-NCC-NEC (JV)                                    |
| 7  | Fatehpur-Khaga<br>Km38-km 115<br>Contract IIC of Sikandara- Khaga Stretch<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b>                               | 2 | 76 | Centrodorstroy Russia                                      |
| 8  | Khaga-Kokhraj<br>Km 115-km 158<br>Contract III A of Khaga- Varanasi Stretch<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b>                             | 2 | 43 | IRCON International Ltd.                                   |
| 9  | Handia-Varanasi<br>Km 245 -km 317<br>Contract III C of Khaga-Varanasi Stretch<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b>                           | 2 | 72 | Centrodorstroy Russia                                      |
| 10 | Varanasi - Mohania<br>Km 317- 329(0) km 0-km 65<br>Contract IV A of Varanasi-Aurangabad<br><b>Uttar Pradesh (55)/Bihar (21)</b> | 2 | 76 | M/s PCL-Suncon (JV)                                        |
| 11 | Mohania-Sasaram<br>Km 65-kin 110<br>Contract IV B of Varanasi-Aurangabad<br>Stretch<br><b>Bihar</b>                             | 2 | 45 | LC Engg. & Construction Ltd.                               |
| 12 | Sasaratn-Dehri on-sona<br>Km 110-km 140 Contract IV C of<br>Varanasi-Aurangabad<br><b>Bihar</b>                                 | 2 | 30 | M/s Somdutt-NCC (JV)                                       |
| 13 | Dehri on-Sone - Aurangabad<br>Km140-km 183<br>Contract IV D of Varanasi-<br>Aurangabad Stretch<br><b>Bihar</b>                  | 2 | 40 | Ssangyong Korea-Oriental SE India                          |
| 14 | Aurangabad-Barachatti<br>Km 180-km 240 Contract V A of<br>Aurangabad-Barwa-Adda<br><b>Bihar</b>                                 | 2 | 60 | Oriental Structural Engg. Ltd. & Gammon India<br>Ltd. (JV) |
| 15 | Rajgang - Barakata<br>Km 240 - km 320<br>Contract V B of Aurangabad-Barwa-Adda<br><b>Bihar (10) /Jharkhand (70)</b>             | 2 | 80 | M/s L&T - HCC (JV)                                         |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                         | 3 | 4     | 5                                                                         |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 16 | Gorhar-Barwa-Adda<br>Km 320-km 398.75<br>Contract V C of Aurangabad-<br>Barwa-Adda<br><b>Jharkhand</b>                    | 2 | 78.75 | Progressive Const. Ltd. & Sunway Const. Ltd.<br>(JV)                      |
| 17 | Panagarh-Palsit<br>Km 517-km 581<br><b>West Bengal</b>                                                                    | 2 | 65    | Gamuda Malaysia-WLT Malaysia                                              |
| 18 | Palsit-Dankuni<br>Km 581-km 666<br>(Durgapur Expressway)<br><b>West Bengal</b>                                            | 2 | 65    | Consortium of Gomuda (Malaysia) & WCT<br>Engineering (Malaysia)           |
| 19 | Vivekananda Bridge and Approach<br><b>West Bengal</b>                                                                     | 2 | 6     | SVBT Consortium of AIDC group (USA)<br>STRADC (Philippines) L & T (India) |
| 20 | Westerly Diversion<br>Km 868-km 834<br>Pune bypass<br><b>Maharashtra</b>                                                  | 4 | 34.25 | Ashoka Constructon & Birla GTM                                            |
| 21 | Katraj-Sarole<br>Km 825.5-km 797<br>Contract 111 of Pune-Satara<br><b>Maharashtra</b>                                     | 4 | 28.5  | Satav Constt. Pvt. Ltd. and Dena Rehsaz                                   |
| 22 | Katraj Realignment<br>Km 825- km 30 of Bypass<br>Contract III of Pune Satara<br><b>Maharashtra</b>                        | 4 | 9     | M/s Shakti Kumar M. Sancheti Ltd.                                         |
| 23 | Sarole-Wathar<br>Km 797- km 760 excluding km<br>773-km 781<br>Contract II of Pune-Satara<br><b>Maharashtra</b>            | 4 | 28    | Birla CTM Enterpose Ltd. & BG Shrike Constt.<br>Tech. Ltd.                |
| 24 | Wathar-Satara<br>Km 760-Km 725<br>Contract I of Pune-Satara<br><b>Maharashtra</b>                                         | 4 | 35    | Skanska Cementation India Ltd.                                            |
| 25 | Satara-Kagal<br>Km 725 -km 592<br>Satara-Maharashtra/Karnataka border<br><b>Maharashtra</b>                               | 4 | 133   | MSRDC                                                                     |
| 26 | Maharashtra Border-Belgaum<br>Km 592-km 515<br>Contract-III of Maharashtra/Karnataka<br>Border-Haveri<br><b>Karnataka</b> | 4 | 77    | Consortium of IL & FS - Punj Llyod - CTNL                                 |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                 | 3 | 4    | 5                                         |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|------|-------------------------------------------|
| 27 | Belgaum Byapss<br>Km 515 - km 495<br>Haveri - Maharashtra Border Section<br><b>Karnataka</b>                      | 4 | 18   | Sunway Constt. Berhad & R.N. Shetty & Co. |
| 28 | Belgaum - Dharwad<br>Km 495 - km 433<br>Contract-II of Maharashtra/Karnataka<br>Border-Haveri<br><b>Karnataka</b> | 4 | 62   | Sunway Constt. Berhad & R.N. Shetty & Co. |
| 29 | Hubli-Haveri<br>Km 404-km 340<br>Contract-I of<br>Maharashtra/Karnataka Border-Haveri<br><b>Karnataka</b>         | 4 | 64   | Afcons-Apil (JV)                          |
| 30 | Haveri-Harihar<br>Km 340 - km 284<br>Contract-V of Haveri-Tumkur<br><b>Karnataka</b>                              | 4 | 56   | UEM-ESSAR (JV)                            |
| 31 | Harihar-Chitradurga<br>Km 284-km 207<br>Contract-IV of Haveri-Tutnkur<br><b>Karnataka</b>                         | 4 | 77   | UEM-ESSAR (JV)                            |
| 32 | Chitradurga bypass<br>Km 207-km 189<br>Contract-III of Haveri - Tumkur<br><b>Karnataka</b>                        | 4 | 18   | Polomite- Al Sudershan (JV)               |
| 33 | Chitradurga-Sira<br>Km 189-km 122.3<br>Contract-II of Haveri-Tumkur<br><b>Karnataka</b>                           | 4 | 66.7 | UEM-ESSAR (JV)                            |
| 34 | Sira-Tumkur<br>Km 116.4 - 0 km 75<br>Contract-I of Haveri-Tumkur<br><b>Karnataka</b>                              | 4 | 41.4 | Larsen & Toubro                           |
| 35 | Tumkur Bypass<br>Km 75- km 62<br><b>Karnataka</b>                                                                 | 4 | 13   | A.L. Sudershan & Co.                      |
| 36 | Tumkur-Neelmangala<br>Km 62-km 30<br><b>Karnataka</b>                                                             | 4 | 32   | Jayaswals-Neco                            |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                         | 3  | 4      | 5                              |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|--------|--------------------------------|
| 37 | Valejapat-Kanchipuram<br>Km 106.4- km 70.2<br>Contract-II of Krishnagiri-Ranipet-<br>Chennai<br>Tamil Nadu                | 4  | 36.2   | Larsen & Toubro                |
| 38 | Kanchipuram-Poonamalee<br>Km 70.2-km 13.8<br>Contract-I of Knishnagiri-Ranipet-Chennai<br>Tamil Nadu                      | 4  | 56.4   | Afcon Infrastructure Ltd.      |
| 39 | Krishnagini-Vaniyambadi<br>Km 0.0- km 49.0<br>Contract-V of Krishnagiri-Ranipet-Chennai<br>Tamil Nadu                     | 46 | 49     | Patel KNR                      |
| 40 | Vaniyambadi-Pallikonda<br>Km 49.0- km 100.0<br>Contract-IV of Knishnagiri-Ranipet-Chennai<br>Tamil Nadu                   | 46 | 51     | Skanska Cementation India Ltd. |
| 41 | Pallikonda-Ranipet and Valejapet bypass<br>Km 100.0-km 145.0<br>Contract-III of Krishnagiri-Ranipet-Chennai<br>Tamil Nadu | 46 | 45     | Skanska Cementation India Ltd. |
| 42 | Balasore-Bhadrak (OR-III)<br>Km 136.5 -km 199.14<br>Contract-I of Balasore-Chandikhole<br>Orissa                          | 5  | 62.64  | ELSMEX-TWS-SNC (JV)            |
| 43 | Bhadrak-Chandikhole (OR-II)<br>Km 61 - km 136<br>Contract-II of Balasore-Chandikhole<br>Orissa                            | 5  | 75     | Larsen & Toubro                |
| 44 | Bridges section (OR-V)<br>Km 199- km 61<br>Contract-III of Balasore-Chandikhole<br>Orissa                                 | 5  |        | Gammon India Ltd.              |
| 45 | Chandikhole-Jagatpur<br>Km 28-km 61<br>Orissa                                                                             | 5  | 33     | KMC Constructions Ltd.         |
| 46 | Bhuneshwer-Khurda (OR-I)<br>Km 387.7- km 418<br>Orissa                                                                    | 5  | 30     | Gammon-Atlanta                 |
| 47 | Khurda-Sunahala (OR-VI)<br>Km 387.7- km 335.642<br>Contract-I of Khunda Town-Icchapuram<br>Orissa                         | 5  | 52.058 | SMJ-RKD-SD (JV)                |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                  | 3 | 4    | 5                              |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|------|--------------------------------|
| 48 | Sunakhala-Ganjam (OR-VII)<br>Km 338 - km 283<br>Contract-II of Khurda Town-Icchapuram<br>Orissa                    | 5 | 55   | Progressive-Sitcco             |
| 49 | Ganjam-Icchapuram (OR-VIII)<br>Km 284-km 233.2<br>Contract-III of Khurda Town-Icchapuram<br>Orissa                 | 5 | 50.8 | Bumi-Hiway DDBL                |
| 50 | Icchapuram-Korlam (AP 4B)<br>Km 233-km 200<br>Contract-I B of Icchapuram-<br>Vishakhapatnam<br>Andhra Pradesh      | 5 | 33   | Skanska Cementation India Ltd. |
| 51 | Korlam-Patasa (AP 4A)<br>Km 200-km 171<br>Contract-I A of Icchapuram-<br>Vishakhapatnam<br>Andhra Pradesh          | 5 | 29   | Skanska Cementation India Ltd. |
| 52 | Palasa-Srikakulam (AP-2)<br>Km 171-km 97<br>Contract-II of Icchapuram-<br>Vishakhapatnam<br>Andhra Pradesh         | 5 | 74   | SPCL-IVRCL                     |
| 53 | Srikakulam-Champawati (AP-I)<br>Km 97 - Km 49<br>Contract-III of Icchapuram-<br>Vishakhapatnam<br>Andhra Pradesh   | 5 | 48   | You one-Maharia                |
| 54 | Champawati-Vishakhapatnam (AP-3)<br>Km 49-km 2.8<br>Contract-IV of Icchapuram-<br>Vishakhapatnam<br>Andhra Pradesh | 5 | 46.2 | Unitech-NCC (JV)               |
| 55 | Bridges section (AP-6)<br>Km 233-km 98<br>Srikakulam - Icchapuram<br>Andhra Pradesh                                | 5 |      | Prasad & SEW (JV)              |
| 56 | Bridges section (AP-5)<br>Km 98-km 2.8<br>Contract-VI of Icchapuram-<br>Vishakhapatnam<br>Andhra Pradesh           | 5 |      | Navyuga Engg. Ltd.             |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                                            | 3 | 4     | 5                               |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------|---------------------------------|
| 57 | Ankapalli-Tuni<br>Km 359-km 300<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                                                                     | 5 | 59    | GMR Consortium                  |
| 58 | Tuni-Dharmavaram<br>Km 300-253<br>Contract-I of Tuni-Rajahmundry<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                                    | 5 | 47    | Consortium of Gammon-Punj Llyod |
| 59 | Dharmavaram-Rajahmundry<br>Km 253-km 200<br>Contract-II of Tuni-Rajahmundry<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                         | 5 | 53    | Consortium of Gammon-Punj Llyod |
| 60 | Vivancheru (near Rajahmundry)-<br>Gowthami (AP-17)<br>Km 200-km 164.5<br>Contract-I of Rajahmundry-Eluru<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>            | 5 | 35.5  | Punj Llyod Ltd.                 |
| 61 | Bridges Section (AP 19)<br>Km. 162-Km. 200<br>V-V Section<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                                           | 5 | 0     | Larsen and Toubro Ltd.          |
| 62 | Gowthami-Gundugolanu (AP-18)<br>Km. 164.5-Km. 80<br>Contract-II of Rajahmundry-Eluru<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                | 5 | 84.5  | Limak-Soma (JV)                 |
| 63 | Bridges Section (AP 20)<br>Km. 80-Km. 162<br>V-V Section<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                                            | 5 | 0     | Larsen and Toubro Ltd.          |
| 64 | Eluru-Vijayawada<br>Km. 75-Km. 3.4<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                                                                  | 5 | 72    | Madhucon-Binapuri               |
| 65 | Vijayawada-Chilikaluripet Package I<br>Km. 355-Km. 380<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                                              | 5 | 25    | IJM - Gayatri                   |
| 66 | Vijayawada-Chilikaluripet Package II<br>Km. 380-Km. 396.8<br>Including Guntur Bypass<br>(Km.0-Km.15.2)<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>              | 5 | 32    | IJM - Gayatri                   |
| 67 | Vijayawada-Chilikaluripet Package III<br>Km. 408-Km. 420.5<br>Including Krishna bridge Approach<br>(Km. 0-Km. 10.8)<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b> | 5 | 23.78 | IJM - Gayatri                   |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                                         | 3 | 4     | 5                                                        |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 68 | Vijayawada-Chilikaluripet Package IV<br>Km. 10.8-Km. 13.68<br>(1792 m Krishna Bridge + 1095 in<br>Approach road)<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b> | 5 | 2.88  | UPSBC                                                    |
| 69 | Chilikaluripet-Ongole (AP-13)<br>Km. 357.9-Km. 291<br>Contract-I of Chilikaluripet-Nellore<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                       | 5 | 66.9  | IJM - Gayatri                                            |
| 70 | Ongole-Kavali (AP-12)<br>Km. 291-Km. 222<br>Contract-II of Chilikaluripet-Nellore<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                | 5 | 69    | HO-HUP-Simplex (JV)                                      |
| 71 | Kavali-Nellore (AP- 11)<br>Km. 222-Km. 178<br>Contract-III of Chilikaluripet-Nellore<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                             | 5 | 44    | KNR - Patel (JV)                                         |
| 72 | Nellore Bypass<br>Km. 178.2-Km. 161<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                                                              | 5 | 17.2  | Consortium Soma Enterprises &<br>Navayuga Engg. Co. Ltd. |
| 73 | Nellore-Tada<br>Km. 163.6-Km. 52.8<br>Nellore-Chennai Section<br><b>Andhra Pradesh</b>                                                    | 5 | 111   | CIDBI Malayasia                                          |
| 74 | Tada-Chennai (TN-I)<br>Km. 52.80 Km.11<br>Contract-II of Nellore-Chennai<br><b>Tamil Nadu</b>                                             | 5 | 41.8  | Larsen & Toubro Ltd.                                     |
| 75 | Dhankuni-Kolaghar (WB-I)<br>Km. 17.6 to Km. 72<br>Contract I of Dhankuni-Kharagpur<br><b>West Bengal</b>                                  | 6 | 54.4  | RBM-PATI (JV)                                            |
| 76 | Kolaghat-Kharagpur (WB-II)<br>Km. 72 to Km 136<br>Contract II of Dhankuni-Kharagpur<br><b>West Bengal</b>                                 | 6 | 64    | Hindustan Construction Company                           |
| 77 | Bridges section (WB-III)<br>Total Stretch Km. 17.6-Km. 136<br>Contract III of Dankuni-Kharagpur Stretch<br><b>West Bengal</b>             | 6 | 1.732 | Bhageeratha Engg. Ltd.                                   |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                                   | 3   | 4      | 5                                                             |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 78 | Kharagpur-Laxmanath (WB-4)<br>Km. 53.41-Km. 119.275<br>Contract I of Kharagpur-Balasore<br><b>West Bengal</b>                       | 60  | 65.86  | B. Seenaiiah Company Ltd.                                     |
| 79 | Laxmannath-Baleshwar (OR-4)<br>Km 0-Km 53.41<br>Contract II of Kharagpur-Balasore<br><b>Orissa</b>                                  | 60  | 53.41  | Larsen & Toubro Ltd.                                          |
| 80 | Bridges Section (OR/WB-I)<br>Km. 0-Km. 119.275<br>Contract III of Kharagpur-Balasore Stretch<br><b>Orissa</b>                       | 60  |        | Gammon India Ltd.                                             |
| 81 | Hosur-Krishnagiri<br>Km. 48.6-Km. 94.0<br>Common with North South Corridor<br><b>Tamil Nadu</b>                                     | 7   | 46.6   | Shakti Kumar Sancheti Ltd. & Bhola Singh Jaya<br>PRakash (JV) |
| 82 | Chittorgarh-Mangalwar<br>Km. 220-Km. 172<br>Contract-V of Kishangarh-Udaipur<br>Common with East West Corridor<br><b>Rajasthan</b>  | 76  | 48     | Madhucon Binapuri (JV)                                        |
| 83 | Mangalwar-Udaipur<br>Km. 172-Km. 113.825<br>Contract-VI of Kishangarh-Udaipur<br>Common with East West Corridor<br><b>Rajasthan</b> | 76  | 58.175 | Sadhav-Prakash (JV)                                           |
| 84 | Nasirabad-Gulabpura<br>Km. 15-Km. 70<br>Contract-II of Kishangarh-Udaipur<br><b>Rajasthan</b>                                       | 79  | 55.87  | Punj Llyod Ltd. - Progressive Constt. Ltd.                    |
| 85 | Gulabpura-Bhilwara Bypass<br>Km. 70-Km. 120<br>Contract-III of Kishangarh-Udaipur<br><b>Rajasthan</b>                               | 79  | 50     | ECSB-JSRC (JV)                                                |
| 86 | Bhilwara Bypass-Chittorgarh<br>Km. 120-Km. 183<br>Contract-IV of Kishangarh-Udaipur<br><b>Rajasthan</b>                             | 79  | 66     | B. Seenaiiah & Co. (Projects) Ltd.                            |
| 87 | Kishangarh-Nasirabad<br>Km. 363.9 (NH-8) to Kin. 15 (NH-79)<br>Contract-I of Kishangarh-Udaipur<br><b>Rajasthan</b>                 | 79A | 36.23  | Sadbhav Engg. Ltd.                                            |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                                            | 3 | 4     | 5                                                         |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 88 | Jaipur Bypass Phase II<br>Km. 221 of NH-8 Km. 246 of NH-II<br>Chandwaji (Delhi-Jaipur Rd.)-Harmara<br>(Jaipur-Sikar Rd.)<br><b>Rajasthan</b> | 8 | 34.7  | Punja Llyod & Progressive Constt. Ltd. (JV)               |
| 89 | Mahapura (near Jaipur)-Kishangarh<br>Km. 273.5-Km. 363.885<br><b>Rajasthan</b>                                                               | 8 | 90.38 | Consortium of GVK BSCPL                                   |
| 90 | Udaipur-Kesariaji<br>Km. 278-Km. 340<br>Contract-I of Udaipur-Ratanpur-<br>Chiloda (Near Ahmedabad)<br><b>Rajasthan</b>                      | 8 | 62    | KMC Constt. Ltd.                                          |
| 91 | Kesariaji-Ratanpur<br>Km. 340-Km. 388.4<br>Contract-II of Udaipur-Ratanpur-<br>Chiloda (Near Ahmedabad)<br><b>Rajasthan</b>                  | 8 | 48.4  | Gayatri-Ranjit (JV)                                       |
| 92 | Ratanpur-Himatnagar<br>Km. 388-Km. 443<br>Contract-III of Udaipur-Ratanpur-<br>Chiloda (Near Ahmedabad)<br><b>Gujarat</b>                    | 8 | 54.6  | Mudajaya - IRB                                            |
| 93 | Himatnagar-Chiloda (Near Ahmedabad)<br>Km. 443-Km. 495<br>Contract-IV of Udaipur-Ratanpur-Chiloda<br>(Near Ahmedabad)<br><b>Gujarat</b>      | 8 | 52    | Mudajaya-IRB                                              |
| 94 | Ahmedabad-Vadodara Exp. Way Phase-I<br>Km. 0.0-Km. 43.4<br><b>Gujarat</b>                                                                    | 8 | 43.4  | PT Sumber Mitra Jaya                                      |
| 95 | Ahmedabad-Vadodara Exp.<br>Way Phase-II<br>Km. 43.3 (Nadiad-Dakor SH) -<br>Km. 93 .302<br><b>Gujarat</b>                                     | 8 | 50    | LG Engineering and Constt. Co. & Nagarjun<br>Constt. Ltd. |
| 96 | Suat (Chakhan)-Atul<br>Km. 263.4-Km. 343<br>Contract I of Swat-Manor<br><b>Gujarat</b>                                                       | 8 | 79.6  | SKEC-Dodsal                                               |
| 97 | Atul-Kaijali<br>Km. 343 - Km 381.6<br>Contract II of Surat-Manor<br><b>Gujarat</b>                                                           | 8 | 38.6  | LG Constructions - Patel Engineering                      |

| 1                                   | 2                                                                                        | 3  | 4     | 5                             |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------|-------------------------------|
| 98                                  | Kaijali-Manor<br>Km 381.6 - Km 439<br>Contract III of Surat-Manor<br>Maharashtra         | 8  | 57.4  | Larsen & Toubro               |
| <b>East-West Corridor (Phase-I)</b> |                                                                                          |    |       |                               |
| 99                                  | Abu Road Deesa Section near<br>Palanpur (EW/1)<br>Km 340 - Km 350 (Completed)<br>Gujarat | 14 | 10.00 | Dinesh Chadra R. Agarwal      |
| 100                                 | Lucknow-Kanpur (EW/2)<br>Km 11.38 - Km 21.8<br>Uttar Pradesh                             | 25 | 10.42 | Villayati Ram Mittal          |
| 101                                 | Lucknow-Kanpur (EW/3)<br>Km. 59.5-Km. 75.5<br>Uttar Pradesh                              | 25 | 16    | Rana Projects Intt. Ltd.      |
| 102                                 | Purnea-Gayakota (EW/4)<br>Km. 410-Km. 419 & Km 470-Km 476.15<br>Bihar                    | 31 | 15.15 | Progressive Construction Ltd. |
| 103                                 | Dalkhola-Islampore (EW/5)<br>Km. 447-Km.470<br>West Bengal                               | 31 | 23    | Progressive Construction Ltd. |
| 104                                 | Dalkhola-Islampore Sub section (EW/6)<br>Km. 476.15-Km. 500<br>West Bengal               | 31 | 23.85 | Lanco Construction Ltd.       |
| 105                                 | Guwahati bypass (EW/7)<br>Km. 156-Km. 163.895<br>Assam                                   | 37 | 7.9   | Valecha Engineering Ltd.      |
| 106                                 | Palanpur-Dessa (EW-11/GJ)<br>Km. 350.00 to Km. 370.70<br>Gujarat                         | 14 | 22.7  | Dinesh Chandra R. Agarwal     |
| 107                                 | Lucknow-Kanpur section (EW- 8/UP)<br>Km. 21.80 to Km. 44.00<br>Uttar Pradesh             | 25 | 22.2  | Villayati Ram Mittal          |
| 108                                 | Lucknow-Kanpur section (EW-9/UP)<br>Km. 44-Km. 59.5<br>Uttar Pradesh                     | 25 | 15.5  | BRA-TRG-Bharat (JV)           |
| 109                                 | Purnea-Goyakota section (EW- 12/BR)<br>Km. 419-Km. 447<br>Bihar                          | 31 | 28    | Lanco-Rani (JV)               |

| 1   | 2                                                                                                                              | 3       | 4    | 5                     |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------|-----------------------|
| 110 | Guwahati Bypass (EW-14/AS)<br>Km. 146.00 to Km. 156.50<br><b>Assam</b>                                                         | 37      | 10.5 | BLA-CISC-C&C (JV)     |
| 111 | Lucknow Bypass (EW- 15/UP)<br>Connecting NH-25 and NH-28<br>via NH-56<br>Passing through Lucknow City.<br><b>Uttar Pradesh</b> | 6A & 56 | 23   | Prakash-Atlanta (JV)  |
| 112 | Gondal to Ribda section (EW10/GJ)<br>Km. 143-Km. 160<br><b>Gujarat</b>                                                         | 8B      | 17   | Tarmat-Back Bone (JV) |

[Translation]

### Uses of Atomic Power

7344. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any programmes are being run to use atomic energy for power generation, treatment of diseases like cancer, preservation of food stuff and to develop agricultural technology; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The applications of atomic energy in India have been playing a very important role in national development, in power and non-power sectors leading to widespread benefits to the society. The non-power applications are in the fields of industry, medicine and agriculture. There are fourteen operating nuclear power reactors generating 2720 MWe. Eight nuclear power plants are under construction to augment the power generation capacity to 6680 MWe by the end of this decade.

Various atomic energy applications in the field of health care, cancer treatment, medicine, food and agriculture are as follows:

Development of a range of new nuclear medicines for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes.

Radiation sterilization of various medical products such as syringes, surgical sutures, cotton dressings, drugs and related products.

Development, manufacture and supply of low cost blood irradiators containing cobalt-60 source to various hospitals in the country.

Training of medical physicists and radiation technologists to man the facilities in the area of nuclear medicine in various hospitals of the country.

A "Poton Irradiator" plant at Lasalgaon near Nashik in the state of Maharashtra to demonstrate increased shelf life of onions on commercial scale is under construction.

Radiation Processing Plant (capacity 30T/Day) for treatment and preservation of spices at Vashi, Navi Mumbai using Cobalt-60 is being operated by Board of Radiation Isotope Technology (BRIT) since January 2000.

In the field of agriculture, 22 improved high yielding crop varieties such as black gram, green gram, groundnut, mustard, tur, rice and jute have been developed in the recent past using radiation induced mutation breeding approach. Some of the mutants produced by Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) are very popular amongst farmers. As per the statistics, Trombay groundnut variety accounts for about 30% of the total national breeder seed indent. Trombay blackgram variety accounts for 44% of the total national breeder seed indent. In Maharashtra alone this blackgram variety has covered 95% of the area under blackgram cultivation. Further work to develop disease resistant high yielding crop varieties is a continuous process at BARC.

**Regional Development Centres**

7345. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposals to set up Regional Development Centres for promoting health services;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the expenditure likely to be incurred on this project; and

(d) the places where these centers are proposed to be set up, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) No, Sir. There is no proposal to set up Regional Development Centres. However, four Regional Resource Centres at Kolkatta (Child in Need Institute), Mumbai (Family Planning Association of India), New Delhi (Voluntary Health Association of India) and Dindigul (Tamil Nadu) (Gandhi gram Institute of Rural Health & Family Welfare Trust) have been set up. These Centers will provide technical and managerial support to Mother NGOs/Field NGOs who are involved in the implementation of RCH programme. A sum of Rs. 7.00 lakhs each has been released to them during 2001-2002.

The Regional Resource Centers are expected to provide the following services:

- Enabling Mother NGOs to access information and materials.
- Provide and facilitate training for Mother NGOs.
- Management assistance.
- Advocacy and Networking assistance.

There is no proposal to set up State-wise Regional Resource Centers. Under the Scheme, only National NGOs recognized in the Mother NGO Scheme can bid for establishing Regional Resource Center. Accordingly, all 4 National NGOs have bid and have been granted permission.

[English]

**Golden Quadrilateral Project**

7346. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have included later on some of the routes/roads in the Quadrilateral Project on the recommendation of State Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

**Unspent Fund**

7347. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether enormous Central Road Funds for North-eastern States remained unutilised during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002;

(b) if so, the amount remaining unutilised with respect to Assam and other States in the region indicating the specific projects required to be implemented with the C.R. Fund, the cost thereof;

(c) the extent to which respective schemes were implemented, year-wise;

(d) the extent of over flow of the schemes and the funds remaining unutilised; and

(e) the main reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) to (d) Details of accrual, release and utilization of funds under Central Road Fund by the States of the North Eastern Region during the year 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 are given in statement-I. The details of the projects sanctioned in the above mentioned years under Central Road Fund and present status are enclosed at statement-II.

(e) Central Road Fund is non-lapsable fund. The implementation of projects is carried out and monitored by respective State Governments. Initially utilisation of funds under Central Road Fund had been slow. However, the matter has been pursued at various levels including at the level of Chief Ministers for expeditious progress and utilisation of funds. With that the overall position of utilisation has shown improvement.

**Statement-I***Funds Accrued, Released and Utilised by the North Eastern States*

(Rs. in Lakh)

| Sl.No. | Name of States    | Funds Accrued |           |           | Funds Released |           |           | Utilised  |           |           |
|--------|-------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|        |                   | 1999-2000     | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 | 1999-2000      | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 | 1999-2000 | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 |
| 1      | Arunachal Pradesh | 6.91          | 1113.00   | 108.00    | 78.89          | 371.00    | 371.00    | 78.89     | Nil       | 371.00    |
| 2      | Assam             | 26.17         | 1508.00   | 1473.00   | 26.52          | 503.00    | 463.00    | 26.52     | Nil       | 966.00    |
| 3      | Manipur           | 4.44          | 332.00    | 318.00    | 26.24          | 111.00    | 111.00    | 26.24     | Nil       | 137.24    |
| 4      | Meghalaya         | 8.89          | 447.00    | 434.00    | 8.11           | 149.00    | 298.00    | 8.11      | NIL       | 298.00    |
| 5      | Mizoram           | 3.46          | 302.00    | 290.00    | 3.94           | 202.00    | 590.00    | 3.94      | 202.00    | 403.00    |
| 6      | Nagaland          | 4.94          | 256.00    | 241.00    | 4.92           | 85.00     | 126.00    | 4.92      | Nil       | 211.00    |
| 7      | Sikkim            | 1.98          | 112.00    | 107.00    | 14.56          | 37.00     | 37.00     | 14.56     | Nil       | 37.00     |
| 8      | Tripura           | 3.46          | 193.00    | 187.00    | 3.94           | 64.00     | 143.70    | 3.94      | Nil       | 135.85    |

**Statement-II***Works sanctioned and progress achieved under central road fund.***1. Arunachal Pradesh**

| Sl.No.                 | Name of Works/Schemes                                                                                              | Sanctioned Cost<br>(Rs. in lakh) | Date of Sanction | Present Status/<br>Progress |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1                      | 2                                                                                                                  | 3                                | 4                | 5                           |
| <b>1999-2000</b>       |                                                                                                                    |                                  |                  |                             |
| 1                      | Construction of double lane standard approach road of Arunachal University at Rono Hill, Doimukh (Length 2.36 km.) | 78.89                            | 10.6.1999        | In progress                 |
| <b>2000-2001 – NIL</b> |                                                                                                                    |                                  |                  |                             |
| <b>2000-2001</b>       |                                                                                                                    |                                  |                  |                             |
| 1.                     | Steel Truss Girder Bridge over river Sigen on Lensi-Siberite road (span 70 mtr.)                                   | 184.78                           | 23.10.2001       | In progress                 |
| 2.                     | Approach road to VKV School at Along (6 km) Renewal resurfacing                                                    | 98.88                            | 23.10.2001       | In progress                 |

| 1                      | 2                                                                                                                                              | 3       | 4          | 5           |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------|-------------|
| 3.                     | Roing-Shantipur Road (21.50 km)                                                                                                                | 482.50  | 23.10.2001 | In progress |
| 4.                     | Mebo-Dholia Road (36.70 km)                                                                                                                    | 1005.50 | 23.10.2001 | In progress |
| 5.                     | Steel Truss Girder Bridge over river Dibang (span 150 mtr)                                                                                     | 434.88  | 23.10.2001 | In progress |
| 2.                     | <b>Assam</b>                                                                                                                                   |         |            |             |
| <b>1999-2000 – Nil</b> |                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| <b>2000-2001</b>       |                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| 1.                     | Improvement of Old A.T. Road in 1st km and 2nd km in the Guwahati district - Assam                                                             | 50.00   | 30.1.2001  | Completed   |
| 2.                     | Improvement of Moran-Naharkatia Road from 19th Km Ch. 18,700.00 m to Ch. 322,700.00 under Dibrugarh Road, Division - Assam                     | 98.91   | 30.1.2001  | Completed   |
| 3.                     | Improvement of Pathasala-Sarthebari Road (Dr. Jina Ram Das road) in Barpeta district road Division - Assam                                     | 75.00   | 28.2.2001  | Completed   |
| 4.                     | Improvement of Bhawanipur-Bhuyapara road under Barpeta Road Division - Assam                                                                   | 93.78   | 28.2.2001  | Completed   |
| 5.                     | Metalling & Blacktopping of Kathiatoli-Amlokhi road from Ch. 15000 m to Ch 50300 m in the Nagaon district under Kaliabor Road Division - Assam | 200.00  | 28.2.2001  | Completed   |
| 6.                     | Improvement of Kamaipur-Morrow Road in Kamrup district under Rangia Road Division - Assam                                                      | 100.00  | 9.3.2001   | Completed   |
| 7.                     | Improvement of Deshbhakta Tarun Ram Phukan Road in Dibrugarh Town - Assam                                                                      | 19.61   | 9.3.2001   | Completed   |
| 8.                     | Improvement of riding quality of GS road from Ch. 0.0 to Ch. 867.00 m in Guwahati City - Assam                                                 | 34.00   | 9.3.2001   | Completed   |
| 9.                     | Improvement of traffic junction at Ganeshguri Chariali on GS Road in Guwahati town - Assam                                                     | 50.00   | 9.3.2001   | Completed   |
| 10.                    | Metalling & Blacktopping of Kathiatoli-Amlokhi road (Remaining length) in the Nagaon district under Nagaon East Road Division - Assam          | 214.02  | 9.3.2001   | Completed   |

| 1   | 2                                                                                                                                                                            | 3      | 4         | 5         |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| 11. | Metalling and black topping of Nonai-Dakhinpat road at km 2nd, 3rd & 4th including protection work at km 1st in Nagaon district under Nagaon East Division - Assam           | 69.72  | 9.3.2001  | Completed |
| 12. | Improvement by widening and strengthening of Nagaon Bhuragaon road via Dhing to Bardowa in Nagaon district under Nagaon West Division - Assam                                | 600.00 | 9.3.2001  | Completed |
| 13. | Metalling and black topping of Nalbari - Kamarkuchi road from km 7th to 11th in Nalbari district under North Kamrup Division - Assam                                         | 100.00 | 9.3.2001  | Completed |
| 14. | Improvement of road from Circuit House to North Lakhimpur Daily Bazar road via ASTC including link to D.C.'s court to NH-52 in North Lakhimpur Dist. Assam                   | 29.83  | 9.3.2001  | Completed |
| 15. | Strengthening of weak pavement section of North Guwahati Amingaon Hajo Nalbari Road (from ch 473000 m to 49400 m) - Assam                                                    | 50.00  | 9.3.2001  | Completed |
| 16. | Improvement of Sonai-Saidaria road by metalling and blacktopping including widening and strengthening of existing weak pavement from 1st km to 12th km.                      | 267.22 | 28.3.2001 | Completed |
| 17. | Improvement of Old A.T. Road in km 3rd to 4th & 5th under Guwahati Road Division                                                                                             | 100.08 | 27.3.2001 | Completed |
| 18. | Improvement of Bangalipara-Fakiragram road from ch. 0.000 to 5500.00 m                                                                                                       | 244.00 | 28.3.2001 | Completed |
| 19. | Metalling and black topping of Chamata Sahpur Kaithalkuchi Nalbari road from km 1st to 9th                                                                                   | 179.89 | 28.3.2001 | Completed |
| 20. | Improvement of North Solmara Chapaguri Road from 15th to 17th Km (widening and strengthening i/c drain cum footpath)                                                         | 179.97 | 28.3.2001 | Completed |
| 21. | Improvement by Metalling & Blacktopping to Manikpur Chakisali to Roha Chakla Kokaila road (4.372)                                                                            | 200.00 | 28.3.2001 | Completed |
| 22. | Construction of road-cum-bund along the western side of river Haria connecting Pachim Tetelisora with Southern approach of bridge No.7/1 on Dakhinapat Kampur road (4.7 km.) | 29.46  | 28.3.2001 | Completed |

| 1                      | 2                                                                                                                                                   | 3      | 4          | 5                    |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------------|----------------------|
| <b>2001-2002</b>       |                                                                                                                                                     |        |            |                      |
| 1                      | Improvement of Met. Moran-Naharkatia Road from Km 1st to 19th under Dibrugarh Road Division in Assam                                                | 201.55 | 30.3.2002  | Recently sanctioned  |
| 2                      | Improvement & Met. D.R.T. Road from Ch. 52850.00 to 46850.00 m under Tinsukia Road Division Assam                                                   | 203.91 | 30.3.2002  | Recently sanctioned. |
| 3.                     | <b>Meghalaya</b>                                                                                                                                    |        |            |                      |
| <b>1999-2000 – Nil</b> |                                                                                                                                                     |        |            |                      |
| <b>2000-2001</b>       |                                                                                                                                                     |        |            |                      |
| 1.                     | Improvement of Geomeytrics and widening including metalling black topping of Ludmuklah-Kyndern Tuber road - portion from 55 km of NH-44 to Nongbah. | 200.00 | 25.2.1992  | 100%                 |
| 2.                     | Improvement of Laitkor-Pamlakrai, Laitkor-Laitlyngkot at 9th Km of Shiklong-Jowai Road to 40 ST. Road                                               | 90.53  | 19.6.98    | 100%                 |
| 3.                     | Improving of riding quality of Agia Medhipara-Phulbari-Tura (AMPT) road portion from Km . 3rd to 12th and from Km 79th to 88th                      | 189.46 | 01.02.2001 | 30%                  |
| 4.                     | Strengthening of Shillong-Cherra Road from Km. 22.00 - 29.00                                                                                        | 192.83 | 01.02.2001 | 40%                  |
| 5.                     | Strengthening of weak pavement from Km. 7/0 to 12/0 including provision of hard shoulder and Lad-Mukhla-Nangbah Kyndong Tuber Road.                 | 68.69  | 28.2.2001  | 90%                  |
| 6.                     | Strengthening Shillong-Cherra road from Km 29/0 to 32/0 (Phase-II)                                                                                  | 81.44  | 28.2.2001  | 70%                  |
| 7.                     | Strengthening of Dkhiah-Sutanga-Saipung-Moulsei-Haflong road (Section III and IV)                                                                   | 149.83 | 28.2.2001  | 20%                  |
| 8.                     | Improvement of riding quality of Rongram-Rongrenggiri-Darugiri road (Km 79 to 83 & Km 101 to 105)                                                   | 87.68  | 28.2.2001  | 20%                  |

| 1                      | 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 3       | 4          | 5           |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------|-------------|
| <b>2001-2002</b>       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| 1.                     | Widening of formation width and pavement including improvement of geometrics, metalling and black-topping from single lane to double lane standard of Jowai-Khanduli Road from 1st Km. to 5th Km                                                               | 265.14  | 29.5.2001  | 30%         |
| 2.                     | Improvement including metalling and blacktopping of road from NH-44 to Nongthymme (4.00 Km.)                                                                                                                                                                   | 173.434 | 16.10.2001 | In progress |
| 4.                     | <b>Mizoram</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |            |             |
| <b>1999-2000 – Nil</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| <b>2000-2001</b>       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| 1.                     | Improvement of riding quality and widening of narrow portions of roads within Aizwal Town                                                                                                                                                                      | 301.70  | 30.1.2001  | In progress |
| <b>2001-2002</b>       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| 1.                     | Improvement and connectivity missing link road viz. (i) Vaivakawn to Tanhril and Link Road to NH-54 (ii) Zemabawk to Selesih Road (iii) Lunglei-Thenzawl Road (iv) Keitum-Chekkawn via Artahkawn Road (v) Construction of Bridge over R. Chawngte at Chawngte. | 600.00  | 7.8.2001   | In progress |
| 2.                     | Improvement of Aizawl Town Roads                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 400.02  | 15.1.2002  | In progress |
| 5.                     | <b>Manipur</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |         |            |             |
| <b>1999-2000 – Nil</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| <b>2000-2001</b>       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| 1.                     | Reconstruction of Pishunthong Bridge over Nambul River                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 118.00  | 30.3.2001  | 20%         |
| 2.                     | Reconstruction of Yairipok Bridge over river Thoubal (Balance work)                                                                                                                                                                                            | 117.86  | 30.3.2001  | In progress |
| 3.                     | Reconstruction of Irilbung Bridge over river Iril including approaches                                                                                                                                                                                         | 159.73  | 30.3.2001  | 10%         |
| <b>2001-2002</b>       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |         |            |             |
| 1.                     | Improvement of Churachandpur-Singhat-Behiang Road (Km 84.75 to 92.00)                                                                                                                                                                                          | 155.92  | 20.7.2001  | 60%         |
| 2.                     | Improvement of Mayang Imphal to Chakpikarong road via Sugum Turning                                                                                                                                                                                            | 435.00  | 06.12.2001 | 20%         |

| 1         | 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 3                      | 4         | 5           |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>6.</b> | <b>Nagaland</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                        |           |             |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>1999-2000 – Nil</b> |           |             |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>2000-2001</b>       |           |             |
| 1.        | Improvement of road from NH-61 to Impur Town (MDR) in Nagaland (Length 10.0 km)                                                                                                                                                                                    | 113.36                 | 22.3.2001 | 42.94%      |
| 2.        | Improvement of road from IOC to Rotary Junction at Mokokchung (Length-2km)                                                                                                                                                                                         | 16.016                 | 22.3.2001 | 37.06%      |
| 3.        | Improvement of Town road at Kohima in Nagaland (Length 10.50 km)                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 252.12                 | 22.3.2001 | 87.00%      |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>2001-2002 – Nil</b> |           |             |
| <b>7.</b> | <b>Tripura</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                        |           |             |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>1999-2000 - Nil</b> |           |             |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>2000-2001 - Nil</b> |           |             |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>2001-2002</b>       |           |             |
| 1.        | Replacement of 9 nos. of existing timber bridges by RCC slab-box culverts on Telamura-Khowai road                                                                                                                                                                  | 193.00                 | 18.4.2001 | 78%         |
| 2.        | Improvement of Agartala-Airport (Mahatma Gandhi Smarani) Road                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 160.98                 | 16.7.2001 | In progress |
| <b>8.</b> | <b>Sikkim</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                        |           |             |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>1999-2000 - Nil</b> |           |             |
|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>2000-2001</b>       |           |             |
| 1.        | Stabilization (Protective works) c/o box drain and widening to Namchi-Phong road, Namchi-Damithang Road, Namchi-Assangthang road, Naya Bazar-Namchi road, Namchi-Saighari Road, Namchi-Salghari road, Melli-Phong road Sadam-Bhaniyang road and Manpur-Namchi road | 29.14                  | 28.3.2001 | In progress |
| 2.        | Road Surface improvement and improvement of drainage system around Gangtok                                                                                                                                                                                         | 56.31                  | 28.3.2001 | In progress |
| 3.        | Surface strengthening and improvement and drainage system under Geyzing Sub Division in West Sikkim                                                                                                                                                                | 36.33                  | 28.3.2001 | In progress |

| 1  | 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 3     | 4         | 5           |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|-------------|
| 4. | Upgradation of GRBA road strengthening and drainage works under R&B Division (East) Gangtok                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 25.95 | 28.3.2001 | In progress |
| 5. | Surface strengthening on Namchi-Damithang Road under Namchi-Sub-Division in South Sikkim                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 11.34 | 28.3.2001 | In Progress |
| 6. | Stabilization box drain works mangan SR Sec. School Road at Km. 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 4.96  | 28.3.2001 | In progress |
| 7. | Surface improvement and patch repair on Pelling-Dentam Road, Km 1st to 17th                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 13.38 | 28.3.2001 | In progress |
| 8. | Surface strengthening and slop stabilization Sirwani-Birmiak Road, Nompok-Yangang Road, Singtham-Pabong-Tarku Road, Sintam-Chewribotey road, Duga Pandam Road, Sintam-Chewribotey-Pandam, Duga, Chewribotey and Pacheykhani road, Phongla-Mamrign road, Sirwani-Bermiok road, Km. 6th, 7th and 8th. | 13.79 | 28.3.2001 | In progress |

#### Nuclear Fuel Resources

7348. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether substantial nuclear fuel resources are located in Lambapur in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the quantum reserves estimated and their utility;

(c) whether any feasibility study has been conducted of the resources and raw materials located;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the funds earmarked for the exploitation of the resources in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD) has established Uranium deposits of moderate tonnage (about 5,000 Tonnes) in the Lambapur - Peddagattu areas of Andhra Pradesh.

(c) and (d) Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL), a public sector undertaking under DAE is presently carrying out feasibility studies for exploitation of these deposits.

(e) Approximately Rs.25 crore during 2002-03.

[Translation]

#### Safety of people of Indian origin in Zimbabwe

7349. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:

SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:

SHRI C.N. SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a move to drive out the people of Indian origin in Zimbabwe and to usurp their properties as reported in the 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated April 26, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure safety of the people of Indian origin in Zimbabwe?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Acting Chairman of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veteran Associations has asked the Indian community to ignore the threats and ultimatums issued by the Association's Secretary for Projects. There has been no panic or concern expressed by the Indian community in Zimbabwe.

(c) The Government of India through the High Commission of India in Harare has taken up the matter with the Government of Zimbabwe and has been assured that the latter would safeguard the interest of the Indian community in Zimbabwe.

[English]

#### **Red Alert at National Port**

7350. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA:

SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have issued a warning to the various Port authorities in the country regarding terrorist attacks from the sea on the vital installations of the Port;

(b) if so, the details of the guidelines given to them in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken by the Port authorities thereon?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) to (c) Ministry of Shipping advised the Major ports to take strict measures to protect and safeguard ports. In addition to the regular security arrangements, measures taken include:

- Special watch is being kept on patrolling of inner harbour waters. Night patrolling has been intensified. Strict punitive action is being taken against those fishermen who attempt to enter into inner harbour waters by country boats.
- The security of the Ports has been beefed up with extra deployment of CISF personnel at various vulnerable points.

- Entry to the port has been restricted and identity is strictly checked.

- Water Front patrolling has been beefed up.

- The Civil Defence Authority has been requested to conduct training programme for all categories of personnel.

- Important security matters are being reviewed regularly.

- Random checking at vital installation has been intensified.

#### **Withdrawal/Grant of MFN Status**

7351. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:

SHRI B.K. PARTHASARATHI:

SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken a decision to withdraw the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status granted to Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government have since taken a decision to grant MFN status to Afghanistan; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Government have, following the December 13 terrorist attack on Indian Parliament, taken diplomatic and other measures considered appropriate and necessary.

(d) and (e) India and Afghanistan had signed a trade agreement on June 24, 1978. According to Article 4 of this agreement, both Governments had accorded to each other MFN treatment in respect of import and export licences, customs, duties and all other charges and taxes applicable to importation, exportation or transit of commodities.

**Invitation to Home Minister**

7352. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Pakistan's Interior Minister lately invited the Union Home Minister to visit Islamabad; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) In March this year, during the 2nd SAARC Information Minister's conference held at Islamabad, the Pakistan media carried a report indicating that the Pakistan Interior Minister had extended an invitation to the Union Home Minister, Shri L. K. Advani. There was also a suggestion in these reports, that the Pakistan Interior Minister proposed discussions on the issue of de-escalation of tensions with India and on the list of 20 fugitives from law. Subsequently, a senior Pakistan Interior Ministry official was also quoted in the media confirming the fact that such an invitation had indeed been extended.

Pakistan leaders frequently indulge in such propagandist ploys, especially during international conferences, in their attempt to divert international attention from Pakistan's continued sponsorship and involvement with cross border terrorism in India. Pakistan also seeks to divert attention from the fact that it has not taken any action on the list of 20 fugitives from law, handed over to them on 31st December 2001.

Government have consistently stated their commitment to establishing good neighbourly ties with Pakistan, and for this purpose to resume the Composite Dialogue that seeks to build trust and confidence, establish a stable structure of cooperation and address outstanding issues. Pakistan must end its sponsorship of cross border terrorism and take urgent action on the list of 20 fugitives from law so that appropriate conditions for a meaningful dialogue process are created.

**U.S. Reactions over Gujarat Incidents**

7353. SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL:

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State who visited India recently had expressed her concern over the incidents in Gujarat;

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Media reports have quoted the U. S. Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca as expressing, during her visit to India, 9-10 April 2002, concern over the recent Gujarat incidents.

- (c) Government has clearly stated that it rejects any intrusive criticism or prescription with regard to handling of India's internal developments. Government has, however, noted that in an interview published on 3 May 2002 in *The Hindu*, the U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice had stated "we have been impressed with the Indian Government, which has reacted so strongly to the sectarian violence... We believe that India is a great democracy, that the Vajpayee Government is leading India very well and it will do the right thing when it comes to investigating the violence".

[Translation]

**Retrenchment of Employees**

7354. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the retrenchment of employees is proposed in his ministry and various corporations as per the guidelines issued by the Government in this regard; and
- (b) if so, the grounds for such a retrenchment and the time by which retrenchment would start and the manner in which the same is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

**Retention of Locally Recruited Employees**

7355. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the CAG in its Report No.2 of 2001 in paragraph 8.9 pointed out retention of locally recruited employee for seven years beyond the date of her

superannuation in Embassy of India, Athens and whether the same thing had been repeated by the Embassy of India in Seoul when a chauffeur-cum-messenger was continued in service irregularly for more than 5 years beyond the date of extended period of superannuation;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the reasons thereof;
- (d) whether there is any proposal to fix accountability and responsibility in this regard;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) the reasons for which the Ministry did not reply to the audit observations/references expeditiously; and
- (g) the action the Ministry propose to take in ensuring timely reply to audit observations giving the details of the observations pending with them and since when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The services of a local clerk/typist in the Embassy of India, Athens were retained for seven years beyond her attaining the prescribed age of retirement of female staff in Athens i.e. 60 years on 28-2-1993. Her services were terminated on 28-2-2000. The Embassy of India, Seoul retained the services of a local chauffeur from 1-10-1995 to 31-12-2001 without Ministry's approval after he had attained the prescribed age of retirement of 58 years as applicable in 1994-95. In his case, however, on the Mission's recommendation, the Ministry had approved extension for one year from 1-10-94 to 30-9-95.

(c) The prescribed procedure for seeking extension of service was not observed by the concerned missions.

(d) The matter is under investigation with a view to fix responsibility on the concerned officials.

(e) The comments of the concerned officials posted in Athens during the period of extension have been sought. As regards Seoul, the Audit Report has been received recently and the same is being studied with a view to seek necessary comments of the concerned officials.

(f) There has not been any undue delay in replying to the audit observations. The Audit Para No.8.9 of the CAG's Report for the year 2001 relating to Athens, was received in the Ministry on 22-10-2001 and the Draft Action

Taken Note was sent to the DG, ACR on 20-11-2001. As regards Seoul, Para No.9.5 of Report of the CAG for the year ended 20J2 has been received in the Ministry only on 16th April, 2002. The Ministry has already approved ex-post-facto the retention of the employees concerned. Having regularised the retention, the proposal for regularisation of the expenditure of Rs. 6,94,096 in the case of Athens and Rs.1,97,231 in the case of Seoul, towards the wages paid to the two employees during extended period of their service, is under consideration.

(g) All the CAG paras pertaining to this Ministry up to the year 1998 have been settled. Audit paras pertaining to the C & AG Reports since 1999 at various stages of settlement are as below:

| Report No.   | No. of paras for settlement |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| No.2 of 1999 | 2                           |
| No.2 of 2000 | 3                           |
| No.2 of 2001 | 11                          |

The Ministry has set up a high powered Monitoring Committee under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of the Ministry to review follow up action for timely settlement of the C & AG paras.

[English]

#### Emergency Procedures Around Nuclear Plants

7356. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) and the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (US N.R.C.) have stressed upon India for better emergency procedures around the nuclear plants;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Atomic Energy Commission has not adopted the emergency procedures;

(d) if so, the reasons therefore;

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by Atomic Energy Commission to finalise and develop a safety manual for emergency procedures and also evacuation procedures, emergency training and fire safety issues;

(f) whether any collaboration has been sought by AEC in this regard; and

- (g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) Not applicable.

(c) and (d) Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) through the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has ensured that emergency procedures are in place in all nuclear installations. The respective State Governments have drawn detailed emergency response procedures in the vicinity of the operating nuclear power stations.

(e) Approved Emergency Plans are in place in all nuclear power plants before it is authorised for commissioning. The emergency plans are prepared by the State authorities with the active support of the plant management. They cover all necessary aspects.

- (f) No, Sir.

- (g) Not applicable.

#### Use of Wombs and Semen

7357. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a Bill to allow consenting couples to make use of wombs and semen from willing owners; and

(b) if so, the time by which the Bill is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Within the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare there is no proposal to introduce the Bill.

[Translation]

#### Committee to Check Adulteration

7358. SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have constituted a committee to check all the aspects of the menace of adulteration in drugs; and

(b) if so, the number of manufacturers and sellers of drugs against whom action has been taken by the above committee alongwith details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare constituted a Committee under the chairmanship of Directorate General of Health Sciences (DGHS) on July 18, 2001 associating members from industry, trade, drug regulatory officers and public representatives to go into all aspect of the menace of spurious drugs and suggest remedial measures. The committee had deliberated various underlying issues concerning manufacture and sale of spurious drugs in its meeting held on Oct. 25, 2001 and March 14, 2002, including measures required to be taken to combat the menace of spurious drugs.

(b) The committee has not been entrusted with this task.

#### Job to the Adopted Son

7359. SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is provision to provide Government job to the dependants of deceased officials of the Department of Post;

(b) if so, whether there is also provision to provide Government job to the adopted son of a deceased officials of postal department;

(c) if so, the number of cases where applications for providing jobs to the adopted sons of the deceased officials of the postal department are lying pending and the time since when they are lying pending; and

(d) the time by which the pending cases are likely to be disposed of?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The object of the Scheme of compassionate appointment is to grant appointment on compassionate grounds to dependent family member of a Government servant who dies in harness or retires on medical grounds. As per the scheme dependent family includes adopted son.

(c) and (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

#### **Health Project in Karnataka with World Bank Aid**

7360. SHRI G. S. BASAVARAJ: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a State Health Systems Development Project aided by the World Bank is being implemented in Karnataka since 1996;

(b) if so, the outlay of the project;

(c) the time by which the project is likely to be completed alongwith the quantum of funds spent so far; and

(d) the objectives to be attained under the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A multi State Project with an outlay of SDR 235.5 million (US\$ 350 million) is being implemented in the States of Karnataka, West Bengal and Punjab since 1996. The share of Karnataka of the total allocation is SDR 74.83 million. Out of this an amount of SDR 60.64 million has been disbursed by World Bank upto 31.3.2002. The project is scheduled to close on 31.3.2004.

(d) (i) To improve efficiency in the allocation and use of health resources through policy and institutional development; and (ii) to improve the performance of the health care system through improvements in the quality, effectiveness and coverage of health services at the first referral level and selective coverage at the primary level to better serve the neediest sections of society.

[Translation]

#### **Sea Route Cable Network with Singapore**

7361. SHRI PADAM SEN CHOUDHRY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first sea route cable network has started functioning between India and Singapore recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which rates of long distance telephone calls are likely to be reduced as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Competition and opening of sector always lead to reduction in rates of various services and is a continuous process.

#### **CGHS Dispensary in Mayur Vihar**

7362. DR. ASHOK PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is only one C.G.H.S. dispensary in Mayur Vihar (East Delhi) at present providing health services to more than fifty thousand Government employees and pensioners;

(b) whether as per the norms in the event of the number of card holders exceeding 2000 a new dispensary has to be opened;

(c) if so, the reasons for not opening a new dispensary despite the number of card holders in the dispensary exceeding 20,000;

(d) whether the Government propose to open a new dispensary in this area keeping in view the difficulties faced by the beneficiaries; and

(e) if so, the time by which the dispensary is likely to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) Opening of new dispensaries under CGHS require creation of new posts. The implementation of the norms fixed in the SIU report of November, 1999, has become sub-judice as CAT Principal Bench, New Delhi vide order in OA No.1030/2001 and MA No.1762/2001 has partially stayed the implementation of the recommendations contained in the said SIU report. Till such time new posts are sanctioned, it will not be possible for the Government to open a new CGHS dispensary in Mayur Vihar.

*[English]***P&T Service in Tribal Districts of Madhya Pradesh**

7363. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Post and Telegraph Services in the Tribal districts of Madhya Pradesh are in a very bad shape to such an extent that in the rural areas the dak takes more than week days to reach from one place to another and postal stamps as well as other postal stationery has been in short supply for a long time;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) the action being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Post and Telegraph Services in the tribal districts of Madhya Pradesh are satisfactory. As per the results of Test Letters posted in these districts, on an average 98.6% of the mails are delivered within norms prescribed by the Department. There is also no shortage of postage stamps and other postal stationery.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

**PCR System for HIV/AIDS**

7364. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to procure the PCR system for HIV/AIDS patients;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have received representation from various organizations to make PCR system available in the Hospitals of State particularly in Mumbai;

(d) if so, the decision of the Government thereto;

(e) the benefit, HIV/AIDS patients would have due to this system; and

(f) the time by which this project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In addition to the Polymerized Chain Reaction (PCR) system already available at four centres viz. NARI Pune, NICEC Kolkata, AIIMS New Delhi and NICD Delhi, Government have decided to procure eleven more such systems for eleven centres.

(c) Yes, Sir. Shri Kirit Somaiya, MP had written to HFM requesting for early procurement and supply of these systems to Mumbai.

(d) Government is re-tendering for procurement of the eleven PCR system as none of the bids earlier received in response to first tender were found to be responsive.

(e) This will be of limited benefit to the HIV patients as it can detect HIV infection during window period only as also in the children born to HIV infected mothers. It can also be used in doubtful case of HIV for confirmation.

(f) It is the endeavour of the Government to expedite the procedure for procurement of the system.

*[Translation]***Non Availability of Electricity for Village Telephone Exchange**

7365. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item regarding "three thousand telephone exchanges established for villages are waiting for electricity" as reported in the "Rashtriya Sahara" dated April 2, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to make the said exchanges operational; and

(d) the time by which the exchanges are likely to become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

*[English]*

**Audit System of Death Cases in  
Government Hospitals**

7366. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether death rates in Government hospitals are very high as compared to the other hospitals;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; .

(c) whether the Government are aware that in Government hospitals the audit systems of death cases exist on papers only and are not implemented properly;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereon;

(e) whether the Government are considering to make mandatory the medical audit in each death case;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(h) the steps taken by the Union Government to fix responsibility in each case of death occur due to the negligence of doctors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Mortality data in respect of Non-Government Hospitals are not maintained. However, the gross death rates in Dr. R.M.L. Hospital, Safdarjung Hospital, Smt. Sucheta Kriplani Hospital and Kalawati Saran Children Hospital during the last three years are as under:

| Name of the Hospital | Year (gross death Rate in %) |      |      |
|----------------------|------------------------------|------|------|
|                      | 1999                         | 2000 | 2001 |
| Dr. R.M.L. Hospital  | 5.9                          | 5.6  | 5.3  |
| Safdarjung Hospital  | 7.4                          | 6.9  | 6.5  |
| SSK Hospital         | 1.7                          | 1.4  | 1.5  |
| KSC Hospital         | 11.8                         | 11.6 | 11.3 |

In the Central Government Hospitals very serious/critical/ referred from other places/Head Injury or patients in terminal

stages come for treatment since the admission is not refused for any patient.

(c) and (d) In Dr. R.M.L. Hospital, Safdarjung Hospital, Smt. Sucheta Kriplani Hospital and Kalawati Saran Children Hospital, the death review/medical audit committees meet regularly to review the death cases. Besides this, death cases are also reviewed in respective departments.

(e) to (h) Do not arise in view of (c) and (d) above.

*[Translation]*

**World Bank Fund for Maternity Hospitals**

7367. SHRI RAM SINGH KASWAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank had allocated funds for setting up maternity hospitals in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the States where the maternity hospitals/ maternity centers were set up with this fund; and

(d) the amount spent thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) Under the World Bank assisted Eighth India Population Project (IPP- VIII) under implementation since 1993 at a total cost of Rs.429.40 crores including Rs.171.20 crores for civil works for construction/repairs/renovation of various health facilities etc., 58 new maternity hospitals/centres were set up at a total cost of Rs.43.85 crores as per the following details:

| State                              | Number of Maternity Hospitals/Centres set-up | Amount spent (Rs. in crore) |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Delhi                              | 6                                            | 11.08                       |
| West Bengal including Kolkata      | 34                                           | 25.25                       |
| Andhra Pradesh including Hyderabad | 5                                            | 2.42                        |
| Karnataka including Bangalore      | 13                                           | 5.10                        |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>58</b>                                    | <b>43.85</b>                |

The World Bank assisted Reproductive and Child Health

(RCH) Programme envisages repairs, add-on and upgradation of various health facilities. Under the RCH sub-project being implemented in Asansol city of West Bengal at a total cost of Rs.8.57 crores, two maternity homes have been set up at total cost of Rs.1.62 crores.

In addition, the World Bank is also assisting State Health Systems Development; Projects in the States of West Bengal, Karnataka, Punjab, Orissa, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh for strengthening Primary & Secondary level health care facilities which include repair/ renovation/ upgradation of health facilities at various levels.

[English]

#### **Working Group on Telecom Factories**

7368. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether CGMs telecoms were instructed to form standing working groups at telecom factories level to bring about reduction in the cost of items;

(b) if so, whether such groups have been formed;

(c) if so, the number of meetings held by them so far and the outcome thereof;

(d) whether the prices of telecom items produced in their factories came down in comparison to the prices prevailing in the markets; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) A 'Product Cost Review Group' of Telecom Factories was constituted on 9.4.99. The 'group' submitted its report on 18th May 1999. The issue of cost comparison is also reviewed in Quarterly Production Review meetings of factories.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The prices of some of the items produced in Telecom Factories have come down in comparison to the prices prevailing in the markets. The prices of other items are somewhat higher due to large work force and overhead in these factories.

#### **Ship Building Subsidy**

7369. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to extend further the existing 3% ship building subsidy presently available to public ship building companies only;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the increased subsidy to private yards is likely to affect the ship building industry in the public sector?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) The extension of existing ship building subsidy to all the Shipyards has been examined by Ministry of Shipping. However, no decision has been taken in this regard.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

#### **Growth of India Fleet**

7370. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian shipping industry has failed to meet the target in regard to growth of Indian fleet during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(c) whether according to the National Shipowners' Association, there has been stagnation in the growth of the Indian fleet during the Ninth Five Year Plan period; and

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

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government had fixed a target of 9 million Gross Ton (GT) to be achieved by the end of the 9th Plan period. Against this, the tonnage position at the end of the 9th Plan period was 6.82 million GT comprising of 560 vessels. The main reasons for not achieving the target tonnage by Shipping Industry are (i) Lack of conducive fiscal environment and (ii) the Shipping Industry faced world wide recession during the first half of the Ninth Plan period.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Government has been taking steps from time to time to facilitate the growth of Indian tonnage. Considering the slow growth of Indian tonnage, the following fiscal measures have also been taken by the Government from the year 2000-01:

- (i) Restoration of Section 33AC of the Income Tax Act from 50% to 100% tax relief on amounts earmarked for vessel acquisition in separate reserve account;
- (ii) Increase in depreciation rate from 20% to 25%;
- (iii) Necessary amendments in EXIM policy to rectify the anomaly of categorizing acquisition of second hand vessels as capital goods, which necessitated procuring special import license for the purpose;
- (iv) Allowing 100% foreign direct investment in the shipping sector;
- (v) Ministry of Shipping convinced Ministry of Finance to roll back imposition of 5% customs duty on import of ocean going ships; .
- (vi) Expanding the scope of Section 33AC to simulate Indian Shipowners to earmark higher funds for acquisition of tonnage. Further, to make this section more attractive for Indian ship owners, Government has decided to allow deduction of funds transferred under Section 33AC while computing book profits for the purpose of Minimum Alternate Tax.

#### **Splitting of B.S.N.L.**

7371. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to split Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited into four business units; and

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

#### **Funds for Acharya Harihar Cancer Research Centre**

7372. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount sanctioned by the Union Government for the Acharya Harihar Cancer Research Centre, Cuttack during the last three years;

(b) the purposes for which the funds have been sanctioned in each year;

(c) the amount out of the above spent in each year by the centre;

(d) whether most of the equipments in the institute are lying in unused condition; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) During the last three years, an amount of Rs. 2.25 crores has been sanctioned to the Acharya Harihar Cancer Research Centre, Cuttack.

(b) The funds have been sanctioned for purchase and maintenance of the equipments purchased by the Institute.

(c) to (e) The Institute has reported that it has fully utilized the amount sanctioned. Most of the equipments in the Institute are in working conditions. However, due to non-availability of spares and financial constraints some of the equipments like Gamma Camera, Image Intensifier & TV Monitor and Bronchoscope & Cystoscope are not in working condition at present.

[Translation]

#### **Dredger Machines in Kolkata Port Trust**

7373. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Dredger Machines functioning under the Kolkata Port Trust and the number out of them lying out of order indicating the period since when;

(b) the reasons for not getting the said machines repaired;

(c) the total amount of rent paid for hiring Dredger Machines from Private Organisations during the last three years; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure requisite depth for the movement of big ships in Kolkata and Haldia Ports?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) There are 5 dredgers functioning under Kolkata Port Trust and all of them are operational at present. In addition, there is a very small jet dredger for use inside the lock barrels and dry docks.

(d) Does not arise.

(c) The amount spent by Kolkata Port Trust on hiring dredgers from private organizations during the last three years is Rs.116.66 crores. Besides, Kolkata Port incurred following expenditure on additional maintenance dredging in the shipping channel at Haldia, which was carried out by M/s. HAM Dredging & Marine Contractors:

| Year      | Expenditure      |
|-----------|------------------|
| 1997-98   | Rs. 36.26 crores |
| 1998-99   | Rs.225.63 crores |
| 1999-2000 | Rs.116.66 crores |

(d) Increase in the navigable depths in the approach channels to Kolkata and Haldia has been the endeavour through all possible means such as dredging, river training, re-alignment of navigable channel and basin. The Government reimburses to Kolkata Port 100% of the cost on items directly related to river dredging and river maintenance as well as the cost incurred on items directly related to maintenance dredging of shipping channel leading to Haldia. In addition, Government has approved the proposal of Kolkata Port for execution of River Regulatory Measures for improvement of draft in Hooghly Estuary at an estimated cost of Rs. 350.84 crores. River Regulatory Measures include action in all three dimensions of capital dredging, river training measure and re-alignment of existing channels.

#### **Pending Passport Applications in Bihar**

7374. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the people of Bihar are not getting passports from the Regional Passport Office for a pretty long-time;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the total number of applications lying pending in the Bihar Regional Passport Office as on date; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for early disposal of the said applications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Passport Office, Patna is issuing passports to the people of Bihar without delay. An application is

considered pending after a clear police verification report has been received and the application is complete in all respects. The average time taken by Passport Office, Patna in issuing passport after receipt of a clear police report is less than 10 days.

(c) and (d) The total number of passport applications pending with Passport Office, Patna as on 7th May, 2002 was 1900. This is due to the diversion of passport office staff for the local elections at Patna. Passport Office, Patna has been directed to clear the pendency in a time bound manner.

#### **Clearance of Parcels by Foreign Parcel P.O. at Ahmedabad**

7375. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B.THAKKAR:

SHRI P. S. GADHAVI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of parcels containing electronic goods like CDs etc. received in the foreign Parcel Post Office at Ahmedabad during the last three years;

(b) the number of such parcels cleared as sample parcels during the period and the revenue collected by the Government therefrom;

(c) the mechanism adopted by the Government to accord clearance to such Sample Parcels;

(d) whether the device ensures that no under valuation of article is done; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The number of parcels containing electronic goods received at Foreign Parcel Post office Ahmedabad during the last three years are as under:

| Year | No. of parcels containing electronic goods received |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 1999 | 179                                                 |
| 2000 | 200                                                 |
| 2001 | 352                                                 |

(b) The number of such parcels cleared as sample parcels during the above period are given in the table below. The revenue from sample parcels is Nil due to the reasons given in (c) below:

| Year | No. of such parcels cleared as sample parcels | Revenue collected |
|------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1999 | 132                                           | Nil               |
| 2000 | 120                                           | Nil               |
| 2001 | 154                                           | Nil               |

(c) Duty-free clearance is allowed for such parcels with samples valued up to Rupees Five Thousand as provided under Customs notification No. 154/94 dated 13.7.1994. However, the Suppliers' invoice showing value for the purpose of customs and indicating that the goods are samples and supplied free of cost, are obtained from the addressee before the parcels are delivered. An undertaking regarding non-payment is also obtained from the addressee before release of the parcels.

(d) No such case of under valuation noticed at Foreign Post Office, Ahmedabad.

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

#### **RADAR Imaging Satellite**

7376. SHRI Y.V. RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to undertake Radar Imaging Satellite mission in the Tenth Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the targets being fixed therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is presently defining a project for a Radar Imaging Satellite, RISAT-1, which will provide all weather and day/night imaging capability for applications in flood management, kharif crop production estimation, soil moisture estimation, ocean state application etc. The RISAT -1 is slated for launch in 2006.

[English]

#### **Industries Status to IT**

7377. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the States where Industrial status has been given to information technology;

(b) whether the Government are taking steps to promote IT Industry in every State; and

(c) if so, the details of the assistance extended to various States?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) The Information Technology Sector is exempted from Industrial Licensing and IT Industry can be set up anywhere in the country. Government has taken a number of steps to promote the IT Industry, Which are applicable uniformly all-over the country, as listed in statement-I. For promotion of Software exports, Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), an autonomous society under the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information technology has set up 35 Centres all-over the country. A list of STPI Centres, state wise, is enclosed as statement-II. For setting up a STPI Centre, the State Government is required to identify a potential location for the IT industry, provide 3 acres of land and 3000 sq. ft. of built-up space and give a grant-in-aid of Rs.100 lakhs to partially defray the total project cost. The Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology also provides a grant-in-aid of Rs.50 lakhs towards setting up of High Speed Data Communication facilities in these centers. Financial assistance has also been given to IT projects which have been approved by the Empowered Committee on critical infrastructure balance scheme administered by the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

#### **Statement-I**

##### *Steps taken by the Government to promote the Information Technology Sector*

1. Export promotion Capital Goods scheme (EPCG) has been rationalized and extended uniformly to all sectors without any threshold limit on payment of 5% duty.

2. Approval for all foreign direct investment proposals relating to the Information Technology sector, with the exception of Business-to-Consumer (B2C) e-commerce are under the automatic route.
3. Electronics Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) and Software Technology Park (STP) Schemes are implemented under the aegis of the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, through a single window mechanism of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (IMSC).
4. Supplies of Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items in the Domestic Tariff Areas (DTA) by EHTP/EOU/EPZ units shall be counted towards fulfilment of minimum Net Foreign Exchange earning as a Percentage of exports (NFEP) and the minimum Export Performance (EP), provided that the items are manufactured in time unit and attract zero rate of basic customs duty. Positive NFEP is required to be achieved in 5 years instead of every year.
5. DTA access upto 50% of the FOB value of export is permitted for electronics hardware units under EOU/EPZ/EHTP schemes and the software units under EOU/EPZ/STP schemes.
6. Accelerated depreciation norms extended to computers and computer peripherals to all units and capital goods of IT hardware units under Export Oriented schemes (EOU/EPZ/EHTP). These shall stand depreciated to overall limit of 90% over a period of 3 years.
7. Special Economic Zones are being set up to enable hassle free manufacturing and trading for export purposes.
8. The Depreciation on Computers is allowed @ 60%.
9. In the Budget 2002-03, the peak rate of customs duty has been reduced from 35% to 30%. Customs duty has been reduced on stepper motors for computers/printers from 5% to 0%, floppy diskette and unrecorded magnetic tape from 15% to 10%, Ink cartridges/ribbon assembly/ ribbon gear assembly/ ribbon gear carriage for use in printers for computers from 25% to 5%. 56 items of capital goods for manufacture of semiconductors from 5% to 0%, 24 items of capital goods for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 15%. tools/moulds/ dies for electronics industry from 25% to 15% and on 46 items of raw materials for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 5%.
- \*Customs duty on Computers and Peripherals continues to be @ 15% and all storage devices, integrated circuits, microprocessors, data display tubes and deflection components of colour monitors continue at 0%. The concessional rate of customs duty @5% for specified raw materials for the electronics Industry (121 items) continues. Customs duty on Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) Items of WTO (IT and Telecom products) continues @15%, parts of Telecom continue @5%, parts, components and accessories of mobile handsets including cellular telephones continue at @0%.
10. The Central Excise duty structure was rationalized from multiple rates to single rate @16% and single rate of Special Excise Duty (SED) @ 16%, In the Budget 2001-02, and continues.
11. Information Technology Software is exempted from Customs and Excise Duty.
12. Second hand capital goods upto 10 years are freely importable.
13. EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units are eligible for Income Tax benefit on export profits upto 2010, in terms of Sections 10A and 10B of the Income Tax Act.
14. Exemption of withholding tax on interest on External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) is available to the IT sector.
15. Definition of Computer Software, as in Section 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act covers transmission of data.
16. Benefit of Section 80 HHE is available to supporting software developers.
17. IT Enabled Services are eligible for Income Tax benefit under Sections 10A, 10B and 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act.
18. DEPB rate will be same for a product whether exported as CBU or in CKD/SKD condition.
19. Threshold limit for obtaining 'Export house' status reduced to Rs.5 crores from Rs.15 crores for Small Scale Industry, tiny sector, cottage sector, units located in North East States/Sikkim/J&K; exporters exporting to countries in Latin America/CIS/Sub Sahara Africa

and units having ISO 9000 (series) status. The status holders are eligible for the following new/special facilities:

- 100% retention of foreign exchange in Exchange Earners' Foreign Currency (EEFC) account;
  - Enhancement in normal repatriation period from 180 days to 360 days.
20. The donation of computers, imported duty free by EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units to recognized noncommercial educational institutions, registered charitable hospitals, public libraries, public funded research and development establishments, etc., two years after their use by the said units is permitted.
  21. The second-hand computers and computer peripherals donated by an outside donor to Government schools and recognized schools run on a non-commercial basis by any organisation are exempted from customs duties.
  22. Income by way of dividends or long-term capital gains of a Venture Capital Fund or Venture Capital company from investment made by way of equity shares. In a Venture Capital Undertaking, which has been expanded to include the Software and IT sectors, will henceforth not be included in computing the total income.
  23. To give thrust to Venture Capital finance, SEBI has been made the single point nodal agency for registration and regulation of both domestic and overseas venture capital funds.
  24. There will be no tax on distributed or undistributed income of Venture Capital Funds. The income distributed by the VCFs will only be taxed in the hands of the investors at the rates applicable to the nature of the income. VCFs will continue to be eligible for exemption even if the shares of the VC undertaking in which the VCFs have made the initial investment are subsequently listed in a recognized stock exchange in India.
  25. Under policy on portfolio investment, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are permitted to invest in a company upto an aggregate of 24% of equity shares, extendible upto 40% subject to approvals. This limit was raised from 40% to 49% in the Budget 2001-02.

26. Tax holiday under provisions of Section 80-IA (Infrastructure Status) has been extended to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Broadband Network providers.
27. Two-way fungibility has been permitted for ADRs/GDRs. Local shares can be reconverted into ADRs/GDRs, subject to sectoral caps.
28. With a view to give a boost to the manufacturing sector, it is proposed in the Budget announcements 2002-03, to allow a deduction of a further sum of 15% of the actual cost of such machinery or plant acquired and installed after 31.3.2002 in case of new industrial undertaking or substantial expansion by an existing industrial undertaking. The proposed amendment will take effect from 1.4.2003 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2003-04 and subsequent years.
29. To encourage re-location of Industries to India, plant and machineries would be permitted to be imported without licence, where the depreciated value of such relocating plants exceeds Rs.50 crores.
30. Indian Companies wishing to invest abroad may now invest upto US \$ 100 Million on an annual basis through automatic route without being subject to the three year profitability condition, up from existing limit of US\$ 50 million (Budget announcement 2002-03).
31. Indian Companies making overseas Investment in joint ventures abroad by market purchases may now do so without prior approval upto 50% of their net worth, up from existing limit of 25% (Budget announcement 2002-03).
32. To induce more investment for R&D activities, a weighted deduction of 125% on the sums paid to any university, college or an Institution or a Scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research is available.
33. For reduction of transaction time for export/import clearances, Ministry of Civil Aviation has finalized the scheme of 'Known-Shippers' for doing away with the 24 hours cooling off period.
34. Two shifts have been introduced on week days and single-shift on holidays at the Air Cargo Complexes at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi and Goa.

35. Information Technology Act, 2000 dealing with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other information security related legal aspects is in place to encourage expansion of e-commerce through Internet.

**Statement-II**

*Software Technology Parks of India  
New Delhi-110003*

**Operational STPI Centers**

| Sl.No. | STPI Centers | States         |
|--------|--------------|----------------|
| 1      | 2            | 3              |
| 1      | Bangalore    | Karnataka      |
| 2      | Manipal      | Karnataka      |
| 3      | Mysore       | Karnataka      |
| 4      | Mangalore    | Karnataka      |
| 5      | Hubli        | Karnataka      |
| 6      | Bhubneswar   | Orissa         |
| 7      | Rourkela     | Orissa         |
| 8      | Pune         | Maharashtra    |
| 9      | Navi Mumbai  | Maharashtra    |
| 10     | Aurangabad   | Maharashtra    |
| 11     | Nagpur       | Maharashtra    |
| 12     | Hyderabad    | Andhra Pradesh |
| 13     | Vizag        | Andhra Pradesh |
| 14     | Vijayawada   | Andhra Pradesh |
| 15     | Warangal     | Andhra Pradesh |
| 16     | Thirupati    | Andhra Pradesh |
| 17     | Noida        | Uttar Pradesh  |
| 18     | Lucknow      | Uttar Pradesh  |
| 19     | Kanpur       | Uttar Pradesh  |
| 20     | Dehradun     | Uttaranchal    |
| 21     | Gandhinagar  | Gujarat        |

| 1  | 2                  | 3                |
|----|--------------------|------------------|
| 22 | Thiruvananthapuram | Kerala           |
| 23 | Chennai            | Tamil Nadu       |
| 24 | Coimbatore         | Tamil Nadu       |
| 25 | Trichy             | Tamil Nadu       |
| 26 | Madurai            | Tamil Nadu       |
| 27 | Mohali             | Punjab           |
| 28 | Jaipur             | Rajasthan        |
| 29 | Guwahati           | Assam            |
| 30 | Kolkata            | West Bengal      |
| 31 | Indore             | Madhya Pradesh   |
| 32 | Srinagar           | Jammu & Kashmir  |
| 33 | Shimla             | Himachal Pradesh |
| 34 | Bhilai             | Chhattisgarh     |
| 35 | Pondicherry        | Pondicherry      |

**Reservation to Muslims**

7378. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide 15 per cent reservation to Muslims in Government services in proportion to their population;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) As per provisions contained in Article 16 of the Constitution, there can be no discrimination in matters of public employment on the ground of religion.

**India's Entry in ASEAN**

7379. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any effort is being made by the Government to become a full member of the Association of South East Asian Nations; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) An ASEAN-India Summit is scheduled for 5 November 2002.

#### **Cargo Handling at Major Airports**

7380. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:

SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to poor maintenance of port equipment, the existing capacity for cargo handling of major ports has registered much lower than the estimated requirement during 2000- 2001 and 2001-2002;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the Government have enquired about the reasons for this;

(d) whether any responsibility has been fixed; and

(e) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

#### **Telephone Connection in Jamnagar and Porbandar**

7381. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL:

SHRI G.J. JAVIYA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of complaints regarding non-functioning of telephones have been received by Telecom Department for Jamnagar and Porbandar districts of Gujarat during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith action taken thereon;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to improve the telephone system in these areas;

(d) whether all the telephone exchanges have been brought under STD network; and

(e) if so, the number of new telephone connections provided by each exchange in these areas during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The number of complaints received during last three years are as under:

| Name of District | 1999-2000 | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Jamnagar         | 124260    | 132172    | 156288    |
| Porbandar        | 48397     | 53864     | 54113     |

All efforts have been made to dispose off the complaints regarding non-functioning of telephones in shortest possible time.

(c) The following steps have been taken to improve telephone system:

- (i) Connecting all the exchanges on reliable media.
- (ii) Providing STD facility to all the exchanges.
- (iii) Laying of underground cable to reduce overhead alignment and opening of 5 pairs and 10 pairs DPs.

(d) All the exchanges working at Jamnagar and Porbandar Districts have been provided with STD facility.

(e) The exchange wise details of new telephone connections provided in Jamnagar and Porbandar during 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02 are enclosed at statement I and II respectively.

#### **Statement-I**

##### *New Telephone connections provided during last three years in Jamnagar District*

| Sl. No. | Name of Exchange | 1999-2000 | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 |
|---------|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1       | 2                | 3         | 4         | 5         |
| 1.      | Aliabada         | 26        | 251       | 193       |

| 1   | 2           | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|-----|-------------|-----|-----|-----|
| 2.  | Amran       | 25  | 104 | 44  |
| 3.  | Arla        | -   | -   | 55  |
| 4.  | Baghdhara   | -   | 2   | 106 |
| 5.  | Balachadi   | 1   | 63  | 91  |
| 6.  | Balambha    | 21  | 86  | 74  |
| 7.  | Beraja      | 12  | 11  | 134 |
| 8.  | Bhadthar    | 9   | 36  | 72  |
| 9.  | Bhandana    | -   | 52  | 153 |
| 10. | Bhangore    | 34  | 41  | 112 |
| 11. | Bhanvad     | 418 | 361 | 468 |
| 12. | Bhatia      | 372 | 226 | 319 |
| 13. | Bhensdad    | -   | -   | 51  |
| 14. | Bhogat      | -   | 82  | 69  |
| 15. | Chandragadh | -   | 2   | 250 |
| 16. | Chokhanda   | 1   | 11  | 11  |
| 17. | Dabasang    | -   | 14  | 52  |
| 18. | Dadla       | 20  | 73  | 123 |
| 19. | Dallungi    | -   | 2   | 95  |
| 20. | Dhrata      | 40  | 53  | 13  |
| 21. | Dhrol       | 193 | 442 | 568 |
| 22. | Dhutarpar   | -   | -   | 166 |
| 23. | Dudhai      | -   | 127 | 62  |
| 24. | Dwarka      | 232 | 369 | 689 |
| 25. | Falla       | 25  | 150 | 130 |
| 26. | Falsar      | -   | 37  | 59  |
| 27. | Gadhka      | 67  | 85  | 111 |
| 28. | Hadiana     | 36  | 142 | 44  |
| 29. | Hansthal    | -   | 48  | 69  |

| 1   | 2               | 3    | 4    | 5    |
|-----|-----------------|------|------|------|
| 30. | Haripar         | -    | 2    | 165  |
| 31. | Hathla          | 11   | 12   | 41   |
| 32. | INS Valsura     | 83   | 44   | 4    |
| 33. | Jam Devalia     | -    | 98   | 112  |
| 34. | Jam Jodhpur     | 370  | 288  | 395  |
| 35. | Jam Kalyanpur   | 124  | 106  | 381  |
| 36. | Jam Khambhalla  | 801  | 1116 | 737  |
| 37. | JMN (MAIN)      | 5198 | 6140 | 5648 |
| 38. | Jam Raval       | 43   | 277  | 358  |
| 39. | Jam Vanthali    | 38   | 101  | 115  |
| 40. | Jamvari (Balva) | 13   | 91   | 128  |
| 41. | Jivapar         | 51   | 30   | 122  |
| 42. | Jovia           | 6    | 276  | 200  |
| 43. | Kajurda         | -    | 157  | 60   |
| 44. | Kalawad         | 29   | 578  | 248  |
| 45. | Kanalus         | 20   | 71   | 145  |
| 46. | Kushia          | -    | 131  | 209  |
| 47. | Khambhalida     | -    | -    | 86   |
| 48. | Khandhera       | 112  | 6    | 95   |
| 49. | Kharedi         | 49   | 21   | 262  |
| 50. | Khengarka       | -    | -    | 53   |
| 51. | Khirsara        | -    | 22   | 97   |
| 52. | Lalyala         | -    | -    | 188  |
| 53. | Lalol           | -    | 2    | 228  |
| 54. | Lalpur          | 328  | 291  | 159  |
| 55. | Lambabunder     | 55   | 152  | 7    |
| 56. | Latipur         | 21   | 140  | 26   |
| 57. | Majoth          | -    | -    | 119  |

| 1   | 2               | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|-----|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|
| 58. | Makaji Meghpar  | -   | 2   | 144 |
| 59. | Mandasan        | 1   | 51  | 41  |
| 60. | Mansar          | 0   | 0   | 180 |
| 61. | Malwa           | 18  | 76  | 65  |
| 62. | Medi            | 70  | 103 | 101 |
| 63. | Meghpar         | 56  | 36  | 105 |
| 64. | Mevasa          | -   | -   | 52  |
| 65. | Mithapur        | 228 | 518 | 857 |
| 66. | Modpar          | 18  | 64  | 39  |
| 67. | Morjhar         | 25  | 55  | 186 |
| 68. | Mota Bhadukia   | -   | 2   | 333 |
| 69. | Mota Gunda      | 4   | 31  | 160 |
| 70. | Mota Panchdevda | 24  | 36  | 66  |
| 71. | Mota Vadala     | 77  | 36  | 68  |
| 72. | Moti Banugar    | 143 | 84  | 261 |
| 73. | Moti Khavdi     | 7   | 16  | 169 |
| 74. | Moti Khokhri    | -   | -   | 54  |
| 75. | Moti Nagajhar   | -   | 2   | 178 |
| 76. | Movan           | -   | 51  | 57  |
| 77. | Naghedi         | 55  | 92  | 80  |
| 78. | Nana Vadala     | -   | 51  | 172 |
| 79. | Navagam (KLD)   | 83  | 16  | 208 |
| 80. | Nagagam (LLP)   | -   | -   | 50  |
| 81. | Nikava          | 65  | 10  | 270 |
| 82. | Okha            | 237 | 233 | 268 |
| 83. | Paradva         | -   | 2   | 109 |
| 84. | Pipartoda       | -   | 2   | 69  |
| 85. | Pithad          | 3   | 148 | 142 |

| 1    | 2             | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|------|---------------|-----|-----|-----|
| 86.  | Rajparas      | -   | 2   | 162 |
| 87.  | Ran           | 11  | 82  | 153 |
| 88.  | Ranpor        | -   | 80  | 17  |
| 89.  | Rinari        | 81  | 44  | 166 |
| 90.  | Sadodar       | 9   | 82  | 48  |
| 91.  | Salaya        | 78  | 152 | 138 |
| 92.  | Samana        | -   | 98  | 168 |
| 93.  | Samor         | -   | 91  | 84  |
| 94.  | Sanosari      | -   | 2   | 69  |
| 95.  | Sapar         | 13  | -   | 216 |
| 96.  | Satapar       | 42  | 42  | 75  |
| 97.  | Seth Vadala   | 123 | 61  | 97  |
| 98.  | Shiva         | 6   | 74  | 119 |
| 99.  | Sidsar        | 40  | 120 | 43  |
| 100. | Sikka         | 120 | 293 | 446 |
| 101. | Sinhan Ahir   | -   | -   | 62  |
| 102. | Sonvadia      | 49  | 44  | 45  |
| 103. | Tarsai        | -   | 222 | 108 |
| 104. | Vadinar       | 70  | 393 | 92  |
| 105. | Vadpanchasara | -   | 6   | 106 |
| 106. | Vanana        | -   | 2   | 176 |
| 107. | Verad         | 33  | 28  | 174 |
| 108. | WLL (JMN)     | -   | -   | 453 |

**Statement-II**

*New Telephone connections provided during last three years in Porbandar District*

| Sl.No. | Name of Exchange | New Telephone Connections provided during |           |           |
|--------|------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|        |                  | 1999-2000                                 | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 |
| 1      | 2                | 3                                         | 4         | 5         |
| 1      | Porbandar        | 3184                                      | 1548      | 1003      |

| 1  | 2                | 3   | 4    | 5   |
|----|------------------|-----|------|-----|
| 2  | Dharampura (PBD) | 0   | 1480 | 105 |
| 3  | Madhavpura Ghed  | 44  | 177  | 112 |
| 4  | Tukda Gosa       | 13  | 102  | 34  |
| 5  | Bagvadar         | 63  | 113  | 169 |
| 6  | Advana           | 81  | 76   | 110 |
| 7  | Visavada         | 72  | 55   | 152 |
| 8  | Bakharala        | 55  | 102  | 110 |
| 9  | Fatana           | 159 | 98   | 83  |
| 10 | Modhavada        | 41  | 73   | 123 |
| 11 | Kantela          | 21  | 63   | 78  |
| 12 | Khishtri         | 30  | 29   | 146 |
| 13 | Ranavadala       | 17  | 99   | 32  |
| 14 | Simar            | 17  | 89   | 6   |
| 15 | Kadachh          | 41  | 107  | 8   |
| 16 | Odadar           | 0   | 103  | 37  |
| 17 | Ratia            | 0   | 60   | 124 |
| 18 | Garej            | 0   | 163  | 21  |
| 19 | Ranavav          | 328 | 136  | 422 |
| 20 | Adityana         | 44  | 84   | 94  |
| 21 | Rana Kandorna    | 126 | 138  | 261 |
| 22 | Bileshwar        | 37  | 65   | -   |
| 23 | Rana Khirasara   | 87  | 127  | 73  |
| 24 | Mokar            | 48  | 23   | 86  |
| 25 | Jambu            | 0   | 146  | 46  |
| 26 | Kutiyana         | 256 | 247  | 95  |
| 27 | Mahiyari         | 31  | 26   | 131 |
| 28 | Moddar           | 32  | 70   | 8   |

| 1  | 2         | 3   | 4   | 5   |
|----|-----------|-----|-----|-----|
| 29 | Gokarn    | 132 | 20  | 167 |
| 30 | Khageshri | 37  | 115 | -   |
| 31 | Ishwaria  | 72  | 79  | 113 |
| 32 | Kotda     | 0   | 138 | 46  |
| 33 | Devda     | 0   | 183 | 1   |
| 34 | Farer     | 0   | 2   | 74  |

#### US Human Rights Practices Report

7382. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices, 2001 released in March 2002 has made certain critical remarks about problems concerning human rights in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) The U.S. State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2001, released on March 4, 2002 made some critical remarks about extra-judicial killings, deaths in police custody and excessive use of force by security forces in India. It, however, also acknowledged that India is a long-standing parliamentary democracy with a bi-cameral Parliament and an independent judiciary, that the Indian Constitution provides for civil rights and liberties which the Government generally respects in practice. It also made favourable comments about the work of the National Human Rights Commission and other independent human rights organisations operating throughout most of the country. The Report, a tabulation of US perception of human rights in countries across the world, is prepared annually under the requirement of US law.

(c) Government considers the Report as an internal exercise of the US Government and rejects the criticisms contained therein.

#### Change in Per Line Expenditure

7383. SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether after formation of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) the per line expenditure has been changed drastically; and

(b) if so, the details of variation from DOT to BSNL status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) There is no drastic variation in Per Line capital cost of installing telephones after formation of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). However, the per line expenditure on operations is expected to be higher by approximately 10% after taking into account the additional cost on various items like salary and wages on the lines of IDA scales, leave salary and pension contribution, taxes and duties, etc.

#### MoU on IT

7384. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Thailand have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on joint collaboration in the Information Technology Sector;

(b) if so, the salient features of the Memorandum of Understanding;

(c) the time by which it is likely to be implemented; and

(d) the extent to which India will assist Thailand in Information Technology?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to promote closer cooperation in the following areas:

- Electronic Commerce
- Electronic Government
- Information Security
- Human Resource Development
- Research, Design & Development
- Exploring third world markets.

(c) The MoU is valid for three years from the date of its execution and its term may be extended any time by mutual consent of the Parties.

(d) The cooperation in IT would mainly relate to identifying and facilitating programmes for the purpose of:

- i) Exploring and supporting research and implementation, incubation, venture financing and infrastructural development for IT.
- ii) Development of skills through exchange programme, joint sponsorship of conference, training programmes and seminars in IT sector.
- iii) To involve, wherever possible, entrepreneurs in India and Thailand to foster incubation activities.
- iv) Development of technology, product, trade and market between the two countries.

#### National Highway No. 215

7385. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons as to why the development and improvement works are not taken up on National Highway No.215 so far despite the fact that Rs. 9.7 crores have been sanctioned;

(b) in what specific work the fund has been spent;

(c) whether any utilisation certificate has been submitted since the beginning of the work related to NH No. 215 has under taken;

(d) if so, the total fund released for that NH, and actual amount spent till date; and

(e) the steps taken to utilise the fund sanctioned by the Centre on the development and improvement of National Highway No. 215?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) 5 nos of works amounting to Rs 15.96 crore have been sanctioned on National Highway No. 215.

(b) to (d) Details of sanction, expenditure and progress on sanctioned works on National Highway No. 215 are given in the statement enclosed.

(e) Quarterly work-wise review is carried out by the Ministry.

**Statement*****Sanctions, allotment and expenditure on NH 215,***

(Amount in Rs. in lakh)

| Sl.No. | Name of Work                                           | Sanctioned Cost | Allotment | Expenditure | Status of work        |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1      | Impr. of Riding Quality in Km. 0/0 to 9/7              | 306.88          | 306.88    | 306.88      | Nearing Completion    |
| 2      | Impr. of Riding Quality in Km. 121/0 to 130/0          | 286.51          | 286.51    | 286.51      | Work Completed        |
| 3      | Paved Shoulders in Km. 178/0 to 181/0 & 183/3 to 184/0 | 137.30          | 10.56     | 10.56       | Work in Progress      |
| 4      | Widening & Strengthening in Km. 24 to 34               | 452.03          |           |             | Tender under Progress |
| 5      | Widening & Strengthening in Km. 70 to 80               | 413.14          |           |             | Tender Under Process  |
| Total  |                                                        | 1595.86         | 603.95    | 603.95      |                       |

**Assured Crude Cargo**

7386. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Shipping Corporation of India has requested the Government to take up the issue of assured crude cargo with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken up the matter with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas; and

(c) if so, the response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas is of the view that after dismantling of Administrative Price Mechanism (APM) from 1.4.2002, individual oil public sector companies such as Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd., Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd., and Indian Oil Corporation would be free to make their own arrangements for sourcing/ transportation of crude oil.

**Visit c\* Yugoslavia and Hungary Delegations**

7387. SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Yugoslavia and Hungary delegations visited India recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the matters discussed with them; and

(d) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

**Life Saving Medicines**

7388. SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the drugs/life saving medicines procured/imported from abroad for the use of Government hospitals in the country during each of the last three years;

(b) the amount spent during said period, year wise for the procurement of drugs/life saving medicines, medical equipments from abroad; and

(c) the details of the distribution of these medicines and medical equipments to various State in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

**India-EU Troika Meeting**

7389. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL:

SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL:

SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:

SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

SHRI C. SREENIVASAN:

SHRI AMBAREESHA:

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and EU Troika held a meeting in New Delhi recently;

(b) if so, the points which were discussed in the meeting and the outcome thereof;

(c) whether India and EU have discussed enhancement of trade between India and EU countries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The India-EU Senior Officials Meeting took place in New Delhi on 2nd May 2002. The fight against terrorism was the first item on the agenda. The two sides also reviewed India-EU bilateral relations, preparations for the Third India-EU Summit to be held in Copenhagen on 10-11 October 2002, and regional and international issues of mutual concern.

(c) and (d) Measures to enhance trade and business interaction figured in the discussions, including the identification of obstacles, such as lack of market access and anti-dumping measures imposed on India by the EU. Wide participation in the forthcoming India-EU Business Summit in Copenhagen was emphasized by both sides.

**Deepening of Tuticorin Port**

7390. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have received a comprehensive turnkey project for the deepening

and development of Tuticorin port from a Belgian firm;

(b) if so, the details of this turnkey project, involving dredging activity;

(c) whether the Government have cleared this proposal;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government have received any similar proposals for such turnkey project for deepening ports on the East Coast also; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

**Medicines for Afghanistan**

7391. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBHA MANDLIK:

SHRI C.N. SINGH:

SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry had announced to send medicines to Afghanistan during the Afghan war;

(b) if so, whether the procedure to procure the medicines for this purpose has not been completed; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Ministry of External Affairs requested Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to supply certain medicines to Afghanistan.

(b) and (c) The details in this regard are being collected.

**Indo-US Safety Cooperation Talks**

7392. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and the US have recently talks on nuclear safety cooperation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the US Government has offered to upgrade the safety measures and equipment at Indian nuclear power plants; and

(d) if so, the details of an agreement arrived at on this issue;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been decided to resume safety cooperation which was discontinued in May 1998.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

#### **Smoking Toll**

7393. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the comparative figures of the smoking toll per year in the country during the last three years alongwith the first ten States which are having highest ton of tobacco related diseases; and

(b) the effective steps taken/being taken to combat this menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Year-wise and state-wise data on deaths due to tobacco use is not available. However, based on the studies related to prevalence of tobacco use, magnitude of tobacco related disease and risk of their development due to tobacco usage, it has been estimated that about 8,00,000 persons in India die every year due to their tobacco habit. According to National Family Health Survey-2, the ten worst affected States as far as prevalence of use is concerned, are:

1. Mizoram, 2. Arunachal Pradesh, 3. Bihar, 4. Orissa, 5. Assam, 6. Nagaland, 7. Madhya Pradesh, 8. Sikkim, 9. Uttar Pradesh, 10. Maharashtra.

(b) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has introduced a Bill, "The Cigarettes and other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Bill, 2001 in the Rajya Sabha on 7th March, 2001 for discouraging use of tobacco products, which seeks to prohibit smoking in public places. It has set up the National tobacco Control Cell to coordinate all research and advocacy activities relating to tobacco control. It actively supports the working of 12 tobacco cessation clinics throughout the country. On World Health Day, the 7th April, 2002, a mass media campaign has been launched to spread awareness and disseminate information on the hazards of tobacco use. Besides a number of Non Governmental Organizations and grass root level organisations are being supported to make school and community-based interventions throughout the country.

[Translation]

#### **Surplus Employees of P.O.**

7394. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether several post of postal employees particularly the post of postman and mail officers have been rendered surplus/reduced recently;

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

(c) the reasons therefor? .

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **Evaluation of PMRY**

7395. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI:

Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the dates on which an appraisal of the Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana was conducted alongwith details thereof;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which such appraisal is likely to be conducted; and

(c) the percentage of loan-recovery under the above scheme?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) Two rounds of evaluation of the Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) have been conducted so far. Evaluation for both the round was conducted by the Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR), New Delhi. The first round of evaluation conducted in the year 1996-97 pertained to the programme years 1993-94 and 1994-95. It covered 48 districts of 21 State/UTs covering 15,331 beneficiaries. The second round of evaluation conducted in the year 2000-01 pertained to the programme years 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98. It covered 13 districts of 5 States covering 16,397 beneficiaries. The important findings of the first round of the evaluation study are enclosed as statement-I, while the important findings of the second round of the evaluation study are enclosed as statement-II.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) As per the latest report received from the Reserve Bank of India, the recovery of loan over dues under the PMRY is 28.6 percent for the half year ended September, 2001.

#### Statement-I

##### *Important Findings of the Evaluation Study of the Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (1st Round)*

- i) 67% of beneficiaries belong to general category, 21% to OBCs, 8% to SCs & 5% to STs. Proportion of women and minority are 11 %.
- ii) Sanction was 80% of target and 83% of sanctioned cases were disbursed.
- iii) Average amount of loan sanctioned is Rs.52,268/- per beneficiary.
- iv) Employment Generated is 2.39 per unit.
- v) Around 65% of the beneficiaries were making regular payment.
- vi) The share of backward areas in total investment in units set up and in employment generated is around 1/3 of total.
- vii) Around 53% of beneficiaries faced problems due to insistence on "collateral security" by banks.
- viii) 15002 units were set up out of the 15098 cases disbursed (99.3% success rate).

#### Statement-II

##### *Important Findings of the Evaluation Study of the Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (2nd Round)*

- i) 61.3% of beneficiaries belong to general category, 25.6% to OBCs, 11% to SCs & 2.1% to STs. Proportion of women is 14%.
- ii) Sanction was 81.6% of target and 74.7% of sanctioned cases were disbursed.
- iii) Average amount of loan disbursed is Rs.57, 403/- per beneficiary.
- iv) Employment Generated is 1.94 persons per functional unit.
- v) The distribution of the beneficiaries in rural/urban areas are 49.9% & 50.1% respectively.
- vi) Assets have been created in 89.7% of the cases disbursed.
- vii) 36.4% of the beneficiaries were repaying the loan instalment on time.
- viii) Wilful default have been found to be in 16% of the default cases.

[English]

#### Medical Council

7396. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:

SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH:

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH:

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Medical Council was set up for the purpose of reviewing cases relating to medical negligence in the Government hospitals;

(b) if so, the number of medical negligence cases examined by the Medical Council since its inception;

(c) the number of cases in which medical negligence in Government hospitals was established; and

(d) the action taken by the Government in such cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The Medical Council of India was established under the Indian Medical Council Act, 1933 which was replaced by the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 and its main functions inter-alia, are inspection/visitation of medical colleges with a view to maintaining proper standards of medical education in India and for recommending to the Central Government for grant of permission to open medical colleges, increase of seats, to start postgraduate courses, recognition/de-recognition of Indian medical qualifications and foreign medical qualifications; maintenance of Indian Medical Register and registration of additional qualifications; issue of good standing certificate etc. As per the provisions of section 20A of the Act read with section 33 (power to make regulations), the Council with the approval of the Central Government have notified in the Official Gazette on 6th April, 2002 the Indian Medical Council (professional conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002. These Regulations, inter-alia, indicate the acts of commission or omission on the part of a doctor which shall constitute professional misconduct of unethical acts rendering him/her liable for disciplinary actions. So far as medical negligence in Government hospitals is concerned, as and when such complaints are received, they are referred to the State Medical Councils where the doctor concerned is registered and the State authorities concerned for necessary action. As regards complaints against doctors registered directly with the Medical Council of India, action is taken by the Council through the Ethical Committee of the Council. The records of complaints against doctors since its inception is not available with Medical Council of India. However, as per information received from the Council for the years 1999, 2000 & 2001 they have received 36, 28, & 32 complaints respectively against the doctors working in Government hospitals which have been referred to the concerned State Medical Councils for necessary action where these doctors are registered.

#### **Shortage of Marine Engineers**

7397. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is acute shortage of marine engineers and other skilled personnel required for shipping industry in the country;

(b) if so, the details regarding the present strength and capacity of technical institution in various States for marine engineers and other skilled personnel, State-wise;

(c) the estimates for requirement of such personnel as per the latest review; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for establishing marine engineering colleges and introduce courses in technical institutions to meet the manpower requirements of shipping industry?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The training establishments run by the Government and other private institutes are capable of imparting training to about 1570 Marine Engineers and 600 engine room ratings per year. The State-wise break up is as follows:

| S.No. | Name of State. | No. of officers | No. of Ratings |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1.    | Maharashtra    | 464             | Nil            |
| 2.    | Goa            | 55              | 160            |
| 3.    | Kerala         | 100             | Nil            |
| 4.    | Tamil Nadu     | 412             | 440            |
| 5.    | Andhra Pradesh | 98              | Nil            |
| 6.    | West Bengal    | 400             | Nil            |
| 7.    | Delhi          | 40              | Nil            |

(c) There is an estimated requirement of 1120 marine engineers for the ships under Indian Registry.

(d) To meet the manpower requirements of shipping industry, the Government took a decision in 1997 to encourage private sector participation in the establishment of maritime training institutes. As a result of this, the output of Marine Engineers has increased from a little over 700 in 1998 to about 1570 marine engineers as at present.

#### **CII Ten Point Agenda for Hot Sites**

7398. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) have proposed a ten point agenda for the promotion of hot sites in the country by a consortium of call centre companies, based on the need and demand equation as per the DOT guidelines;

(b) If so, whether these hot sites have been proposed with a view to keep the operations on even in the event of disasters like earthquakes, fire, bomb explosions etc.;

(c) whether the Government have examined the proposal; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN BIKDAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Government, after examining these proposals, have permitted setting up of independent hot sites. These hot sites would require to be registered as a hot site Call Centre. The independent hot site provider will provide only the infrastructure i.e. building, main server, agent positions, power plant, air conditioner etc. The various call centers desirous of availing hot site facility would provide, dedicated servers/routers at the hot site and necessary leased circuits.

#### **Homoeopathy Industry**

7399. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to create standardized procedure on good manufacturing norms for homoeopathy industry like allopathy and ayurvedic medicines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the measures taken or being taken to boost homoeopathy industry in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The sub-Committee of Drugs Technical Advisory Board on Homoeopathy has prepared the draft on Good Manufacturing Practices in Homoeopathy.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) In this regard the Government has taken the following actions:

(i) Government has published 8 volumes of Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India containing monographs of 916.

(ii) State Pharmacies & Laboratories have been provided grant-in-aid.

(iii) For ensuring the quality control of the Medicines prepared the Government has established a Central Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory.

(iv) Schedule 'K' of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945 has been amended recently in order to make available certain commonly used medicines through any licensed pharmacy.

#### **Irregularities in Ayurvedic Hospitals in New Delhi**

7400. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the news-item appeared in the Navbharat Times on April 5, 2002 regarding Irregularities in Ayurvedic Hospitals in New Delhi;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether any enquiry has been ordered in this regard to fix responsibility and take action against the persons responsible;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the corrective measures proposed to be taken in this regard by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The deficiencies pointed out in the said news item pertain to the CGHS Ayurvedic Hospital, Lodhi Road, which inter-alia includes non-functioning of the additional block of the hospital constructed in 1997, delay in filling up of the post of Medical Superintendent in the hospital and irregularities in the purchase of some Ayurvedic medicines.

(c) to (e) A fact finding enquiry has been ordered for ascertaining the deficiencies in running of the above hospital. Necessary corrective action would be taken after the report of the Enquiry Committee is received.

As regards filling up of post of Medical Superintendent for the above hospital is concerned, the Dept. of ISM&H have advertised the post in December, 1999, subsequent to which the UPSC held interviews for selection. As no suitable candidate could be found, the post has again been advertised for filling up the same through the UPSC.

**Internet Service to MP**

7401. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Madhya Pradesh had submitted a proposal to his Ministry to connect Bhopal, Indore and other major cities of Madhya Pradesh with each International gateway webs;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government on the proposal;

(c) the steps taken to promote Internet service in that State; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) The following steps have been taken by the Government to promote Internet services in Madhya Pradesh (M.P.).

- (i) 78 Category A licenses have been given to Internet Services providers (ISPs) who can start service anywhere in India including MP. In addition 2 Category B & 9 Category C licenses have been given in MP.
- (ii) 14 ISPs have reported start of Internet service in MP.
- (iii) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has installed 44 nodes in MP.
- (iv) Internet facility has been made available in all District Headquarters of MP by BSNL.
- (v) Internet access has been extended to the customers on local call charge basis to the nearest node by BSNL.
- (vi) Internet connectivity has been extended to 304 Block Headquarters out of 313 Block Headquarters in MP state by BSNL.
- (vii) BSNL, through the scheme of Internet Dhabas set up through the franchisees, has provided Internet Dial-up connections to 142 Internet Dhabas.

(viii) To promote proliferation of Internet in rural areas BSNL is offering free Internet access for the Internet Dhabas in rural Block Headquarters.

(ix) The Internet Dhaba franchisees of BSNL are also eligible for 25 percent of Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) access charges as commission.

**Identification of Competitor in Software Services**

7402. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have identified the countries which are potential competitor to India in its Software and services business;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the initiatives taken by the Government to face the emerging challenge in the IT sector?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Indian Software & Services Industry has emerged as a key global player. The countries likely to be potential Competitors to India in Software & Services include China, Israel, Ireland, Russia, CIS countries, East European Block, Philippine, Mexico and Vietnam.

(c) The initiatives taken by Government to promote the IT sector are enclosed at statement.

**Statement*****Steps taken by the Government to promote the Information Technology Sector***

1. Export promotion Capital Goods scheme (EPCG) has been rationalized and extended uniformly to all sectors without any threshold limit on payment of 5% duty.
2. Approval for all foreign direct Investment proposals relating to the Information Technology sector, with the exception of Business-to-Consumer (B2C) e-commerce are under the automatic route.
3. Electronic Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) and Software Technology Park (STP) Schemes are implemented under the aegis of the Department of

Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, through a single window mechanism of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (IMSC).

4. Supplies of Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items in the Domestic Tariff Areas (DTA) by EHTP/EOU/EPZ units shall be counted towards fulfilment of minimum Net Foreign Exchange earning as a Percentage of exports (NFEP) and the minimum Export Performance (EP), provided that the items are manufactured in the unit and attract zero rate of basic customs duty. Positive NFEP is required to be achieved in 5 years instead of every year.
5. DTA access upto 50% of the FOB value of export is permitted for electronics hardware units under EOU/EPZ/EHTP schemes and the software units under EOU/EPZ/STP schemes.
6. Accelerated depreciation norms extended to computers and computer peripherals to all units and capital goods of IT hardware units under Export Oriented schemes (EOU/EPZ/EHTP). These shall stand depreciated to overall limit of 90% over a period of 3 years.
7. Special Economic Zones are being set up to enable hassle free manufacturing and trading for export purposes.
8. The Depreciation on Computers is allowed @ 60%.
9. In the Budget 2002-03, the peak rate of customs duty has been reduced from 35% to 30%. Customs duty has been reduced on stepper motors for computers/printers from 5% to 0%, floppy diskettes and unrecorded magnetic tape from 15% to 10%, Ink cartridges/ribbon assembly/ ribbon gear assembly/ ribbon gear carriage for use in printers for computers from 25% to 5%. 56 items of capital goods for manufacture of semiconductors from 5% to 0%, 24 items of capital goods for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 15%, tools/moulds/dies for electronics industry from 25% to 15% and on 46 items of raw materials for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 5%.

\* Customs duty on Computers and Peripherals continues to be @ 15% and all storage devices, integrated circuits, microprocessors, data display tubes and deflection components of colour monitors continue

at 0%. The concessional rate of customs duty @5% for specified raw materials for the electronics industry (121 items) continues. Customs duty on Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items of WTO (IT and Telecom products) continues @15%, parts of Telecom continue @5%, parts, components and accessories of mobile handsets including cellular telephones continue at @ 0%.

10. The Central Excise duty structure was rationalized from multiple rates to single rate @16% and single rate of Special Excise Duty (SED) @ 16%. In the Budget 2001-02, and continues
11. Information Technology Software is exempted from Customs and Excise Duty.
12. Second hand capital goods upto 10 years are freely importable.
13. EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units are eligible for Income Tax benefit on export profits upto 2010, in terms of Sections 10A and 10B of the Income Tax Act.
14. Exemption of withholding tax on interest on External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) is available to the IT sector.
15. Definition of Computer Software, as in Section 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act covers transmission of data.
16. Benefit of Section 80 HHE is available to supporting software developers.
17. IT Enabled Services are eligible for Income Tax benefit under Sections 10A, 10B and 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act.
18. DEPB rate will be same for a product whether exported as CBU or in CKD/SKD condition.
19. Threshold limit for obtaining 'Export House' status reduced to Rs.5 crores from Rs.15 crores for Small Scale Industry, tiny sector, cottage sector, units located in North East States/Sikkim/J&K; exporters exporting to countries in Latin America/CIS/Sub Sahara Africa and units having ISO 9000 (series) status. The status holders are eligible for the following new/special facilities:

100% retention of foreign exchange in Exchange Earners' Foreign Currency (EEFC) account;

- Enhancement in normal repatriation period from 180 days to 360 days.
- 20. The donation of computers, imported duty free by EOUEPZ/STP/EHTP units to recognized non-commercial educational institutions, registered charitable hospitals, public libraries, public funded research and development establishments, etc., two years after their use by the said units is permitted.
- 21. The second-hand computers and computer peripherals donated by an outside donor to Government schools and recognized schools run on a non-commercial basis by any organisation are exempted from customs duties.
- 22. Income by way of dividends or long-term capital gains of a Venture Capital Fund or Venture Capital company from investment made by way of equity shares in a Venture Capital Undertaking, which has been expanded to include the Software and IT sectors, will henceforth not be included in computing the total income.
- 23. To give thrust to Venture Capital finance, SEBI has been made the single point nodal agency for registration and regulation of both domestic and overseas venture capital funds.
- 24. There will be no tax on distributed or undistributed income of Venture Capital Funds. The Income distributed by the VCFs will only be taxed in the hands of the investors at the rates applicable to the nature of the income. VCFs will continue to be eligible for exemption even if the shares of the VC undertaking in which the VCFs have made the initial investment are subsequently listed in a recognized stock exchange in India.
- 25. Under policy on portfolio investment, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are permitted to invest in a company Upto an aggregate of 24% of equity shares, extendable upto 40% subject to approvals. This limit was raised from 40% to 49% in the Budget 2001-02.
- 26. Tax holiday under provisions of Section 80-IA (Infrastructure Status) has been extended to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Broadband Network providers.
- 27. Two-way fungibility has been permitted for ADRs/ GDRs. Local shares can be reconverted into ADRs/ GDRs, subject to sectoral caps.
- 28. With a view to give a boost to the manufacturing sector, it is proposed in the Budget announcements 2002-03, to allow a deduction of a further sum of 15% of the actual cost of such machinery or plant acquired and installed after 31.3.2002 in case of new industrial undertaking or substantial expansion by an existing industrial undertaking. The proposed amendment will take effect from 1.4.2003 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2003-04 and subsequent years.
- 29. To encourage re-location of industries to India, plant and machineries would be permitted to be imported without a licence, where the depreciated value of such relocating plants exceeds Rs.50 crores.
- 30. Indian Companies wishing to invest abroad may now invest upto US \$ 100 Million on an annual basis through automatic route without being subject to the three year profitability condition, up from existing limit of US\$ 50 million (Budget announcement 2002-03).
- 31. Indian Companies making overseas Investment in joint ventures abroad by market purchases may now do so without prior approval upto 50% of their net worth, up from existing limit of 25% (Budget announcement 2002-03).
- 32. To Induce more investment for R&D activities a weighted deduction of 125% on the sums paid to any university, college or an Institution or a Scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research is available.
- 33. For reduction of transaction time for export/import clearances, Ministry of Civil Aviation has finalized the scheme of 'Known-Shippers' for doing away with the 24 hours cooling off period.
- 34. Two shifts have been introduced on week days and single-shift on holidays at the Air Cargo Complexes at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi and Goa.
- 35. Information Technology Act, 2000 dealing with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other Information security related legal aspects is in place to encourage expansion of e-commerce through Internet.

**Communication Network**

7403. SHRI Y.V.RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL proposes to spend about Rs. 1500 crores for village Panchayats telecom works;

(b) if so, the number of Panchayats to be covered during the current year, State-wise;

(c) the amount proposed to be spent, State-wise; and

(d) the manner in which this is likely to enhance the village communication network?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) BSNL plans to provide telecom facilities in 12007 Panchayats during the current year. State-wise details are given in the statement. 9916 Gram Panchayats are to be covered by Private Basic Service Operators (PBOs).

(c) and (d) No separate funds have been provided state-wise for providing VPTs in Panchayats. The existing Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) equipment is proposed to be utilised to provide telecom facilities in Gram Panchayats. However, the funds to the tune of Rs. 400 crore are required to provide about 18,045 satellite telephones in remote and isolated villages of the country including those Panchayat villages which can not be covered by any terrestrial technology. With the induction of WLL equipment in the rural areas, it would be possible to provide telephone connections in areas far away from telephone exchanges also.

**Statement***Panchayats to be covered during current year*

| Circle         | Panchayats to be covered by BSNL | Panchayats to be covered by PBOs |
|----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1              | 2                                | 3                                |
| Andhra Pradesh | 0                                | 1273                             |
| Assam          | 391                              | 0                                |
| Bihar          | 587                              | 0                                |

| 1                    | 2     | 3    |
|----------------------|-------|------|
| Chhattisgarh         | 971   | 1903 |
| Gujarat              | 0     | 968  |
| Himachal Pradesh     | 103   | 0    |
| Jammu & Kashmir      | 560   | 0    |
| Jharkhand            | 882   | 0    |
| Karnataka            | 2     | 0    |
| Madhya Pradesh       | 0     | 3209 |
| Maharashtra          | 0     | 2020 |
| North East-I         | 291   | 0    |
| North East-II        | 648   | 0    |
| Orissa               | 244   | 0    |
| Rajasthan            | 0     | 543  |
| Uttar Pradesh (East) | 5370  | 0    |
| Uttaranchal          | 1958  | 0    |
| Total                | 12007 | 9916 |

**Technology to Spread Message of Population Control**

7404. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences have developed a unique technology to spread the message of population control and to solve health problems in far-flung villages of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent to which it is likely to help in checking the population control; and

(d) the time by which this scheme is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) There is no such proposal pending with the Government.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

#### **Domestic Money Order Business**

7405. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to allow the non-banking financial companies, travel agents and courier service to enter the domestic money order business;

(b) whether the guidelines have been finalised in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the measures taken or proposed to be taken to ensure full proof transactions by these agencies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The Government has approved one proposal of domestic money transfer business as a fund based non-banking financial company activity, subject to compliance with regulatory framework and capitalisation norms, and exclusion of outward money transfer activity. The Government does not propose to allow travel agents and courier service providers to enter this business.

(b) to (d) Guidelines in this regard are to be finalised by Reserve Bank of India.

#### **Construction of P.O.**

7406. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the land reserved for the site of post offices in various parts of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, location-wise;

(b) the number of sites where Government have taken up the work of construction;

(c) whether at many places, reserved for post offices, the construction work has not yet been started;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the time by which the work is likely to be completed in all the sites which have been reserved for post offices; and

(f) the total rent being paid by the Department for running post offices in rented building in Hyderabad during the last two years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The details of land reserved for the site of post offices in various parts of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, location wise are as follows:

| Sl. No. | Name of the area                                   | Area of plot in sq. mtrs. |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1.      | Bharatnagar colony<br>Hyderabad city division      | 418                       |
| 2.      | Juubli Hills Hyderabad<br>city division            | 500                       |
| 3.      | Motinagar Swarajyanagar<br>Hyderabad city Division | 418                       |
| 4.      | Mankhal Hyderabad SE division                      | 752                       |
| 5.      | Shamshabad Hyderabad<br>SE division                | 921.25                    |
| 6.      | Vanastalipuram Hyderabad<br>SE division            | 324.05                    |
| 7.      | Gaganpahad Hyderabad<br>SE diyision                | 289.5                     |
| 8.      | H. Nagar Secunderabad division                     | 392.98                    |
| 9.      | HMT Town Ship Secunderabad<br>division             | 836.13                    |
| 10.     | KPHB Colony Secunderabad<br>division               | 418.06                    |
| 11.     | Zamistanpura Secunderabad<br>division              | 263                       |
| 12.     | Bolaram Bazaar Secunderabad<br>division            | 333                       |

(b) to (e) The construction of buildings is done on the vacant plots of land on the basis of priority and availability of funds.

(f) The total rent paid by the department for running post offices in rented buildings in Hyderabad during 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 is Rs.42,88,442/- and Rs.42,90,442/- respectively.

**Incurring of Extra Expenditure**

7407. SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether CAG in its Report No.4 of 2002 (Civil) in Paragraph 9.2 has brought out the fact of incurring of extra expenditure of Rs. 2.32 crore in the irregular acceptance of the revised higher offer of the second lowest tenderer after negotiations; and

(b) if so, whether the matter has been enquired into and action taken against the persons concerned for entering into negotiations with the other bidder than the lowest?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Para 9.2 of the C&AG Report No.4 of 2002 pertains to incurring extra expenditure of Rs. 2.32 crores due to delay in evaluation of the lowest bids for the supply of tugs and pilot craft and irregular acceptance of the second lowest tenderer after negotiation. Tenders for supply of three Tugs and two Pilot Crafts for operation at the new Ennore Port were called by Chennai Port Trust. The Consultant proposed the lowest offer of M/s 'A' for 'Cycloidal Propulsion System' with a qualification stating that the offer was technically questionable as the bid did not satisfy the dynamic stability requirement and the tugs with "Azimuth Propulsion" system, recommended the next higher offer of M/s 'B'. The Tender Committee preferred (June 1998) the Cycloidal Propulsion System, but sought a firm opinion from the Consultant on the stability aspects of the bid of M/s A, a Public Sector Enterprise. After obtaining all the additional information required, the Consultant, based on further information from the firm, finally recommended (26 June, 1998) the offer of M/s 'A' for Rs. 52.32 crore. The Tender Committee accepted the recommendation of the Consultant and recommended placing order to M/s 'A' on 30.6.1998. The validity period for bids was 90 days i.e. upto 20.4.1998 which was extended by M/s 'A' on the

request of the port for 60 days upto 20.6.1998, then 30 days upto 20.7.1998. When further extension of 30 days upto 20.8.1998 was sought, M/s 'A' expressed inability to extend their validity with the quoted price and increased their quoted price by 20% extra which tantamounted to post tender revision. As per conditions of bid document, bidders were neither required nor permitted to modify their bids. M/s 'A' were not competent to increase the price hence their offer was treated as invalid. Since the lowest tenderer (M/s 'A') refused to extend the validity of their offer on the existing terms, Chennai Port Trust negotiated with the next lowest offer in the interest of the project to avoid cost and time over run.

[Translation]

**Target for Opening of New Post Offices**

7408. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the targets fixed for opening of Post Offices in the rural and urban areas of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar during the Ninth Plan period;

(b) the achievements made so far; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to achieve the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The targets and achievements for opening of Post Offices in rural and urban areas of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh during the Ninth Plan are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) The opening of the post offices in rural and urban areas is subject to the fulfilment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources.

**Statement**

*The details of Targets and Achievements of Opening of New Post Offices in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar during the Ninth Plan*

| Plan Year | Bihar Circle |       |              |       | Uttar Pradesh Circle |       |              |       |
|-----------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|----------------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|           | Targets      |       | Achievements |       | Targets              |       | Achievements |       |
|           | Urban        | Rural | Urban        | Rural | Urban                | Rural | Urban        | Rural |
| 1         | 2            | 3     | 4            | 5     | 6                    | 7     | 8            | 9     |
| 1997-1998 | 04           | 31    | 04           | 31    | 6                    | 70    | 6            | 57    |

| 1         | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6  | 7   | 8   | 9   |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1998-1999 | 02  | 72  | 02  | 72  | 3  | 82  | 3   | 82  |
| 1999-2000 | Nil | 51  | Nil | 51  | 3  | 42  | 2   | 10  |
| 2000-2001 | 02  | 73  | Nil | 71  | 1  | 44  | Nil | 45  |
| 2001-2002 | Nil | 60  | Nil | 38  | 2  | 40  | 2   | 38  |
| Total     | 08  | 287 | 06  | 263 | 15 | 278 | 13  | 232 |

[English]

**Programme for Machine Tool Sector**

7409. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- whether the Government have formulated any programme for the Machine Tool Sector;
- if so, the details thereof;
- whether the desired result has been achieved through this programme so far; and
- if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) The National Programme for Development of the Indian Machine tool Industry (NPDIMTI) implemented by the Government of India in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), the EXIM Bank of India and the Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers Association (IMTMA) was launched on 13th December, 2001. The objective of the NPDIMTI is to enhance competitiveness through activities that include technology upgradation through preparation of technology manuals, exposure to newer technologies, market development through participation in international fairs, preparation of the international market database, capacity building through regular courses on designs, mechatronics, study of best practices, etc.

(c) and (d) As the duration of the programme is for a period of three years, activities are still being conducted to achieve the desired results.

[Translation]

**National Population Stabilisation Fund**

7410. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- the progress made by National Population Stabilisation Fund in controlling the population in the country;
- the funds available with the society at present; and
- the schemes being implemented out of this fund along with the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The procedural formalities for setting up of the National Population Stabilisation Fund have not so far been completed. The funds available with the Society and the schemes to be implemented out of the same will become clear only when the Fund becomes operational.

[English]

**Modernisation of Rural Post Offices**

7411. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- whether there is any proposal to provide modern facilities such as modern digitalised postal system in the Post Offices in the rural areas of the country; and

(b) if so, the details of such facilities likely to be provided during 2002-2003 in the Post Offices in the rural areas of Maharashtra and Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

#### Financial Assistance by KVIC

7412. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether KVIC is providing any financial assistance/loans to the unemployed youths for starting small scale income generating business; and

(b) if so, the details of assistance/loans provided to unemployed youths by KVIC during each of the last three years in each State particularly in Maharashtra and Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) provides Margin Money assistance under, the Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP). Under this scheme, the KVIC provides margin money assistance at the rate of 25% of the project cost upto Rs. 10 lakhs and for the project above Rs. 10 lakhs and upto Rs. 25 lakhs, rate of margin money is 25% of Rs. 10 lakhs plus 10% on remaining cost of the project. In the case of SC/ST/ OBC/ Women/ Physically Handicapped/ Ex-Servicemen and Minority Community beneficiary/ institution and for hill border and tribal areas, North Eastern Region, Sikkim, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep, the margin money grant is 30% of the project cost upto Rs. 10 Lakhs. Under the scheme, the beneficiary's contribution is at least 10% of the project cost. In case of SC/ ST and other weaker sections, beneficiary's contribution is 5% of the project cost. This scheme is being implemented through Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks, etc. Balance funds for the projects are provided by banks in the form of term loan.

(b) State-wise details of financial assistance provided under the Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP) including that of Maharashtra and Karnataka are given in the statement enclosed.

#### Statement

State-wise disbursement of REGP for the last three years

(Rs. in lakhs)

| S.No. | States/Union Territories | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 | 2000-2001 |
|-------|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1     | 2                        | 3         | 4         | 5         |
| 1.    | Andhra Pradesh           | 87.88     | 217.81    | 776.04    |
| 2.    | Arunachal Pradesh        | 0.00      | 0.00      | 30.00     |
| 3.    | Assam                    | 2.01      | 15.78     | 67.94     |
| 4.    | Bihar                    | 5.61      | 22.47     | 28.65     |
| 5.    | Goa                      | 2.46      | 22.16     | 139.58    |
| 6.    | Gujarat                  | 2.83      | 21.67     | 41.47     |
| 7.    | Haryana                  | 85.35     | 85.35     | 539.78    |
| 8.    | Himachal Pradesh         | 0.00      | 0.00      | 0.00      |
| 9.    | Jammu & Kashmir          | 8.79      | 53.92     | 283.67    |
| 10.   | Karnataka                | 65.00     | 485.38    | 736.34    |
| 11.   | Kerala                   | 107.57    | 334.39    | 942.2     |
| 12.   | Madhya Pradesh           | 95.81     | 562.67    | 777.05    |
| 13.   | Maharashtra              | 312.23    | 809.13    | 734.79    |
| 14.   | Manipur                  | 0.00      | 0.00      | 0.00      |
| 15.   | Meghalaya                | 3.00      | 7.92      | 53.12     |
| 16.   | Mizoram                  | 0.00      | 0.00      | 0.00      |
| 17.   | Nagaland                 | 0.00      | 4.31      | 180.74    |
| 18.   | Orissa                   | 3.19      | 27.74     | 58.32     |
| 19.   | Punjab                   | 162.99    | 780.74    | 1048.61   |
| 20.   | Rajasthan                | 118.24    | 792.24    | 1096.2    |
| 21.   | Sikkim                   | 0.00      | 0.00      | 11.91     |
| 22.   | Tamil Nadu               | 86.4      | 321.02    | 470.68    |
| 23.   | Tripura                  | 0.00      | 1.14      | 7.17      |

| 1     | 2                      | 3       | 4       | 5        |
|-------|------------------------|---------|---------|----------|
| 24.   | Uttar Pradesh          | 229.29  | 549.03  | 1917.53  |
| 25.   | West Bengal            | 14.27   | 7.61    | 191.06   |
| 26.   | Andaman & Nicobar      | 0.00    | 0.00    | 1.71     |
| 27.   | Chandigarh             | 0.22    | 5.06    | 4.84     |
| 28.   | Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 0.00    | 0.00    | 2.5      |
| 29.   | Delhi                  | 0.83    | 1.05    | 15.82    |
| 30.   | Pondicherry            | 0.15    | 1.58    | 9.21     |
| 31.   | Daman and Diu          | 0.00    | 0.00    | 0.00     |
| 32.   | Lakshadweep            | 0.00    | 0.00    | 0.00     |
| 33.   | Chhattisgarh           | 0.00    | 0.00    | 2.94     |
| 34.   | Jharkhand              | 0.00    | 0.00    | 12.37    |
| 35.   | Uttaranchal            | 0.00    | 0.00    | 13.98    |
| Total |                        | 1394.12 | 5130.15 | 10196.22 |

#### **Four Laning of National Highways**

7413. SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any request to improve the quality/riding conditions of the National Highways till the four-laning works are actually implemented or carried out;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have given any instruction to NHAI to sanction special schemes for maintaining the NH's and to improve the riding conditions; and

(d) if so, the details of such projects already undertaken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b) Requests for improvement of riding quality and maintenance of National Highways which are to be four-laned are received by the Government from time to time. Such requests are examined and appropriate action is taken.

(c) and (d) NHAI has been instructed to maintain all existing National Highway sections entrusted to it, in traffic-worthy condition until the widening to 4/6-lanes, as envisaged, are completed.

[Translation]

#### **Extradition of Main Accused of Purulia Arms Dropping Case**

7414. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:

SHRI C.N. SINGH:

SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has taken up the issue of extradition of Kim Davy, the main accused of Purulia arms dropping case with the Danish Foreign Minister during his recent visit to India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Denmark thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The issue of Kim Davy was raised by External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh, during his meeting with the Danish Foreign Minister on 30 April 2002 in New Delhi.

(c) India and Denmark agreed to continue to explore ways & means to resolve the issue. Government is in continuous contact with the Government of Denmark, through our Embassy in Copenhagen.

[English]

#### **Selection of Handsets**

7415. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL in Delhi has been unable to finalise the selection of handsets and fix minimum technical specifications for such handsets to be used in WLL service;

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay on the part of MTNL in this regard;

(c) the period since when this evaluation process has been going on; and

(d) the time by which a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir. The technical specifications for handsets for WLL equipment were finalised in 1999 by MTNL. Subsequently, Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC) has also finalised specifications giving Generic Requirements (GR).

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

(d) Based on above technical specifications of MTNL Purchase Order for 30,000 handsets of WLL service of Delhi was issued on 4.7.2000. These handsets had been received and are in use at present. Subsequently another purchase order for 1.5,000 handset has been placed on 24.02.2002 based on TEC specifications.

[Translation]

#### **Appointment of Physiotherapists**

7416. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Physiotherapists in the Government hospitals in the country, at present;

(b) whether several posts of Physiotherapists have been lying vacant in Safdarjung Hospital, Delhi for the last three years;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government propose to fill-up these vacancies; and

(e) if so, the time by which these posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The sanctioned posts of physiotherapists in the three Central Government Hospitals, viz Dr. RML Hospital, Safdarjung Hospital & LHMC & Associated Hospitals are as under:

|                            |   |    |
|----------------------------|---|----|
| Dr. RML Hospital           | - | 3  |
| Safdarjung Hospital        | - | 20 |
| LHMC & Associate Hospitals | - | 7  |

(b) No, Sir. Two posts of physiotherapists are lying vacant in Safdarjung Hospital - one since 1.6.2001 and the other from 27.11.2001.

(c) The post of the first physiotherapist is lying vacant due to compulsory retirement of the incumbent and the other due to death of the incumbent.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Out of the two vacant posts the Screening Committee has cleared one post and NOC from surplus cell has been obtained. To fill up the post DAVP has been requested for publication of advertisement inviting applications. The post will be filled up by a suitable candidate thereafter. For the other post clearance has not been received from the Screening Committee so far.

[English]

#### **Reduction in Cost of Issuing Passports**

7417. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passports issued by the Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam passport offices in 2001-2002;

(b) the fees collected by both the passport offices in 2001-2002;

(c) whether any efforts has been made to reduce the cost of issuing passports in the State; and

(d) if so, the details of the steps taken so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The number of passports issued by the passport offices at Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam during the year 2001-2002 are as under:

|                                |   |          |
|--------------------------------|---|----------|
| Passport Office, Hyderabad     | - | 48,163   |
| Passport Office, Visakhapatnam | - | 2,39,660 |

(b) The fees collected by both the Passport Offices during 2001-2002 are given below:

|                                |   |                     |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Passport Office, Hyderabad     | - | Rs. 1,97,10,125.00  |
| Passport Office, Visakhapatnam | - | Rs. 11,30,38,125.00 |

(c) and (d) The cost of issuing passports in Andhra Pradesh are in consonance with the costs in other states

and no special efforts are required to reduce the costs in that state.

**Facilities to Telephone Subscribers  
in Rural Areas**

7418. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the facilities provided by the Government to the telephone subscribers of the rural areas for ensuring cash payment of their telephone bills;

(b) whether the cheques for the payment of telephone bills are not accepted by local post offices in the rural areas;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure the acceptance of cheques by the post offices in the rural areas;

(e) whether the permission from some Government Authority is required for the payment of such cheques; and

(f) if so, the details including the exact procedure for the same in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The Government no longer provides the telephone service to subscribers. In the case of public sector companies, such as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, they have intimated that the payment of telephone bills both in cash and cheque is accepted in departmental post offices, including in certain selected branch post offices in the rural areas now.

(c) to (f) Do not arise in view of reply to (a) & (b) above.

**Pensions to BSNL and Telecom Employees**

7419. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has taken over the responsibility on itself of paying retirement benefits and monthly pension for all employees retiring and have retired in the past from the Department of Telecommunications and BSNL;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the specific reasons for which the BSNL has taken over this responsibility; and

(d) the financial burden likely to fall on BSNL on this account yearly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) No, Sir. BSNL has not taken over the responsibility on itself of paying the retirement benefit on monthly pension for all employees retiring and retired in the past from DOT and BSNL. The retirement benefits and monthly pension is being paid to the erstwhile employees of the DOT as well as to the retiring absorbed employees of BSNL by the Government. For the period of service rendered by the employees in the BSNL, the Company has to pay pension contribution as per the rates prescribed in the Fundamental Rules. Ministry of Finance, however, in Demands for Grants (Demand No. 13) has netted the entire pension payment against the pension contribution receivable from BSNL on the ground that the schedule of payments to be made by BSNL to the Government in Pension Contribution should exactly match the amounts paid in pension by the Government. The Standing Committee of Parliament on Information Technology, while examining the Demands for Grants 2002-03, has recommended that the case should be pursued by the Department of Telecom with the Ministry of Finance for appropriate rectification.

(d) The financial burden on account of pension and retirement benefits for the retired/retiring employees of DOT as well as absorbed employees retiring from BSNL has been estimated at Rs. 800 crores during 2002-03 in the Demands for Grants of the Department of Telecommunications.

**Central Sponsored Disease Control  
Programmes in Karnataka**

7420. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the centrally sponsored disease control programmes presently launched in Karnataka;

(b) the assistance extended to the State for launching of these programmes during the last three years; and

(c) the details of the achievement made in controlling various diseases under these programmes during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Government is implementing Centrally sponsored national health programmes for control of major diseases like Malaria, Leprosy, TB, Blindness and AIDS in the country including Karnataka. Financial assistance provided to Karnataka during the last three years is as follows:

| Programme | (Rs. in Lakh)   |         |         |
|-----------|-----------------|---------|---------|
|           | Amount Released |         |         |
|           | 1999-00         | 2000-01 | 2001-02 |
| 1         | 2               | 3       | 4       |
| NAMP      | 229.29          | 250.26  | 369.55  |
| NLEP      | 247.98          | 302.75  | 196.05  |

**National Anti-Malaria Programme (NAMP):**

|      | Blood Examination Rate (ABER) |               | Pop. Covered with insecticide (in million) |                    |
|------|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|
|      | Target ABER                   | Achieved ABER | Targeted Population                        | Covered Population |
| 1999 | 10                            | 18.58         | 3.26                                       | 1.98               |
| 2000 | 10                            | 17.02         | 4.83                                       | 2.45               |
| 2001 | 10                            | 18.35         | 2.60                                       | 1.53               |

**National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP):**

| Year    | Case Detection |       | Case Treatment |       | Case Discharge |       |
|---------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
|         | Case Tar.      | Ach.  | Tar.           | Ach.  | Tar.           | Ach   |
| 1999-00 | 10000          | 18511 | 10000          | 18449 | 14000          | 17156 |
| 2000-01 | 8000           | 15830 | 8000           | 15813 | 14000          | 18325 |
| 2001-02 | 8000           | 18761 | 8000           | 18761 | 14000          | 17418 |

**National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB):**

|           | Cataract Operations |                      |
|-----------|---------------------|----------------------|
|           | Targets             | Operations performed |
| 1999-2000 | 2,00,000            | 164033               |
| 2000-2001 | 2,10,000            | 164693               |
| 2001-2002 | 2,20,000            | 181736               |
|           |                     | (Provisional)        |

**National Tuberculosis Control Programme (NTCP):**

|           | No. of TB cases detected and put on treatment |             |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------|
|           | Target                                        | Achievement |
| 1999-2000 | 25720                                         | 20244       |
| 2000-2001 | 26050                                         | 26133       |
| 2001-2002 | 26400                                         | 31099       |

| 1    | 2      | 3      | 4      |
|------|--------|--------|--------|
| NPCB | 352.20 | 290.20 | 259.20 |
| NTCP | 315.01 | 343.76 | 529.45 |
| NACP | 801.67 | 398.65 | 785.15 |

(c) Achievements made in Karnataka under these disease control programmes are as under:

**National AIDS Control Programme (NACP):**

34 STD clinics have been strengthened; 9 zonal blood testing centres, 7 blood testing centres and 1 blood component separation facility have been established; 52 blood banks have been modernized. 34 targeted intervention projects have been taken up by NGOs for prevention of HIV spread in high risk groups; Family Health Awareness Campaign was held in April, 2001. 2 community centres have been established; 33 Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centres (VCTCs) have been sanctioned.

**Categories of Telephone Users**

7421 SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the MTNL has decided to create some categories of telephone users;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the purpose behind the creation of such categories;

(d) whether the Government propose to reduce the rent of residential telephone connections to popularise the telephone among the poorer people;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) All tariff related issues come under the purview of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). It has issued a telecom tariff order (20th Amendment) wherein a category of commercial subscribers has been created. Tariff for such commercial subscribers is higher i.e. rental of Rs. 310/- and 45 free calls as compared to rental of Rs. 250/- and 75 free calls for an ordinary subscriber. The process for identification has just begun.

However, it has been decided by the Management of MTNL not to implement the scheme of higher tariff for commercial subscribers to have only one kind of tariff for all types of subscribers.

(d) There is no such proposal at present.

(e) and (f) Do not arise in view of (d) above.

(g) The tariff for basic services is already below cost and there is no justification for further reduction in the tariff.

#### **Rural Telephony**

7422. SHRI Y. V. RAO: Will the Minister COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that BSNL operates about 80 lakh telephone lines as on date in rural areas in the country;

(b) if so, the break-up of these telephone lines, state-wise; and

(c) the total expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) BSNL is operating about 91.5 lakh telephone lines as on 31.3.2002 in rural areas in the country.

(b) Break-up of these telephone lines, state-wise is furnished in the statement enclosed.

(c) An expenditure of approximately Rs. 3100 crores per annum is likely to be incurred for operating these telephone lines.

#### **Statement**

##### *Rural DELs as on 31.3.2002*

| Sl. No. | Circle                    | Rural DELs |
|---------|---------------------------|------------|
| 1       | 2                         | 3          |
| 1       | Andaman & Nicobar Islands | 16984      |
| 2       | Andhra Pradesh            | 1028533    |
| 3       | Assam                     | 93119      |
| 4       | Bihar                     | 289709     |
| 5       | Chandigarh                | 47481      |
| 6       | Gujarat                   | 677741     |
| 7       | Haryana                   | 303482     |
| 8       | Himachal Pradesh          | 281111     |
| 9       | Jammu & Kashmir           | 17952      |
| 10      | Jharkhand                 | 63630      |
| 11      | Karnataka                 | 753963     |
| 12      | Kerala                    | 1580426    |
| 13      | Madhya Pradesh            | 224768     |
| 14      | Maharashtra               | 1070526    |
| 15      | North East-I              | 44486      |
| 16      | North East-II             | 29561      |
| 17      | Orissa                    | 227517     |
| 18      | Punjab                    | 672268     |
| 19      | Rajasthan                 | 507264     |

| 1          | 2                    | 3       |
|------------|----------------------|---------|
| 20         | Tamil Nadu           | 165242  |
| 21         | Uttaranchal          | 72450   |
| 22         | Uttar Pradesh (East) | 414172  |
| 23         | Uttar Pradesh (West) | 132046  |
| 24         | West Bengal          | 443636  |
| 25         | Calcutta             | 0       |
| 26         | Chennai              | 0       |
| BSNL Total |                      | 9158067 |

#### Revamping of AIIMS

7423. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the premiere health institute AIIMS is being revamped;

(b) if so, the main features of the proposed revamping;

(c) whether it is a fact that Rs. 1,200 crore project has been finalized in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The AIIMS is planning to upgrade their facilities and a detailed Master Plan has already been submitted to Delhi Urban Art Commission. The Master Plan includes expansion of housing facilities, expanded hostel facilities, new institutional buildings like Pay Wards, extended OPD, Digestion Centre, Renal Centre, Dental College, Captive Power Plant etc. The project is expected to cost Rs. 1300 crore and is planned to be implemented phase-wise as a part of vision 2025. The project has not been considered by the government yet. Its implementation will depend on due clearances and availability of funds.

#### Sri Lankan Settlement

7424. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:

SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL:

SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

SHRI M.V.V.S MURTHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sri Lankan PM has expressed opinion that India should play a role to further peace process within Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) Government have seen reports to this effect. India has consistently supported the initiatives being taken by the Government of Sri Lanka to further the peace process within Sri Lanka. Government of India is committed to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and to the restoration of a lasting peace through a peaceful, negotiated settlement that meets the just aspirations of all elements of Sri Lankan society.

[Translation]

#### Expenditure Incurred on Major Waterways Development

7425. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) the expenditure incurred so far by the Union Government on the development of the ten major waterways identified by the National Transport Committee; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) The National Transport Policy Committee had identified ten waterways of the country having potential of declaration as National Waterways, these are:

(i) Ganga-Bhagirathi- Hooghly river System

(ii) The Brahmaputra

(iii) The West Coast Canal

(iv) The Sunderbans

(v) The Godavri

- (vi) The Krishna
- (vii) The Mahanadi
- (viii) The Narmada
- (ix) The Mandovi, Zuari Rivers and Cumberjua Canal in Goa
- (x) The Tapi

Out of the above the Ganga -Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system from Allahabad to Haldia, the Brahmaputra river from Dhubri to Sadiya and the West Coast Canal from Kollam to Kottapuram alongwith Champakara and Udyogmandal Canals have been declared as National Waterways No. 1, 2 and 3. Expenditure incurred upto February 2002 by Inland Waterways Authority of India on these National Waterways is given below:

|                        |   |                 |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|
| National Waterway No.1 | - | Rs.89.58 Crores |
| National Waterway No.2 | - | Rs.26.86 Crores |
| National Waterway No.3 | - | Rs.41.76 Crores |

No expenditure for development activities has been made on other waterways since these are not national waterways.

#### **Depositing of Money through Saving Scheme**

7426. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the amount of money deposited by each State through saving schemes during the last three years has been decreasing continuously due to lower interest rates and less publicity to the scheme;

(b) if so, the details of the amount deposited by each State during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether Government are paying commission to agents on these saving schemes;

(d) if so, the total amount of commission paid to agents during the above period in percentage terms of total deposit; and

(e) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to encourage the people for saving in postal saving schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The amount of money deposited in each State through small saving schemes has not been decreasing during last three years.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Commission is paid to agents as percentage of total deposits mobilized by them as per the rate given below:

|       |                                              |      |
|-------|----------------------------------------------|------|
| (I)   | Under Mahila Pradhan Kshetriya Bachat Yojana | Rate |
|       | 5- Year Recurring Deposit Account            | 4%   |
| (II)  | Under Pay Roll Savings Scheme                |      |
|       | 5- Year Recurring Deposit Account            | 2.5% |
|       | 2- Year & 3- Year Time Deposit Account       | 1%   |
|       | 5- Year Time Deposit Account                 | 1%   |
|       | 6-Year NSCs (VIII-Issue)                     | 1%   |
| (III) | Standardized Agency System                   |      |
|       | 1- Year Time Deposit                         | 1%   |
|       | 2- Year & 3- Year Time Deposit               | 1%   |
|       | 5- Year Time Deposit                         | 1%   |
|       | Monthly Income Account Scheme                | 1%   |
|       | Kisan Vikas Patra                            | 1%   |
|       | 6- Year NSCs (VIII-Issue)                    | 1%   |
|       | National Savings Scheme, 1992                | 1%   |

(e) Steps are taken by the Union and State Governments for continued and enhanced mobilization of resources by promoting small saving schemes throughout the country through advertisements in electronic as well as print media and carrying out publicity campaigns. Investments of the small investors are safeguarded by offering implicit guarantee, attractive returns, tax benefits, liquidity and accessibility in regard to the small saving schemes.

[English]

#### **Manning Contract of Vessel**

7427. SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate of Shipping Services, Andaman and Nicobar Islands handed over the manning contract of a vessel to the Shipping Corporation of India, instead of continuing with the lowest tenderer resulting in an avoidable expenditure of Rs. 261.70 lakh during the period from July, 1994 to September 1999;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the matter has been enquired into and responsibility and accountability fixed of the officials responsible for causing financial loss to the State?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) to (c) The manning contract of Andaman & Nicobar Administration's vessel MV Dering was given to M/s Sensea Marine Services Pvt. Ltd. upto 30-6-1994, following the tender procedure. However, due to difficulties in handling the issues relating to repairs and maintenance of the vessel through M/s Sensea Marine Services Pvt. Ltd., the A&N Administration persuaded SCI to take over the operation of the vessel in 1994 on the same terms and conditions which were applicable to other vessels. The intention was that the vessel should be manned and maintained in the most professional and cost effective manner. Though SCI took over the manning and technical management of the vessel, it continued to engage M/s Sensea Marine Services Pvt. Ltd., due to shortage of floating staff. After September, 1999 however, SCI has fully taken over the vessel by engaging their own officers for manning the vessel. As per A&N Administration's estimate, they have made excess payment to SCI, for which action has already been initiated by them.

#### **Business Trip to Afghanistan**

7428. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a business trip to Afghanistan was organised by his Ministry;

(b) If so, the composition of the delegation;

(c) whether this business mission returned to India without even touching Kabul;

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

(e) the total amount spent by the Government on the visit; and

(f) the manner in which the Government propose to make up this loss?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (f) As part of its multifaceted efforts to provide reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, Government of India has facilitated visits of several delegations to Afghanistan, including from the government, corporate sector, as well as Non-Governmental Organisations. Government has also sent several humanitarian consignments on special flights, to provide immediate medical relief and other assistance for the people of Afghanistan. Government had facilitated a detailed interaction of Indian businessmen and organizations with H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai, during his visit to India on 26-27 February 2002.

During visits of various delegations to Kabul, one of the delegations could not reach Kabul because of bad weather. A delegation from Confederation of India Industries subsequently visited Afghanistan on 17th February 2002.

#### **Internet Telephony**

7429. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the companies which have been granted licences for the Internet Telephony products;

(b) the time by which these companies are likely to launch commercial service;

(c) whether the private companies propose to hike the rates of dial-up access substantially;

(d) if so, the extent of increase; and

(e) whether the government have any control over the rate structure of the private sector in keeping the rate within a reasonable limit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The names of the companies which have been permitted to offer Internet Telephony service are given in the statement enclosed.

(b) As per the licence agreement for Internet Services (including Internet Telephony) the service has to be started within 24 months from the effective date of the licence.

(c) to (e) The tariffs for the Internet service are under purview of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). TRAI has forborne tariff for services offered by Internet

Service Providers (ISPs); however, TRAI may review and fix a tariff at any time during the validity of the licence which shall be binding on the licensee.

#### **Statement**

*Name of the Companies who have been permitted to offer Internet Telephony Service*

1. M/s Satyam Infoway Ltd.
2. M/s Data Access India Ltd.
3. M/s ICENET NET Ltd.
4. M/s Dishnet DSL Ltd.
5. M/s Track Online Net India Pvt. Ltd.
6. M/s Worldphone Internet Services Pvt. Ltd.
7. M/s HCL Infi Net Ltd.
8. M/s Estel Communication Pvt. Ltd.
9. M/s Patriot Automation Projects Ltd.
10. M/s Surana Telecom Ltd.
11. M/s Gateway Systems (India) Pvt. Ltd.
12. M/s Comsat Max Ltd.
13. M/s iServ India Solutions Pvt. Ltd.
14. M/s Data Infosys Ltd.
15. M/s Jain Internet Pvt. Ltd.
16. M/s Direct Internet Ltd.
17. M/s Direct Internet Ltd.
18. M/s Direct Internet Ltd.
19. M/s Primus Telecommunications Ltd.
20. M/s Jump India Pvt. Ltd.
21. M/s SAB Infotech Ltd.
22. M/s Rolta India Ltd.
23. M/s Wilnet Communications Pvt. Ltd.
24. M/s Nott Linx Ltd.

25. M/s Growth Compusoft Exports Ltd.
26. M/s Hathway Cables & Datacom Pvt. Ltd.
27. M/s Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd.

#### **Machine-Written Passport**

7430. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of passport offices in the country issuing machine-written and machine "readable" passports;
- (b) the number of passport offices in which the Government propose to introduce the same during 2002-2003; and
- (c) the benefits of machine-written passports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) At present machine readable passports are being issued in 6 passport offices and work is in progress on issuing machine readable passports from 8 other passport offices.

- (b) All major passport offices.

(c) Machine written and readable passports are a norm recommended by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). Most of the advanced countries today issue such passports. Machine written passports eliminate errors in filling personal particulars of the holder, make the passport visually more presentable and would markedly reduce forgeries. Machine readable passports would cut down the time taken for clearances at immigration counters.

#### **Ban on Tobacco**

7431. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a proposal of the Government of Maharashtra for imposition total ban on the manufacture, consumption, distribution, advertisement, sale and exhibition of Gutkha based on tobacco, is under consideration of the Union Government for some time;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the time by which a final decision in the matter is likely to be taken by the Union Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to

(c) A proposal was received from Government of Maharashtra for banning manufacture, sale, storage, distribution and exhibition of tobacco based Gutka and similar articles for human consumption. The State Government was informed that Central Government Policy in the matter would be to follow an approach of discouraging demand rather than curtail or ban production. A Draft Bill on Cigarettes and other Tobacco products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production Supply and Distribution), 2001 which incorporates such measures and seeks to restrict advertisement of tobacco and tobacco products is already placed before the Parliament for consideration. It was also informed that Section 7 (iv) of PFA Act, 1954 empowered State Governments to restrict any item being sold in the territory of their State in the interest of the health of the public.

#### **Establishment of Office by US Customs Service**

7432. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the United States Customs Services have decided to open office in New Delhi as part of their global effort to curb terrorism;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any agreement in this regard has been reached; and

(d) if so, the extent to which it will help both the countries to curb terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The United States requested approval of the Government of India to open a United States Customs Service Office at their Embassy in New Delhi;

(b) and (c) Government of India's approval to the proposal was conveyed in October 2001 with the decision that the initial point of contact for the U.S. Customs Service Office would be the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India and that it would not conduct independent investigations or otherwise act outside the liaison function. The duties of the Office are to be parallel to those currently performed by the Indian DRI office in Consulate General of India, New York.

(d) The arrangement would further strengthen the cooperation between India and the United States in dealing with economic crimes and matters relating to the financing of terrorism.

#### **Reduction Transit Charges of Money Orders**

7433. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether very high charges are being levied for accepting money orders;

(b) if so, whether the Government have instructed the postal authorities to reduce transit charges of money orders;

(c) the steps taken to use the latest communication devices like E-Mail to deliver money orders instantly and at cheaper prices; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir. The Department is charging Re.1/- as money order commission for the transmission of every sum of Rs. 20/- or part thereof.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) A major thrust to expedite transmission of money orders has been given by induction of satellite technology. 150 high speed Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) stations linking 850 post offices in the country have been installed.

#### **Reimbursement of Loan by SCI**

7434. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Shipping Corporation of India has decided to pay back the loan taken from the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government have also agreed to reimburse the extra amount above the market rate that SCI had to pay;

(d) if so, the extent to which it is likely to help the SCI?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Shipping Corporation of India has repaid

the entire loan alongwith interest amounting to Rs.255.48 crore to the Government after necessary adjustment.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) This would help SCI to get their vessels released from Government mortgages.

#### **Surrender of Funds**

7435. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Public Accounts Committee expressed serious concern over the Department of Telecommunication (DOT) casual approach erroneous surrender of funds, laxity in protecting public money;

(b) if so, the extent to which the Department has reacted to the Public Accounts Committee's revelation; and

(c) the corrective measures have been taken about the erroneous surrender of funds and to eliminate such recurrence in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) In their second report on "Union Government Appropriation Accounts-Telecommunications Services (1996-1997)", the Public Accounts Committee (12th Lok Sabha) have pointed out persistent savings in the Capital section, variations under various heads, obtaining additional allocations without due regard to trend of expenditure, erroneous surrender of funds and injudicious appropriation of funds.

(b) and (c) The Committee desired that appropriate steps be taken to tune up the accounting information system so as to avoid erroneous surrender of funds. The observations of the Committee were noted and suitable instructions issued to all the field units. With the corporatisation of the operations of the Department of Telecom Services/Department of Telecom Operations and the formation of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, with effect from 1.10.2000, the budgeting and accounting systems have been completely revamped. The Department of Telecommunications now looks after the functions of policy formulation, licensing, Wireless spectrum Management and administrative control of the Public Sector Undertaking. The expenditure of the Department of Telecommunications is now met from the General Exchequer and the receipts of the Department also accrue to the General Revenues.

[Translation]

#### **National Highway from Rajgir to Nalanda**

7436. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to construct a National Highway from Rajgir to Nalanda via Barbhigha, Mokarna;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the above National Highway is likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) Rajgir-Nalanda- Barbhigha- Mokarna Road is part of already declared National Highway No. 82.

(b) and (c) Out of total length of 73 km of this section, improvement of riding quality has already been sanctioned in a length of 40 km. Improvement of riding quality of remaining length is proposed to be taken up within the next two years, subject to availability of funds.

[English]

#### **Benefits to Hardware Industry**

7437. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to give benefits to hardware industry as given to software industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) Government has provided the following fiscal benefits to the IT hardware industry in the Budget of Financial Year 2002-03:

(i) Custom Duty on 56 items of capital goods for manufacture of semiconductors reduced from 5% to 0%.

(ii) Custom Duty on 24 items of capital goods for

manufacture of electronic components reduced from 25-35% to 15%.

- (iii) Custom Duty on 46 items of raw materials for manufacture of electronic components reduced from 25-35% to 5%.
- (iv) Customs duty on tools, dies, moulds for Electronics Industry reduced from 25% to 15%.
- (v) Customs duty on 4 items of raw material for manufacture of optical fibre/cables reduced from 25-35% to 5%.
- (vi) Customs duty on stepper motors for computers/printers reduced from 5% to 0%.

#### **Extension of Lease by MBPT**

7438. SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Digvijay Cement Company Limited, had applied for extension of lease before the expiry of the original lease in July 1990;

(b) if so, whether the said lease has been renewed/extended;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Mumbai Port Trust failed to serve eviction orders immediately on expiry of the lease and also did not seek the approval of the Government for extension of lease beyond the initial period of 30 years;

(e) if so, the facts thereof; and

(f) the reasons that the port trust authorities levied rental arrears by adopting a compromise formula instead of Kirloskar formula made applicable to all leases from July 1990?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL) : (a) to (c) It is true that Shree Digvijay Cement Company limited applied to Mumbai Port Trust for renewal/extension of lease before the expiry of lease in July, 1990. The request was accepted by the Mumbai Port and revised terms and conditions including increased rent for grant of fresh lease for 30 years conveyed to them. However, the lessee failed to comply with the terms for grant of fresh lease. Hence, the contract was not concluded.

(d) and (e) After expiry of the lease, notice to quit was served on Shree Digvijay Cement Co. Ltd. on 7.8.91.

The offer for grant of fresh lease was approved by the Board on the basis of compromise proposals ratified by the Mumbai High Court in the rent revision matter. The Board granted lease upto 30 years under Section 34 of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963, and the offer being for fresh lease for 30 years on new terms and revised rent on the basis of compromise proposals ratified by the Mumbai High Court, legal advice was that Government sanction was not necessary.

(f) The rents based on Kirloskar Valuation Report were challenged by the lessees/tenants in the Mumbai High Court. The Kirloskar rent was struck down by the Court by order dated 4.10.1990 holding it to be exorbitant, arbitrary, capricious and legally unenforceable. In the Appeal filed by Mumbai Port Trust, the Division Bench suggested compromise and sought a formula. Accordingly, compromise proposals were framed in 1991 and proposed to the Court. The compromise proposals were ratified by the Division Bench of the Mumbai High Court in March 1993. Thus, the recovery of arrears of rent could not be made at the Kirloskar rate which was already struck down by the Court and legally unenforceable and arrears of rent could be recovered only on the basis of compromise proposals which were ratified by the Court.

#### **Differences between BSNL and Private Operators on Telephone Issues**

7439. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a difference between the BSNL and private operators on the issue of interconnection in matters like scope and definition of services, point of interconnection, network management, technical specifications and standards, billing and settlement and commercial terms and conditions etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in which manner and the time by which the Government propose to resolve these differences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) As per normal procedure the Interconnect Agreement with the Private Operators is signed by BSNL in accordance with the terms and conditions of the License Agreement and the Determination and Regulations issued by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). BSNL has already signed 28 Interconnect Agreement

with all those Basic Operators who wanted to start the Basic Telephone Services in different parts of the country. BSNL has also signed 23 Interconnect Agreement with Cellular Operators who wanted to operate Cellular Mobile Services in their choice areas of the country.

However, there are few differences between BSNL and some Private Operators who insist on certain technical, commercial and financial arrangements, which are normally not permissible as per the existing rules and regulations and are to be mutually negotiated and to be agreed upon by the two operators. In case of any dispute or disagreement among the Service Providers in signing of the Interconnect Agreement, the matter is required to be referred to TRAI or Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) as per TRAI (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Telecommunication Interconnection (Charges and Revenue Sharing) Regulation 2001 dated 14th December 2001. Government has not assigned itself any role on the issues of Interconnection between the two operators.

However to facilitate faster settlement of Interconnect Agreements between the Service Providers, TRAI has issued a consultation paper for Draft Reference Interconnect Offer.

#### **Participation of NRI's in Small Scale Industry**

7440. SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have relaxed any norms/rules to facilitate the participation of NRI's in Small Scale Industries Section in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the interests of the indigenous Small Scale Industry units owners will be protected; and

(d) if so, the remedial steps taken by the Government to provide stability and equilibrium in Small Scale Industry Sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

#### **Cases Settled by Telephone Adalats**

7441. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases settled in Telephone Adalats; and

(b) the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and shall be laid on the table of the House.

#### **National Highway-7**

7442. SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have finalised the decision on building Bye-pass roads on the National Highways (NH-7) in the country;

(b) if so, the details of locations, exact, stretch of roads for which Bye-pass roads will be laid; and

(c) the details of the status of Bye-pass roads to be constructed on the NH-7 between Thoppur and Hosur in Dharmapuri district, Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) National Highway No.7 connects Varanasi to Kanyakumari and passes through the cities of Jabalpur, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Madurai. The decision regarding building bypasses are taken based on the feasibility studies for the sections proposed for the improvement/upgradation.

(b) Following bypasses have been constructed/taken up for implementation on NH- 7 .

- |                          |                                    |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (i) Katni Bypass         | (on Jabalpur - Rewa Section)       |
| (ii) Jabalpur Bypass     | (on Rewa - Jabalpur-Seoni Section) |
| (iii) Devanahalli Bypass | (on Hyderabad - Bangalore Section) |
| (iv) Yehalanka Bypass    | (on Hyderabad - Bangalore Section) |

(v) Salem Bypass (on Bangalore - Madurai Section)

(vi) Namakkal Bypass (on Bangalore - Madurai Section)

(vii) Karur Bypass (on Bangalore - Madurai Section)

(c) Feasibility studies for 4-laning of the section of NH - 7 between Thoppur and Hosur under North-South Corridor is yet to be taken up. Details of bypass roads on this section will be finalised, based on the feasibility studies. The whole corridor is targeted for substantial completion by December, 2007.

#### **Wasteful Expenditure**

7443. SHRI AMAR ROY RADHAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware that Ministry of Finance have taken steps to minimise wasteful expenditures in Government Departments and have already identified that there are certain sectors in which wasteful expenditure is maximum in various Government Departments;

(b) if so, details of such sectors of his Ministry/ Departments under him, which have been identified by that Ministry for the purpose and quantum of wasteful expenditure identified there in during each of the last three years as on December 3, 2001; and

(c) corrective steps taken so far by his Ministry to curtail/stop such wasteful expenditure, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure had set up an Expenditure Reforms Commission [ERC] in February, 2000 to identify areas of possible savings in Government expenditure.

(b) and (c) The ERC has made recommendations regarding rationalization, of functions, activities as also for streamlining of this Ministry and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). These relate to further empowerment of the NHAI and the State Governments, Rationalisation of policy making and monitoring functions by this Ministry in the fields of Road and Road Transport sectors. No quantification of reduction in expenditure has been indicated. These recommendations have been examined carefully and the views of the Ministry communicated to the Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure, in December 2001.

#### **Institutes of Research in Reproduction**

7444. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE: Will the MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a 23 acre plot at Vasai in Thane (Maharashtra) was acquired to build the institute of Research in Reproduction, a unit of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in May, 1980;

(b) if so, the details therefor; and

(c) if not, the reasons for not building up the institute of Research in reproduction a unit of ICMR?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) The land was acquired for building Primate and Research Centre and not the Institute for Research in Reproduction which already has a building at Parel, Mumbai.

#### **Indian Space Research Organisation**

7445. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ISRO has prepared a strategy to develop and launch a single mission satellites in near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the disciplines in which ISRO is working in this regard;

(c) whether the MoU has been signed between ISRO and Apollo Hospital Telemedicine Enterprise Limited for launch of health satellites; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) The INSAT Systems configured upto INSAT-3 series were multi-purpose Communication, Broadcasting and Meteorological services included in them. The future missions of INSATs will have exclusive satellite for meteorological services.

(c) and (d) An Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed by the ISRO with the Apollo Telemedicine

Enterprise Limited (ATEL), Chennai and Aragonda Apollo Medical & Education Research Foundation Hospital (AAMERF), Aragonda village, Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh. This MoU provides for a pilot project for evolving a Satellite Telemedicine Network, whereby ATEL will provide super specialist consultancy from its Apollo Hospital in Chennai to Aragonda Apollo Hospital and ISRO's Hospital at Sriharikota. This MoU does not cover launch of any satellite.

[Translation]

#### Construction of Road

7446. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the proposals in regard to construction of roads under Central Road Fund received by the Union Government from Rajasthan Government in district Jodhpur of Rajasthan State; and

(b) whether the construction of M.D.R. road of district Jodhpur which leads to Jodhpur, Osiyan and Falaudi is also covered under the above proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) Seven proposals for improvement of roads in Jodhpur District have been received from Rajasthan Government under Central Road Fund.

(b) No, Sir.

[English]

#### Setting up of CGHS Dispensary

7447. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 2606 dated December 6, 2000 and state:

(a) whether any progress have been made as far as construction of the Dispensary is concerned so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the Dispensary is likely to be shifted in its own premises;

(c) if not, the reasons thereof; and

(d) the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to

(d) The fact whether the work related to CGHS dispensary No.87 in Dilshad Garden has been included in the Budget of CPWD has not been confirmed by the Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation. The information is being ascertained.

#### Job on Compassionate Grounds

7448. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of those eligible dependants of officials of his Ministry/Departments under his Ministry expired while in service during each of the year 1999, 2000, 2001 been provided with the suitable jobs on compassionate grounds;

(b) the number of those whose eligible dependants have not yet been provided with the jobs on compassionate ground; and

(c) the time by which the jobs on compassionate ground is likely to be provided to such eligible dependants of deceased officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a)

1999 - 1 (One)

2000 - 3 (Three)

2001 - 2 (Two)

(b) 9 (Nine)

(c) According to the guidelines issued by the Department of Personnel and Training on this subject. appointments of eligible dependants of deceased Government Officials are to be made against a quota of 5% of the total number of vacancies in Group 'c' and 'D' posts proposed to be filled by Direct Recruitment in a particular year. The nine cases as at (b) above will also be considered subject to the availability of vacancies, in future.

#### PHCs

7449. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA:

SHRI SHASHI KUMAR:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Karnataka Government is not eligible to get funds, from the Government of India to run primary health centers in the State;

(b) if so, the main reasons therefor;

(c) whether the norms fixed by the Government is to have one PHC for every 25,000 population;

(d) if so, whether the Karnataka Government has urged the Government to provide funds for setting up PHCs in the State; and

(e) if so, the extent to which the Government have agreed to the request of the Karnataka Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Primary Health Centres are established and maintained by State Governments, out of funds provided under State Health Sector outlay. Government of India releases funds to the States including Karnataka State for strengthening of Primary Health Centres in terms of Civil Works, contractual appointment of health functionaries, supply of drugs & equipment kits, RCH camps, out reach services. Dai Training and the Primary Health Component of Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana.

(c) As per existing population norms one PHC is to be set up at every 30,000 people in plain area and 20,000 people in hilly and tribal areas.

(d) and (e) States are given targets for setting up of PHCs, every year. No other specific request has been received from Govt. of Karnataka to provide funds for setting up of PHCs. As per current status, 1676 PHCs are functioning in Karnataka as against the requirement of 1201 PHCs, thus it is already in surplus.

#### **Criteria/Norms of Nursing Colleges/Homes**

7450. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state the details of criteria/norms fixed by Government to set up nursing homes/colleges in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **Vaccine/Drug Trials**

7451. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a few foreign universities are collaborating with Indian Universities, Medical Colleges and Hospitals in the field of vaccine and drug trials; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) No such information is compiled by the Government.

#### **Job on Compassionate Grounds In Railway Dak Sewa**

7452. SHRI BHIM DAHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of those eligible dependants of officials of Railway Dak Sewa in Gorakhpur who expired while in service during the each of the year 1999, 2000 and 2001 provided with the suitable jobs on compassionate grounds;

(b) the number of those eligible dependants have not yet been provided with the jobs on compassionate grounds; and

(c) the time by which the jobs on compassionate grounds is likely to be provided to such eligible dependants of deceased officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The dependants of officials of Railway Dak Sewa in Gorakhpur who expired while in service during each of the year 1999 and 2001 have not been appointed on compassionate ground so far. There was no case of death of any official in this place in 2000.

(b) Eligible dependants of officials of Railway Dak Sewa in Gorakhpur who have not been provided jobs are as under:

| Year | Number of eligible dependent |
|------|------------------------------|
| 1999 | 7                            |
| 2000 | Nil                          |
| 2001 | 1                            |

(c) Out of the applications of above mentioned eligible eight dependants, 5 applications are under consideration. However, 3 applications could not be recommended for appointment in accordance with existing instruction. The criterion for appointment on compassionate grounds as prescribed in the guidelines for this purpose by the Nodal Ministry i.e. Department of Personnel and Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions is followed in the Department of Posts. As per the said guidelines, the appointment on compassionate grounds is granted to a dependent family member of a Government Servant who dies in harness or who is retired on medical grounds, thereby leaving his family in penury and without any means of livelihood. The object is to relieve the family of the Government Servant concerned from financial destitution and to help it get over emergency. Compassionate appointment can be made up to a maximum of 5% of vacancies arising in within a year under direct recruitment quota in Group 'C' or D' posts.

#### **Corruption Cases**

7453. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:

DR. M.P. JAISWAL:

SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:

DR. BALIRAM:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of officers/employees of his Ministry/subordinate offices nabbed by the Vigilance Department/CBI on charges ranging from malpractices, financial embezzlement and possessing assets disproportionate to known sources of income during the last three years, grade-wise and office-wise; and

(b) the action taken/proposed to be taken against those found guilty in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **Suspension of SC/ST Employees**

7454. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the

suspension of large number of SC/ST employees working in Atomic Energy Establishment in Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether Government have received any memorandum in this regard; and

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) In the context of a demand for revocation of transfer of an employee from Madras Atomic Power Station to Rajasthan Atomic Power Station ordered by Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited in exigency of work, on 26.9.2001, the SC/ST Association members at Kalpakkam supported by Tamil Nadu Atomic Power Employees Union (TAPEU) had resorted to various agitation methods involving law and order problems at the plant site. Based on the charges framed by the police authorities, 60 persons including 2 villagers who had formed an unlawful assembly were detained under custody. Consequent on their detention orders on 3.10.2001, the concerned employees of the various constituent Units of this Department stationed at Kalpakkam were deemed to have been placed under suspension as per the relevant rules applicable to them.

(b) Several memoranda/representations were received from various agencies such as National Commission for SC/ST, Members of Parliament, Lok Sabha Secretariat (Committee on Energy Branch), etc. and they have been suitably responded.

(c) The matter of suspension of employees who participated in the agitation and who were detained in judicial custody was reviewed on 7.2.2002 and their suspension orders thereafter revoked by the respective competent authorities without prejudice to the right of management to initiate departmental action as deemed fit.

#### **Misuse of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre Laboratories**

7455. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had ordered a CBI investigation into irregularities and misuse of Laboratories

at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Trombay after numerous complaints were received as reported in 'Blitz' Mumbai edition dated April 23, 2002;

(b) if so, whether any CBI enquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

#### **Estimation of Population Living Below Poverty Line**

7456. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have devised any new formula for estimation of the population living below the poverty line in both urban and rural areas;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that the Union Government, on request from some state Government have revised upwards the percentage of population below the poverty line;

(d) if so, the details thereof in respect of urban and rural areas, state-wise;

(e) whether this revision is only for the purpose of allocation of foodgrains under the Targetted Public Distribution System and not for allocation of funds under other anti-poverty alleviation programmes;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor;

(g) whether some states have suffered seriously due to the acceptance of Lakdawala Expert Committee recommendations who have some social security schemes for the poor and have demand return of pre-Lakdawala Committee status;

(h) if so, the details of such states who have

suffered seriously due to acceptance of Lakdawala Expert Committee recommendations; and

(i) the steps taken by the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The poverty line is expressed in terms of per capita consumption expenditure needed to attain a minimum amount of calorie intake out of food consumption along with a minimum amount of non-food expenditure in order to meet the requirements of clothing, shelter, transport etc. These poverty lines were originally recommended by a Task Force on Minimum Needs and Effective Consumption Demand in 1979. Then, in 1993, the Expert Group on Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor recommended disaggregation of these national poverty lines into state specific poverty lines using state specific price indices and inter-state price differential. The full Planning Commission under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister accepted the recommendations of the Expert Group with minor modifications in March, 1997. Since then the estimates of poverty at national and state level are being made using the expert Group methodology. The state wise estimates of poverty lines and poverty ratios for the year 1999-2000 are given in the statement-I and II enclosed.

(c) to (f) Yes, Sir. The Planning Commission has received representation from the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Orissa in the matter of choice of the methodology of estimation of poverty. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka urged that in estimating poverty the impact of the price depressing effect of the food subsidy scheme, funded from the State Exchequer, be eliminated. The Government of Andhra Pradesh at a later stage urged that estimates be made on the earlier methodology of poverty estimation, known as the Task Force method. The Government of Orissa has urged that the national level poverty line be adopted for estimating poverty in the State.

After carefully considering the representations, the Planning Commission has decided to continue with the Expert Group methodology (Lakdawala formula). However, by eliminating the impact of the state-sponsored food subsidy scheme, the Planning Commission has raised the poverty ratio of Andhra Pradesh from 22.19% to 25.68% for exclusive use in the matter of allocation of foodgrain under Targetted Public Distribution Scheme (TPDS).

(g) to (i) The State-wise allocation of Central funds under major rural poverty alleviation programmes is made on the criteria based on the proportion of rural poor in the State/UT to the total rural poor in the country or such other criteria as decided by the Central Government from time to time. Until 1997-98 the funds under major rural poverty alleviation programmes were allocated to States/UTs on the basis of "Task Force estimates of poverty for 1987-88". As the data for 1993-94 became available, estimates of poverty based on these data were calculated using both the Task Force methodology and the Expert Group methodology. A comparison of State-wise share of poor as per Task Force for 1993-94 and as per Expert Group for 1993-94 revealed that some States were adversely affected in their respective share of allocations under various poverty alleviation programmes by the adoption of Expert Group estimates. Some of the States which had been adversely affected represented to the Union Government on this issue. Consequently, an exercise was undertaken to work out an adjustment formula to contain the losses under the Expert Group estimates to not more than 15 percent of their expected entitlement based on the Task Force methodology for 1993-94. Since 1998-99 the allocation is being made on the basis of these 15 percent Adjusted Shares as approved by the full Planning Commission under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister.

#### Statement-I

##### *State-specific Poverty Lines in 1999-2000*

(Rs. per capita per month)

| No. | State          | Rural  | Urban  |
|-----|----------------|--------|--------|
| 1   | 2              | 3      | 4      |
| 1   | Andhra Pradesh | 262.94 | 457.40 |

| 1          | 2                | 3      | 4      |
|------------|------------------|--------|--------|
| 2          | Assam            | 365.43 | 343.99 |
| 3          | Bihar            | 333.07 | 379.78 |
| 4          | Gujarat          | 318.94 | 474.41 |
| 5          | Haryana          | 362.81 | 420.20 |
| 6          | Himachal Pradesh | 367.45 | 420.20 |
| 7          | Karnataka        | 309.59 | 511.44 |
| 8          | Kerala           | 374.79 | 477.06 |
| 9          | Madhya Pradesh   | 311.34 | 481.65 |
| 10         | Maharashtra      | 318.63 | 539.71 |
| 11         | Orissa           | 323.92 | 473.12 |
| 12         | Punjab           | 362.68 | 388.15 |
| 13         | Rajasthan        | 344.03 | 465.92 |
| 14         | Tamil Nadu       | 307.64 | 475.60 |
| 15         | Uttar Pradesh    | 336.88 | 416.29 |
| 16         | West Bengal      | 350.17 | 409.22 |
| 17         | Delhi            | 362.68 | 505.45 |
| All India# |                  | 327.56 | 454.11 |

# The poverty line (implicit) at all-India level is worked out from the expenditure class-wise distribution of persons and the poverty ratio at all-India level. The poverty ratio at all-India level is obtained as the weighted average of the state-wise poverty ratio.

#### Statement-II

##### *Number and Percentage of Population Below Poverty Line by States - 1999-2000*

| No. | States/U.T.'s     | Rural                  |              | Urban                  |              | Combined               |              |
|-----|-------------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|
|     |                   | No. of Persons (Lakhs) | % of Persons | No. of Persons (Lakhs) | % of Persons | No. of Persons (Lakhs) | % of Persons |
| 1   | 2                 | 3                      | 4            | 5                      | 6            | 7                      | 8            |
| 1.  | Andhra Pradesh    | 58.13                  | 11.05        | 60.88                  | 26.63        | 119.01                 | 15.77        |
| 2.  | Arunachal Pradesh | 3.80                   | 40.04        | 0.18                   | 7.47         | 3.98                   | 33.47        |

| 1   | 2                         | 3      | 4     | 5      | 6     | 7      | 8     |
|-----|---------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| 3.  | Assam                     | 92.17  | 40.04 | 2.38   | 7.47  | 94.55  | 36.09 |
| 4.  | Bihar                     | 376.51 | 44.30 | 49.13  | 32.91 | 425.64 | 42.60 |
| 5.  | Goa                       | 0.11   | 1.35  | 0.59   | 7.52  | 0.70   | 4.40  |
| 6.  | Gujarat                   | 39.80  | 13.17 | 28.09  | 15.59 | 67.89  | 14.07 |
| 7.  | Haryana                   | 11.94  | 8.27  | 5.39   | 9.99  | 17.34  | 8.74  |
| 8.  | Himachal Pradesh          | 4.84   | 7.94  | 0.29   | 4.63  | 5.12   | 7.63  |
| 9.  | Jammu & Kashmir           | 2.97   | 3.97  | 0.49   | 1.98  | 3.46   | 3.48  |
| 10. | Karnataka                 | 59.91  | 17.38 | 44.49  | 25.25 | 104.40 | 20.04 |
| 11. | Kerala                    | 20.97  | 9.38  | 20.07  | 20.27 | 41.04  | 12.72 |
| 12. | Madhya Pradesh            | 217.32 | 37.06 | 81.22  | 38.44 | 298.54 | 37.43 |
| 13. | Maharashtra               | 125.12 | 23.72 | 102.87 | 26.81 | 227.99 | 25.02 |
| 14. | Manipur                   | 6.53   | 40.04 | 0.66   | 7.47  | 7.19   | 28.54 |
| 15. | Meghalaya                 | 7.89   | 40.04 | 0.34   | 7.47  | 8.23   | 33.87 |
| 16. | Mizoram                   | 1.40   | 40.04 | 0.45   | 7.47  | 1.85   | 19.47 |
| 17. | Nagaland                  | 5.21   | 40.04 | 0.28   | 7.47  | 5.49   | 32.67 |
| 18. | Orissa                    | 143.69 | 48.01 | 25.40  | 42.83 | 169.09 | 47.15 |
| 19. | Punjab                    | 10.20  | 6.35  | 4.29   | 5.75  | 14.49  | 6.16  |
| 20. | Rajasthan                 | 55.06  | 13.74 | 26.78  | 19.85 | 81.83  | 15.28 |
| 21. | Sikkim                    | 2.00   | 40.04 | 0.04   | 7.47  | 2.05   | 36.55 |
| 22. | Tamil Nadu                | 80.51  | 20.55 | 49.97  | 22.11 | 130.48 | 21.12 |
| 23. | Tripura                   | 12.53  | 40.04 | 0.49   | 7.47  | 13.02  | 34.44 |
| 24. | Uttar Pradesh             | 412.01 | 31.22 | 117.88 | 30.89 | 529.89 | 31.15 |
| 25. | West Bengal               | 180.11 | 31.85 | 33.38  | 14.86 | 213.49 | 27.02 |
| 26. | Andaman & Nicobar Islands | 0.58   | 20.55 | 0.24   | 22.11 | 0.82   | 20.99 |
| 27. | Chandigarh                | 0.06   | 5.75  | 0.45   | 5.75  | 0.51   | 5.75  |
| 28. | Dadra & Nagar Haveli      | 0.30   | 17.57 | 0.03   | 13.52 | 0.33   | 17.14 |
| 29. | Daman & Diu               | 0.01   | 1.35  | 0.05   | 7.52  | 0.06   | 4.44  |
| 30. | Delhi                     | 0.07   | 0.40  | 11.42  | 9.42  | 11.49  | 8.23  |

| 1   | 2           | 3       | 4     | 5      | 6     | 7       | 8     |
|-----|-------------|---------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|
| 31. | Lakshadweep | 0.03    | 9.38  | 0.08   | 20.27 | 0.11    | 15.60 |
| 32. | Pondicherry | 0.64    | 20.55 | 1.77   | 22.11 | 2.41    | 21.67 |
|     | All India   | 1932.43 | 27.09 | 670.07 | 23.62 | 2602.50 | 26.10 |

**Notes:**

- Poverty Ratio of Assam is used for Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura.
- Poverty Line of Maharashtra and expenditure distribution of Goa is used to estimate poverty ratio of Goa.
- Poverty Line of Himachal Pradesh and expenditure distribution of Jammu & Kashmir is used to estimate poverty ratio of Jammu & Kashmir.
- Poverty Ratio of Tamil Nadu is used for Pondicherry and A & N Island.
- Urban Poverty Ratio of Punjab used for both rural and urban poverty of Chandigarh.
- Poverty Line of Maharashtra and expenditure distribution of Dadra & Nagar Haveli is used to estimate poverty ratio of Dadra & Nagar Haveli.
- Poverty Ratio of Goa is used for Daman & Diu.
- Poverty Ratio of Kerala is used for Lakshadweep.
- Urban Poverty Ratio of Rajasthan may be treated as tentative.

**[Translation]****Telephone Connections in Delhi**

7457. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO:

SHRI MANSINH PATEL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether priority is given in providing telephone connection after issuance of OBs by the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited, Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of connections provided on priority basis during the last six months; and

(d) the number of letters received from the MPs regarding this during the said period along with the number of connections provided on priority basis thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. All connections are provided as soon as possible after issuance of OBs. However, priority in issuance of OBs are given by Hon'ble MOC, Hon'ble MOS(C), MPs, CMD, CGM, PGM and Area GMs.

(c) 2952 cases were given where priority was given by issuance of OBs.

(d) 58 letters were received from the Hon'ble MPs and 52 connections have been provided so far during the last six months. The remaining cases are being processed and shall be provided shortly.

**[English]****Chemical Components in Aerated Drinks**

7458. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:

SHRI GUNIPATI RAMAIAH:

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME:

SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the various chemical components used in the preparation of aerated drinks are harmful to health;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose prohibition on celebrities appearing in the advertisements endorsing various brands of aerated drinks;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Manufacture of aerated drinks conforming to the standards for carbonated water as laid down under PFA Rules, 1955 is not harmful to human health.

(c) to (e) There is no such proposal.

#### **Commercial Cultivation of BT Cotton**

7459. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:

SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI:

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA:

SHRI T. M. SELVAGANPATHI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether this Ministry has not been consulted by the Ministry of Environment while granting clearance for commercial cultivation of BT Cotton; and

(b) if so, the objection raised by his Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) under the Ministry of Environment and Forests had sent to Ministry of Health & Family Welfare the reports of the studies conducted on BT cotton in Indian conditions for comments. The National Institute of Nutrition, which is under the ICMR had examined these studies. The Ministry of Health & FW have furnished its comments on the said report to GEAC.

#### **Agro Based Industries**

7460. SHRI P. KUMARASAMY: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes/projects launched for optimum use of agricultural produces and wastes through processing in agro-based industries;

(b) the details of the concession given to agro-based industries in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken to encourage farmers to set up agro-based industries?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) to (c) The Khadi and Village

Industries Commission (KVIC) is already implementing the Rural, Employment Generation Programme (REGP) throughout the country for setting up agro and rural industries. Under this scheme, the KVIC provides margin money assistance at the rate of 25% of the project cost upto Rs. 10 lakhs and for the project above Rs. 10 lakhs and upto Rs. 25 lakhs, rate of margin money is 25% of Rs. 10 lakhs plus 10% on remaining cost of the project. In the case of SC/ST/OBC/Women/ Physically Handicapped/Ex-Servicemen and Minority Community beneficiary/institution and for hill border and tribal areas, North Eastern Region, Sikkim, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep, the margin money grant is 30% of the project cost upto Rs. 10 lakhs but above this amount and upto Rs. 25 lakhs, it is 10% of the remaining cost of the project. Under this scheme, the beneficiary is required to contribute a minimum of 10% of the project cost. In case of SC/ST etc., beneficiary's contribution is 5% of the project cost. This scheme is being implemented through Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks, etc.

Moreover, the Government of India has announced a special package on 14.5.2001 for strengthening the Khadi and Village Industries sector. The package inter-alia provides for Insurance cover to the Khadi artisans, option between Rebate and Market Development Assistance (MDA), creation of packaging and design facilities, measures to promote marketing, brand building, cluster development, technology upgradation, quality control, marketing through publicity and advertisement etc.

#### **Exemption of Anti-AIDS Drugs from Excise Duty**

7461. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some anti-AIDS drugs have been exemption from the excise duty, recently;

(b) if so, the details of the drugs so exempted and the purpose thereof; and

(c) the extent to which it would be help both the manufacturers and the patients in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The under mentioned drugs have been exempted from excise duty to make them available to patients at reasonably affordable price:

(1) Diadanosinde (2) Efavirenz (3) Indinavir (4)

Lamivudine (5) Nelfinavir (6) Nevirapine (7) Ritonavir (8) Sanquinavir (9) Stavudine (10) Zidovudine

(c) With the exemption from excise duty, the manufacturers would be able to make these drugs available to the HIV/AIDS patients at lower prices.

#### **Construction of Electrical Sub-Station**

7462. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether JNPT constructed an electrical sub-station during the project stage at a cost of Rs. 2.57 crore;

(b) if so, whether the sub-station was intended to feed 156 reefer sockets in the container terminal of the Port;

(c) whether JNPT showed an undue favour to a container in construction of electrical sub-station and thus incurred net expenditure of Rs. 1.16 crore which was avoidable;

(d) if so, whether JNPT further handed over a strip of land to the contractor free of cost causing another loss of Rs. 28.22 lakh to the Port;

(e) if so, whether the Government have enquired in to the matter; and

(f) if so, the action taken against the defaulters?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) constructed one 220/33 K.V. master unit sub-station and eight 33/3.3/0.415 K.V. electrical sub-stations inside the operational area and in Port's township for feeding power supply to all equipment and to Port's township as part of Nhava Sheva Port Project under Contract-V-Power Distribution System and Contract-II - Bulk Handling Facility. Out of the eight nos. 33/3.3/0.451 K.V. electrical sub-stations, one sub-station was intended to feed power supply to 156 reefer sockets and External Area Lighting System in the vicinity of the Sub-station.

(c) to (f) According to information made available by JNPT, construction of a new reefer sub-station was envisaged, based on anticipated traffic and after taking into account the problems in feeding power supply to the newly constructed reefer points from the sub-station constructed at the project stage, long before handing over the sub-station to the contractor. JNPT handed over this sub-station along with 34 mtrs. wide strip of land to the contractor at a total cost

of Rs. 2 crores for giving access to the sub-station subject to the condition that this strip of land shall be developed as a green belt by them.

#### **Less Investment in Agro Sector**

7463. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Planning Commission has expressed their concern about less investment by Government in Agro Sector;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this year?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Planning Commission has expressed concern in Mid-Term Appraisal of the Ninth Five Year Plan about the decline in Gross Capital Formation in Agriculture (GCFA) as a percentage of total Domestic Gross Capital Formation (DGCF) which has come down to 9.4% in 1996-97 from -19.1% 1979-80 at 1980-81 prices. At 1993-94, prices GCFA has come down from 6.3% in 1996-97 to 5.5% in, 1998-99. The GCFA in public sector has registered a decline from Rs. 4668.00 crore in 1996-97 to Rs. 3845.00 crore in 1998-99.

(c) The strategy adopted by the Government for increasing Capital Formation in Agriculture Sector is to increase investment in the development of infrastructure through launching schemes like Rural Infrastructure Development Fund, accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme, National Watershed Development Project and other similar programmes.

#### **Shortage of Skilled Pilot**

7464. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian ports are suffering because they don't have enough skilled pilots;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are planning to give more incentives to the pilots to attract them to join; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI VED PRAKASH GOYAL): (a) and (b) Majority of Ports are not suffering because of shortage of skilled pilots. In case regular pilots are not available at any port due to some reason, ports arrange the work through contract pilots.

(c) and (d) At present there is no proposal for giving any more incentives to attract the pilots to join Major Ports.

#### **Non-Recovery of Amounts**

7465 SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the erstwhile Department of Electronics has failed to safeguard the interest of the Government while sanctioning funds to the firm resulting in unintended benefit to them and non-recovery of Rs.40.25 lakh as has been brought out by the CAG in its Report No.5 of 2002 in paragraph 5.2;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to recover the money from the firms and to fix the responsibility and accountability of the persons found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) The erstwhile Department of Electronics (DOE) has not sanctioned any funds to the firms cited in para 5.2 of the CAG Report No.5, 2002. Grant-in-aid of Rs.40.25 lakhs was given by DOE to the Central Electronics Engineering Research Institute (CEERI), Chennai which is a R&D laboratory under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) towards retrofit automation for the paper industry. The firms had also provided matching financial contribution of Rs.50.00 lakhs for this purpose to CEERI, Chennai. The Grant-in-aid provided by DOE was towards underwriting the risk in promotion of indigenous technology. The firms, as eventual beneficiaries of the project outcome, had agreed to repay to DOE the amount provided by DOE to CEERI, Chennai after installation and satisfactory commissioning of the systems. The firms have so far not made the repayments to DOE, after installation and satisfactory commissioning of the systems, citing functional problems with the system and recession in the paper industry as reasons. The matter is being pursued with the firms.

[Translation]

#### **Induction of Medical Right in the Fundamental Rights**

7466. DR. ASHOK PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is under consideration of the Government to include right to medical facilities in the fundamental rights;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which a decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise.

#### **National Highway No.7 and 12**

7467. SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether work has been undertaken on the National Highway number 7 and 12 in districts Jabalpur and Katni in Madhya Pradesh under IRQP scheme;

(b) whether the above work has been completed;

(c) whether the quality of the above work has been found to be satisfactory; and

(d) if so, the amount of funds spent on the above work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b) Out of 160 km length of NH-7 passing through the districts of Jabalpur and Katni, IRQP works on 122 kms. have been sanctioned for Rs.23.25 crore, out of which work on 111 Kms. has been completed. IRQP on the balance stretches of 38 kms. is included in Annual Plan 2002-03. Out of 56 kms. of NH-12 in the district of Jabalpur, IRQP works on 20 kms. have been sanctioned for Rs. 3.77 crore, out of which works on 17 kms. has been completed. Improvement of balance stretches is proposed to be taken up within the next two years, subject to availability of funds.

(c) Yes, Madam..

(d) The expenditure incurred on these works is Rs. 21.79 crores.

[English]

#### VSAT Services

7468. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) services has shifted to revenue share regime for Wireless Planning and Coordination (WPC) charges;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons for not shifting to revenue share; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (d) The WPC charges for VSAT services are charged on fixed rate basis so far. The proposal for shifting to revenue sharing regime is under examination. The decision in this issue is likely to be taken in about six months.

[Translation]

#### Telephone Facility in Maharashtra

7469. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications for telephone connections pending with telephone exchange in Nandurbar, Dhule and Jalgaon district of Maharashtra as on March 31, 2002; and

(b) the times by which the applicants in the waiting list are likely to be provided telephone connections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The pending applications for telephone connections as on 31.3.2002 in Nandurbar, Dhule and Jalgaon districts are as under:

| S.No. | District  | Waiting List |
|-------|-----------|--------------|
| 1.    | Nandurbar | 968          |
| 2.    | Dhule     | 3067         |
| 3.    | Jalgaon   | 4295         |
| Total |           | 8330         |

(b) These wait listed applicants are likely to be provided telephone connections progressively by March, 2003 except for some long distance connections.

[English]

#### Sub Cadres of Doctors

7470. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Health Service (CHS) consists of various sub-cadres of doctors;

(b) if so, whether these sub-cadres have different recruitment, functions and annual assessment criteria;

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

(d) whether common seniority is not prepared for the sub-cadre of teaching specialists;

(e) if so, whether an annual seniority list is not prepared for each sub-cadre; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Central Health Service (CHS) consists of four sub-cadres namely, Teaching Specialist, Non-Teaching Specialist, Public Health Specialist and General Duty Medical Officers. The recruitment, functions and annual assessment criteria of these sub-cadres is given in the statement enclosed.

(d) The seniority of officers of Teaching specialist sub-cadre are prepared speciality-wise up to the level of Professors and common seniority is prepared at the level of Senior Administrative Grade i.e. Director-Professors.

(e) and (f) The seniority of members of Central Health Service is determined in accordance with the provisions of Rule 9 of the Central Health Service Rules, 1996. These rules do not provide for preparation of seniority list of officers annually.

**Statement**

*The recruitment, functions and annual assessment criteria of officers of four sub-cadres of CHS are give below:*

| Sub-Cadre                     | Recruitment                        | Functions                                                                                                                                                          | Annual assessment criteria |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Teaching Specialist           | By direct recruitment through UPSC | Teaching including patient care as a part of teaching programme                                                                                                    | Annual Confidential Report |
| Non-Teaching Specialist       | By direct recruitment through UPSC | Patient care and various administrative duties as may be assigned from time to time.                                                                               | Annual Confidential Report |
| Public Health Specialist      | By direct recruitment through UPSC | Conduct studies and filled investigations to control the communicable diseases and assist in the training programmes undertaken by the Public Health institutions. | Annual Confidential Report |
| General Duty Medical Officers | By direct recruitment through UPSC | Patients care in the dispensaries/hospitals etc. and perform various administrative duties as may be assigned from time to time.                                   | Annual Confidential Report |

[Translation]

**World Bank Aided Health Care Projects**

7471. SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA:

SHRI JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some health centres/health care projects have been started in the country with the assistance of World Bank during the last three years;

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

(c) the amount allocated by the World Bank for these projects during the period, State-wise;

(d) the different works undertaken under these projects during the period; and

(e) the progress made under these projects during the period, till date, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

**Repair of National Highway 15**

7472. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Will

the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that condition of NH 15 passing through Jaisalmer-Barmer-Sanchore Rajasthan is extremely bad especially between KM 229-230, 236-240, 241-242 and 252-253;

(b) whether the repair and renewal work on these portions had not been done for the last three years;

(c) the reasons for not undertaking repair and renewal work on these portions;

(d) whether the proposal for widening of intermediate lane to lane and IRQP between KM 228 to 259, IRQP between KM 240 to 259 have already been received by DG(RD) Delhi; and

(e) if so, the status of the proposals at present and the likely date by which these proposals would be cleared and work for improvement of surface condition would be under taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b) The State PWD, who is the agency for maintaining the National Highway, has informed that the condition of Jaisalmer-Barmer-Sanchore section of NH-15 in the State of Rajasthan is not extremely bad specially between KM 229-230, 236-240, 241-242 and 252-253. However, the State PWD has been requested to frame proposals for improving the above mentioned stretches of the National Highway, as required.

(c) Maintenance and repair of National Highways is a continuous process, depending upon the traffic needs, inter-se priority and availability of resources.

(d) and (e) The proposal for widening of intermediate lane to two-lane and IRQP between km. 228 to 259 has not been received in this Ministry. The proposal for IRQP between km. 240/0 to 259/0 has been received in the Ministry. The same is under examination. It is too early to indicate the date of commencement of work.

#### **Service Condition of Group 'A' in P&T and Telecom**

7473. SHRI SURESH KURUP:

SHRI R.S. PATIL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that there is wide spread apprehensions regarding the service conditions of Group A Officers in Post and Telecom departments (Indian Posts and Telecom Accounts and Finance Service) after the Corporatisation of Department of Telecom Services and Department of Telecom Operations; and

(b) if so, the steps the Government propose to take to protect their service conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Sir, there has been no change in the service conditions of Group 'A' officers of the Indian Posts and Telecom Accounts and Finance Service after corporatisation of the Department of Telecom Services/Department of Telecom Operations. Recruitment for the service is continuing for the Departments of Telecom and Posts through the Union Public Service Commission. The officers of the Indian Posts and Telecom Accounts and Finance Service are working in the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited on deemed deputation, without deputation allowance.

[Translation]

#### **Compulsory Check-up of AIDS of the Foreigners**

7474. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ:

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposals to have compulsory check up of AIDS of the foreigners coming to India from various countries;

(b) whether World Health Organisation and United Nations have opposed this step of the Government;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereon;

(d) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for expansion of voluntary counselling and Training Centres (VCT) for prevention of AIDS; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) As per policy of the Government, all foreigners, intending to stay for more than one year in India and those foreigners who enter India on short term visa but want to extend their stay for a year or more, are subjected to undergo AIDS testing only once during their stay. However, foreigners working in various missions whether enjoying diplomatic status or not; foreign priests and nuns and foreign journalists accredited to the PIB (Press Information Bureau of India) and all foreign visitors coming on short term visa are excluded from AIDS testing.

(b) and (c) No Sir.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Government has decided to establish Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centres in all public sector hospitals up to district level in a phased manner giving priority to high prevalence States viz. Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur and Nagaland.

[English]

#### **Universal Service Obligatory Fund**

7475. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have finalized the quantum of the fund to Universal Service Obligation Fund;

(b) if so, the details of the sources of contribution to the USO Fund;

(c) whether various telecom service providers will contribute a share of their fees to this fund;

(d) if so, the details of the system by which the levy would operate;

(e) whether Government are considering alternate source to raise funds for the USO; and

(f) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir. An amount of Rs. 1805 crores has been provided for in the Budget Estimate of the Financial Year 2002-2003 towards Universal Service Fund.

(b) and (c) The Government have decided to apportion universal service levy @ 5% of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR). This levy is a part of the total license fee to be paid by various service providers such as Basic, Cellular, National and International Long Distance, Paging, Infrastructure Provider Category-II (IP-II), Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT).

(d) The funds created by the Universal Service levy shall be spent in rural and remote areas on both public access telephones or community telephones meant for public use and individual household telephones in net high-cost rural/remote areas. The implementation of USO will be divided into two clearly identifiable streams:

**Stream 1 : Provision of Public Telecom and Information Services. This includes:**

a. Installation of VPTs in the remaining villages (over and above the villages identified as per the 1991 census).

b. Provision of additional rural community phones after achieving the target of one VPT in every village.

c. Replacement of VPTs installed before 01.04.2002.

d. Up gradation of VPTs to Public Telecom and Info Centers (PTICs).

e. Installation of High Speed PTICs (HPTICs).

**Stream II : Provision of household telephones in Net High Cost areas (rural/remote).**

Stream I will be given priority in respect of disbursement of funds over Stream II. The guidelines on the Universal Service Support Policy have already been issued.

(e) and (f) Presently, in the event of an increase in the requirement of Universal Service Obligation, the

percentage of contribution towards Universal service Levy can be raised to meet such additional requirement but the added levy will be drawn out of the prevalent percentage of license fee, keeping the present ceiling of Universal Service Levy plus License Fee intact.

#### **Increase/Decrease in Software Trade**

7476. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether various incentives given/steps taken by the Government have shown any encouraging results in regard to software trade;

(b) if so, the details of the trade made during 2001-2002 so far and the comparative increase or decrease as compared to 2000-2001;

(c) whether software industry has asked the Government to give more concessions for healthy development of the Industry; and

(g) if so, the steps taken or being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The export of software during 2001-2002 was of the order of Rs.36,500 crores as compared to Rs.28,350 crores during 2000- 2001, registering a growth of over 28%.

(c) and (d) The software industry has represented against the announcement in the Budget, 2002-2003 for reduction of full deduction hitherto available on export profits under Sections 10A and 10B of the Income Tax Act, to a deduction of 90% of the export profits.

#### **Telecommunication Network**

7477. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the telecommunications and network technology provider Network Programs has planned to pump Rs. 15 crore for the augmentation of its contract center and customer relationship management software for the Indian market;

(b) if so, whether the company has rolled out a

suite of products, targeted at telecom services provider systems;

(c) whether these markets have already been developed in Israel, the United States and Australia; and

(d) if so, the extent to which this will be helpful in expanding telecommunications network in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **Parcel Bomb**

7478. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a registered parcel bomb exploded at a local sub-post office in Bhubaneswar on January 3, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of people injured in this incident;

(c) whether in view of this the Government have issued any directives to the State Governments;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the precautionary measures being taken by the Government to check such incidence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A parcel bearing number 213 with cloth packing was booked between 11.00 hrs. to 11.30 hrs on 3/1/2002 at the Surya Nagar Sub Post Office of Bhubaneswar. It exploded at about 13.30 hrs. on the same day. Three persons were injured in the incident.

(c) to (e) Necessary directions have been issued on 9-1-2002 to all Heads of Postal Circles to take adequate safeguards while handling any suspected article. A Universal Postal Union (UPU) guideline on Bomb Contingency Planning in Posts has been circulated. Instructions have also been issued to restrict parcel booking to select post offices and also to request customers, wherever feasible, to bring parcels in open condition for inspection before booking.

#### **PM Visit to U.S.**

7479. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the follow-up steps taken by the government to implement the various decisions particularly in the area of defence cooperation and establishing a new strategic framework agreed upon during the PM's visit to U.S.A. in November, 2001?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): The two sides have taken follow-up measures to implement all the decisions taken during the Prime Minister's visit to the United States in November 2001. In order to strengthen defence cooperation, the bilateral Defence Policy Group met in New Delhi in December 2001. The Defence Policy Group drew up a concrete programme of activities and meetings of other institutional forums of bilateral dialogue on defence matters, which have proceeded on schedule. India and the United States have also resumed defence supplies relationship. India and the United States have expanded their ongoing dialogue on the New Strategic Framework. The inaugural political-military dialogue was held in New Delhi on 30th April. Indian experts have been invited for a bilateral workshop on missile defence in the United States in May 2002 and to observe in another exercise in this area in June 2003.

#### **Meeting of Indo-U.S. Joint Working Group**

7480. SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL:

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of the Indo-U.S. Joint Working Group on terrorism was held in New Delhi in January, 2002;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) An inter-agency delegation from the United States led by the Special Coordinator for Counter-terrorism in the State Department visited New Delhi on 20-21 January 2002 for the fourth meeting of the India-U.S. Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism.

(b) The two delegations discussed the current

terrorism situation and further strengthening institutional, law enforcement, financial, military, intelligence cooperation between the two countries in combating terrorism.

(c) The two sides agreed to continue exchanging assessment on the international terrorism situation; further strengthen intelligence and investigation cooperation; expand training in preventive, protective and consequence management capabilities in both conventional and WMD terrorism; share experience on the efforts being made by the two countries to strengthen internal/homeland security; work together for the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 of September 2001 on terrorism; strengthen military-military cooperation on counter-terrorism; and, cooperate on issues such as cyber-terrorism, blocking terrorism financing, forensic capabilities and technological aspects of effective border management.

#### Telephone Connections in Haryana

7481. SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL has provided telephone connections for recently launched special scheme for new connections in Bahadurgarh, Haryana;

(b) if so, whether a number of connections are yet to be provided at the houses where the construction work is in progress;

(c) if so, whether number of representations have been received from such applicants for early installation of telephone connections at the site of construction; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the new connections are likely to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Only one connection is yet to be provided.

(c) and (d) Only one representation has been received for early provision of telephone connection at Bahadurgarh. Efforts are afoot to provided the connection before the end of May '02.

12.00 hrs.

#### PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND  
MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): 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 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:

(i) Review by the Government of the working of the Electronics Trade and Technology Development Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.

(ii) Annual Report of the Electronics Trade and Technology Development Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in the Library. See No. L.T. 5713/2002]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RET.D.) B.C. KHANDURI): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table –

(1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 10 of the National Highways Act, 1956:-

(i) S.O. 280 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 5th March, 2002 regarding authorising the competent authority to perform the functions under National Highways Act in respect of the land stretch from Kokhrajto Haldia and Kanpur Varanasi Section on National Highway No.2 for Kanpur Varanasi Section on National Highway No.2 for Allahabad Bypass in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

(ii) S.O. 281 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 5th March, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for building, maintenance of National Highway No.2 between Bhaunti and Khaga (Delhi-Kanpur Section) and (Kanpur-Varanasi Section) in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

(iii) S.O. 314 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 19th March, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for building, maintenance

- of National Highway No.2 from Agra to Sikandra (Kanpur Dehat) in the State of Uttar Pradesh.
- (iv) S.O. 408 (E) and S.O. 409 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 11th April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No.5 (Visakhapatnam-Bhubneswar Section) in the State of Orissa.
- (v) S.O. 410 (E) to S.O. 412 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 11th April, 2002 regarding authorising the competent authority to perform the function under the National Highways Act in respect of acquisition of land on National Highway No. 45 B in the State of Tamil Nadu and Orissa.
- (vi) S.O. 413 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 11th April 2002 regarding authorising the competent authority to perform the function under the National Highways Act in respect of acquisition of land on National Highway No. 45 B in the State of Tamil Nadu.
- (vii) S.O. 370 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 2nd April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for widening of National Highway No.5 (Nellore-Chilakauripet Section) in the State of Andhra Pradesh.
- (viii) S.O. 371 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 2nd April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No.5 (Visakhapatnam-Bhubneswar Section) in the State of Andhra Pradesh.
- (ix) S.O. 445 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 18th April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for widening of National Highway No.5 (Madras-Vijaywada Section) in the State of Andhra Pradesh.
- (x) S.O. 446 (E) and S.O. 447 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 18th April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No.5 (Vijaywada to Visakhapatnam Section) and (Visakhapatnam to Bhubneswar Section) in the State of Andhra Pradesh.
- (xi) S.O. 448 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 18th, April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning on National Highway No.5 (Visakhapatnam to Bhubneswar Section) in the State of Orissa.
- (xii) S.O. 425 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 15th April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning on National Highway No. 46 (Krishinagar-Ranipet Section) in the State of Tamil Nadu.
- (xiii) S.O. 426 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 15th April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning on National Highway No.4 (Chennai-Ranipet Section) in the State of Tamil Nadu.
- (xiv) S.O. 455 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 20th April, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for maintenance, management, operation of the 2nd Vivekananda Bridge across river Hooghly on National Highway No. 28R in the State of West Bengal.
- (xv) S.O. 464 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 26th April 2002, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.R.O. 1181 dated the 4th April, 1957.
- (xvi) S.O. 465 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 26th April 2002 regarding entrustment of stretches as specified in table annexed therein.
- [Placed in the Library. See No. L.T. 5714/2002]
- [English]
- THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—
- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):
- (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Electronics Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2002-2003.
- [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5715/2002]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Uranium Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5716/2002]

- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Rare Earths Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5717/2002]

- (iv) Memorandum of Understanding between the Nuclear Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5718/2002]

- (2) A copy of the Revised Long-Term Action Plan for the KBK Districts of Orissa alongwith Review and Action Taken Report thereon (Hindi and English versions).

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5719/2002]

- (3) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (2) of section 3 of the All India Services Act, 1951:

- (i) The All India Services (Death-cum-Retirement Benefits) Amendment Rules, 2002 published in Notification No. G.S.R.49 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 18th January, 2002.

- (ii) The All India Services (Discipline and Appeal) Amendment Rules, 2002 published in Notification No. G.S.R.118 in Gazette of India dated the 13th April, 2002.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5720/2002]

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 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 the eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Lok Sabha:-

#### ELEVENTH LOK SABHA

- (1) Statement No. XXVI Fourth Session 1997

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5721/2002]

- (2) Statement No. XXIII Fifth Session 1997

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5722/2002]

#### TWELFTH LOK SABHA

- (3) Statement No. XXIV Second Session 1998

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5723/2002]

- (4) Statement No. XIX Third Session 1999

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5724/2002]

- (5) Statement No. XIX Fourth Session 1999

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5725/2002]

#### THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA

- (6) Statement No. XVI Third Session 2000

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5726/2002]

- (7) Statement No. XII Fourth Session 2000

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5727/2002]

- (8) Statement No. X Fifth Session 2000

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5728/2002]

- (9) Statement No. IX Sixth Session 2001

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5729/2002]

- (10) Statement No. VI Seventh Session 2001

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5730/2002]

- (11) Statement No. IV Eighth Session 2001

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5731/2002]

- (12) Statement No. II Ninth Session 2002

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5732/2002]

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, on behalf of Shri Shripad Yasso Naik, I beg to lay on the Table –

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):-

- (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Dredging Corporation of India and the Ministry of Shipping for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5733/2002]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Shipping Corporation of India Limited and the Ministry of Shipping for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5734/2002]

- (2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (4) of section 124 of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963:-

- (i) G.S.R. 285 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 15th April, 2002 approving the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust Employees (Interest Subsidy on House Building Advance) First Amendment Regulations, 2002.

- (ii) G.S.R. 290 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 18th April, 2002 approving the Cochin Port Trust (Recruitment of Heads of Department) Amendment Regulations, 2002.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5735/2002]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.
- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001, together with Audit Report thereon.
- (iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working

of the Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.

- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5736/2002]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.

- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001, together with Audit Report thereon.

- (iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.

- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5737/2002]

- (5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Academy of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001, along with Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Academy of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.

- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5738/2002]

- (7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.

- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Council for

Research in Ayurveda and Siddha, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000, together with Audit Report thereon.

- (iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.
- (8) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.
- [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5739/2002]
- (9) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.
- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000, together with Audit Report thereon.
- (iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.
- (10) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (9) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 5740/2002]

[English]

12.02 hrs.

## MESSAGES FROM RAJYA SABHA

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 sub-rule (6) of rule 186 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to return herewith the Vice-President's Pension (Amendment) Bill, 2002 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on 7th May, 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."

- (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 14th May, 2002, agreed without any amendment to the Salaries and Allowances of Officers of Parliament and Leaders of Opposition in Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2002, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 7th May, 2002."

- (iii) "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 14th May, 2002, agreed without any amendment to the Salaries and Allowances of Officers of Parliament (Second Amendment) Bill, 2002, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th May, 2002."

12.02½ hrs.

## COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

### Twenty-fifth Report

[English]

SHRI DENZIL B. ATKINSON (NOMINATED): Sir, I beg to present the Twenty-fifth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Private Member's Bills and Resolutions.

12.03 hrs.

## COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

### Seventh Report

[English]

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (CANARA): Sir, I beg to present the \* Seventh Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women on 'Training Programmes for Women'.

\* Presented to hon. Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha on 6th March, 2002 under Direction 71A of the Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha. Hon. Deputy Speaker ordered the printing, publication and circulation of the Report under Rule 280 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

12.03½ hrs.

**MOTION RE: JOINT COMMITTEE ON STOCK  
MARKET SCAM AND MATTERS RELATING  
THERETO—EXTENTION OF TIME**

*[Translation]*

SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI (DEORIA): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do further extend upto the end of the Monsoon Session of 2002, the time for presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee on Stock Market Scam and Matters Relating Thereto."

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do further extend upto the end of the Monsoon Session of 2002, the time for presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee on Stock Market Scam and Matters Relating Thereto."

*The motion was adopted.*

*[Translation]*

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA (DELHI SADAR): Sir, I would like to raise the issue of terrorist attack in Jammu. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Discussion has taken place in this regard. Hon. Prime Minister has given a reply too.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Sir, you have permitted me to raise this issue in Zero Hour.

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: I will permit you after Calling Attention.

12.04 hrs.

*[English]*

**CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF  
URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Reported Regional Imbalance in various parts of the  
country, especially in Northern part of West Bengal**

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Planning to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that she may make a statement thereon:

"The situation arising out of reported regional imbalance in various parts of the country especially in Northern part of West Bengal."

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): Sir, the hon. Member of Parliament, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi has raised a matter regarding the situation arising out of reported regional imbalance in various parts of the country, especially in the Northern part of West Bengal.

Similar concern has been raised by the hon. Member about the overall economic development of the said region on a number of occasions by raising Matters, 'Zero Hour' submissions, letters to the hon. Prime Minister, the Ministers of State for Planning and the Deputy-Chairman, Planning Commission and his anxiety for the area and its people is very well known.

The hon. Member has raised the issue of regional imbalance and lack of infrastructure development like road network, health, rural electrification, industry, exploitation of agriculture potential and construction of over-bridges on railway crossings, etc. in the area as also issues relating to the socio-economic and cultural development of backward communities like the Rajbanshi community and the promotion of Hindi and development of other languages in the region.

These issues, raised by the hon. Member, have dwelt on the perceived imbalance in the development of North Bengal within the State of West Bengal; upliftment of Rajbanshi community in North Bengal; need for all-round development of North-Bengal; remunerative price for jute growers, declining tea industry and lack of support from banks; all-round development of North-Bengal; infrastructure development in North Bengal; making provision for a 250 bedded hospital in Malda and metalled roads in Mahananda; socio-economic development of sub divisional headquarters; socio-economic development of North Bengal; ad-hoc grant of Rs. 15 crore; allocation of funds to West Bengal; and overall development of Harishchandrapur Assembly Constituency. Very recently, he has raised issues, concerning overall development in respect of Karandighi Assembly Segment, Goalpukur and Chakulia Revenue blocks, Chanchal Sub Division and Ratua Block under Rule 377, the replies to all of these are under process.

These issues have been examined, from time to time,

in the Planning Commission. The planning and development of the area and allocation of funds for the purpose are primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government. However, the Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments in the reduction of regional imbalances. Almost, all the matters, raised by the hon. Member, fall within the overall responsibility of the State Government. Inter-se allocation of funds, which are sanctioned for the States in the Annual Plans, is entirely the prerogative of the State Government. The funds for the Annual Plans, I may reiterate, are allocated to the States. Except for a handful Area Development Schemes, that are run by the Central Government, development of specific areas in the State, is the responsibility of the Government of that State. Various programmes have been formulated to deal with the special problems of identified areas such as the Tribal Sub-Plan, the Border Area Development Programme, Hills Areas Development Programme, (which covers Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Development Council), etc.

Towards this end, on these occasions, in response to the matter raised by the hon. Member, suitable communications have been addressed by the incumbent Minister of State for Planning to the Chief Minister of West Bengal, bringing to the latter's notice, the concern of the hon. Member, with the request that the matter may be examined and appropriate action taken at the level of the State Government. In response to every notice/mention, replies have been sent to the hon. Member, regularly.

I may mention that the State Government has constituted a body namely, Uttar Banga Unnayan Parishad in the year 2000-01 with the objective of formulating schemes for the development of North Bengal region.

The University of North Bengal has prepared a socio-economic perspective Plan for North Bengal, 2001-2010, which is under active consideration of the Parishad. The State Government has proposed to allocate all amount of Rs. 112.53 crore for the Tenth Five Year Plan to this Parishad.

Besides, keeping in mind the repeated requests for development of North Bengal, raised by the hon. Member, as a special case, it was decided that a Study would be conducted in respect of the North Bengal region in order to understand and address the issues involved therein. The Study, named 'Research study on the comparative backwardness of North Bengal region', was commissioned to the Institute of Applied Manpower Research, an autonomous institution under the Planning Commission in September, 2001. The Study was meant to bring out the inter-district disparity in different dimension of development, broadly,

under the following heads: (a) Physical Resources (b) Human Resources (c) Physical Infrastructure (d) Social infrastructure including education and health facilities (e) Economic Sectors and (f) implementation of development schemes. The Study has been envisaged as a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of districts of North Bengal vis-a-vis future development initiatives. The Study has since been carried out and the Report is in the process of finalisation.

It is also pertinent to mention that a State Development Report for the State of West Bengal, which includes, inter-alia, North Bengal also, is under preparation, for which, a Core Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. S.P. Gupta, Member, Planning Commission. Different aspects of Study have been assigned to reputed Institutions, such as, Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta; Indian Statistical Institute, Jadhavpur University; and also the Calcutta University.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, the region, which I mentioned in my Calling Attention notice, is like other regions.

Sir, you may recall that when the Maharashtra and Gujarat were reorganised, the Constitution of India in article 371 provided development aspects of those regions like Saurashtra, Kutch and Vidharbha in a special footing.

Sir, North Bengal is a part of West Bengal where several districts have had to be reorganised when the Reorganisation Bill of Bengal and Bihar took place in the 50s. Thereafter, the entire development scenario is languishing.  
...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR): It is a very beautiful statement!

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I am thankful to the Minister and to the former Chief Minister of West Bengal, Shri Jyoti Basu who, in the year 2000, tried to make a committee called the *North Bengal Unnayan Parishad*, without any statutory obligation of the Board to discharge its responsibilities. Now the Tenth Plan is to take shape. The House may be aware that by road, the only gateway to the North-Eastern States is North Bengal. The House may also be aware that even by railway to North-Eastern States, it is the North Bengal which is the only link. The House may also be aware that when the 1962 aggression by China took place, the only way for the army from Delhi or any other part of India to reach Nathu La, was North Bengal. Even the Naxalite movement was originated from North Bengal. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister,

through you, Sir, that since the Tenth Plan is to take shape now - and take shape very fast - will she consider consulting the State Government of West Bengal and involving them, because they are also equally responding, from time to time, on matters which we raise, to shape the Tenth Plan document in a manner by which the imbalance created here is fully compensated.

Forty-two years before, a university was founded, called North Bengal University and I had the privilege to become the first graduate from that university. Thirty-two years before, there was only one medical college, known as Siliguri Medical College. Thirty-five years before, there was only one engineering college, known as Jalpaiguri Engineering College. If you look at the statistics of the other parts of India, including West Bengal, you will find that three Censuses had taken place by this time and several engineering and medical colleges had come up in respective regions, excepting this part of India. Therefore, I have been approached, not politically but by several social organisations, including my colleague Shri Amar Roypradhan of Forward Bloc. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I appreciate his efforts.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I have also been approached by my colleagues Shrimati Minati Sen of Jalpaiguri and Shri Joachim Baxla of Alipurduars. It is not an issue by which we want to score politics, it is a serious issue. This part of the region has to be attended to by the Planning Commission properly because there are the borders of Nepal and Bhutan on the one side and the border of Bangladesh on the other side. I tell you - Advani Ji and the Chief Minister will also share my concern - that even the terrorist outfits of various parts of Nepal and Bhutan are considering this region as a ground for harbouring their activities. Therefore, the peace-loving people of this region, including the social and ethnic population, have been agitating enough. There is a community only in North Bengal, which we call *Rajbongshi* Scheduled Castes. They are suffering in terms of getting higher education for girls in colleges and schools. We all talk of secularism, but you will be shocked to know that there are two or three revenue blocks like Harish Chandrapur, Goalpokhar, Hemtal and Chakulia etc. where 60 per cent Muslims stay, but there is no college worth the name in that region. Where will these people go?

My friends from North Bengal will agree that every alternate year, the havoc of floods destroys all economic opportunities of this region, be it in my district, be it in North Malda, be it Cooch Behar or be it Jalpaiguri. Yet, in successive four Plans - Sixth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth

- not a single Master Plan has been conceived for the water management problem of the flood affected areas. Once upon a time, Jalpaiguri was the headquarters of North Bengal, culturally, politically and economically. The tea town is shattered after two floods and thereafter it could not grow at all. The circuit Bench suggestions recommended and approved by the State Government are still lying with the Law Ministry. Nothing has been signalled for Jalpaiguri. I urge upon the Minister, through you, Sir, to consider a comprehensive Task Force for several other regions, including North Bengal, for taking appropriate measures in the Tenth plan document to compensate the infrastructural deficiencies, including flood management device, Master Plan, and educational and industrial infrastructure.

I have been inviting Shri Somanth Chatterjee for the last three months to visit my area. He said, he will come. The downstream product of Haldia Petrochemicals can have a better opportunity for small-scale industrial growth in the region because there is a positive Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Nepal market.

The youngsters, those of the unemployed sections have been addressing to me as to why we do not address this issue to the Government of India. I am grateful to the hon. Minister for admitting this notice. At the same time, I would request the hon. Minister one thing. Will she consider consulting the Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs and also the Government of West Bengal to see whether the equal development area status, in line with Vidarbha, Saurashtra and Kutch, as provided by Article 371 of the Constitution, could also be considered in this region so that this region can come up and come up with a better footing shortly?

The medical college in Siliguri is taking care of the load of the entire North Bengal and the State of Sikkim. You can imagine what could be the pressures. Therefore, an additional college for this region is considered highly necessary at this moment. Even the people of Bhutan rush to India and the first door for their treatment is Siliguri. Even to maintain our friendly relations with Bhutan and Nepal, I think this region requires this kind of a support.

I will mention about two instances and then I will conclude. The first instance is about the last three severe floods in 1998-99. Do you know the election process in the districts of Malda, Dakshin Dinajpur and Uttar Dinajpur was conducted? The polling booths were placed on the boats and people had to go there, even swimming to vote. Hon. Member, Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Chowdhary, former Minister of Irrigation of Government of West Bengal did

the Mahananda Plan. But till today the embankment has not been renovated. The resource generation programme of the Planning Commission never took up the Plan. Hon. Member Shri Somnath Chatterjee will also agree with me that this has resulted into a situation where Malda is inaccessible during floods. I am told by the experts on the river that river Ganges is trying to change its course. If the river Ganges changes its course from Farakka to Rajmahal and it enters into Malda, devastation will come to that area within five to six years.

I submit that the situation is really alarming and threatening. On the one hand, the Teesta canal project is at a halting stage for lack of resources, the entire support for Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri which comes to Teesta canal for their highest irrigation opportunities, including Dinajpur, is at a halting stage. Therefore, all these issues, combined together, create a situation in which the Government of India owes a responsibility in shaping the Tenth Plan document to provide substantial economic support and infrastructural support in the Tenth Plan document for the entire North Bengal region.

I also appeal on one thing. A few extremists are trying to engineer violence in North Bengal inciting the ethnic passion of *Rajbangshis* which we condemn and disassociate. Large sections of *Rajbangshis* are peace-loving people. They want their cultural heritage to be preserved by the State and North Bengal University. They also want opportunities of jobs, development of infrastructure in their region and that other things which should be honoured. Not even 20 hostels are there in the entire North Bengal for the large number of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people of that area to have education. The rivers Teesta, Kulak, Punarbhaba, Aatreya, Srimati, Pagala, Mahananda and Phuluhar are in a situation now where no effort has been made by the Ministry of Water Resources either through the Ganga Action Plan or through the Mahananda Development Plan to support, to expand the river-basin's base and to arrange proper desilting which is deposited there for the last several decades. It should be dredged out failing which the entire North Bengal will be affected.

I now find to a situation which is alarming, which the hon. Minister has admitted in her statement and which I brought to the notice of the hon. Prime Minister. The river Phuluhar has threatened, by this time last week, several villages have submerged. There is danger from this river and from the river Ganges, which we call Bhagirathi, on the other side in the entire Jagirpur sub-division of Murshidabad and other villages are on the line of extinction.

My friend Shri Moinul Hassan has brought in a Resolution in this regard through Private Members' Resolutions. The erosion in Mahananda, Ganges and Phuluhar has eliminated the villages one after another.

I would request the hon. Minister to pay a visit to the island called Mahananda Tola and Bilaimari in Ratna block. She would be surprised to see that the distance between the river and the village is now only half-a-kilometre which was eight kilometres ten years back. People are staying there in a condition of nightmare. This is because no action has been taken by the Ministry of Water Resources till now through their Plan support to make barges or to give special cover to the eroded river Gank.

Sir, while concluding I would request the hon. Minister, through you, about three things. I again reiterate this. Firstly, will you consider consulting the Ministry of Law on giving the status of the special area development programme under Article 371 of the Constitution to this region which was re-organised after Bangladesh-Bihar Re-organisation Bill in the '50s? Will you consider to constitute a task force for shaping the Tenth Plan and will you please consult the Government of West Bengal to give a statutory status to the Uttar Banga Unnyan Parishad, instead of giving a lip service, overlapping the programmes of the *Zilla Parishad* and municipalities? Will you assure this House that the Government of India would come up with required resources for North Bengal that the Government of India wants to invest for the development of the North Bengal through the Tenth Plan document? If you deny resources, it will be a problem. With great difficulty we have managed the problem of Darjeeling Hill Council. The problem with different dimensions will come now.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Dasmunsi, please conclude now. You are aware of the rules.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, please give me only one minute.

Sending the Army and the CRPF to manage the law and order will not help. Please ensure that sufficient funds from the Central Plan outlay in the Tenth Plan for the overall development of the North Bengal.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister to reply now.

...(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (CALCUTTA SOUTH): Mr Speaker, Sir, generally in discussion on Calling Attention three to four Members speak. We do not know when this

notice was served. Only one hon. Member has raised it. We are also interested in the development of that region. We are also from the same State. We have also to say something. I would request that the hon. Minister may reply after hearing us.

MR. SPEAKER: Mamataji, I have no objection for doing it. But then, let me tell you that there is a 'Zero hour' after this. If this discussion is taken up further, then the 'Zero hour' will not take place. Therefore, please cooperate with the Chair.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, at least two to three Members may be allowed to speak. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I may not be able to do that. As per the rules, only one Member who puts the question is to speak. I am sorry.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, in the discussion on Calling Attention generally three-four persons speak. We also belong to the same State. We do not know when this notice was given. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mamataji, you can use any other device to raise the question. I will definitely permit you.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, please allow me to raise only one question.

MR. SPEAKER: I am permitting Kumari Mamata Banerjee to raise only one question.

*...(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, in such a case everybody will have to speak. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mamataji, please cooperate with me. I may not be able to do that.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, I want to cooperate with you. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (CALCUTTA NORTH WEST): Sir, if such type of rules are cited that 'if she is allowed to speak, then I will have to be allowed', then I will have to apply all those rules. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Do not use the words that I have not said. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: That is not his contention.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, this is the problem. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, he is a person who speaks on anything, on every issue. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I have never said that. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: May I tell you? His contention is quite clear.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, ...\*

*...(Interruptions)*

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, we also represent the Opposition in the State. We are the main Opposition Party there. We are raising questions there. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will ask Mamataji to use some other device and I will definitely permit you. The hon. Minister to speak now.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (COOCHBEHAR): Sir, there was a discussion on this in the Eighth Lok Sabha. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think there is anything to be raised now. I have requested her. She has agreed. Now, it is time for the hon. Minister to reply.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Sir, a reference was made in the Eighth Lok Sabha and at that time the hon. Speaker has allowed for having a discussion under Rule 193. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want me to read the rules? For your information, I have read the rules. The rule permits only one Member to speak, who has raised the issue. It is for the Chair to permit others. But then the 'Zero hour' may also suffer. The hon. Minister to reply now.

*...(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): Sir, she must know how to conduct in the House. *...(Interruptions)* Sir, the word used by hon. Member Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay in response to what Shri Somnath Chatterjee has said should be deleted from the records. You should examine the proceedings. *...(Interruptions)*

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\* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: There is nothing to delete.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, he has used an objectionable word. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have understood what he has said and there is nothing objectionable in what he has said.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: He has used the word \*.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIM/ VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, at the very outset I would like to reiterate about the concern expressed by the hon. Member. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, I do not mind anybody calling me \*. But are you permitting such expression of one Member using it against another Member, to remain on record? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have said that there is nothing wrong in what you have said. That was my contention.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: It has been said \*.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: If the word is unparliamentary, it will be removed from the record. There is no problem.

Now, the Minister can go ahead.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: If the word is unparliamentary, it has to be removed; if it is not, then, it has to be retained. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, he has used the word \*.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, North Bengal is under the jurisdiction of the State Government. There is an utter failure of the State Government. Here, they are accusing the Central Government, but it is a State matter. ...*(Interruptions)*

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: It is a State matter. Still, they are not doing anything for the people of North Bengal. It is being neglected by the State Government. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, \*...*(Interruptions)*

\* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: But I have already told that if the word is unparliamentary, it will be removed from the record.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, he is now using my word \*. He is learning from me. It is fortunate enough that he has learnt from me. ...*(Interruptions)* Now, he is using the word \*. That is not an unparliamentary word! This is the correction of the ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: You must know the rule. Only the person who is calling the attention of the Government is allowed to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: You do not know anything. You keep quiet. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: You should read the rule book. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I think, this is enough now. Let the Minister reply. The question which has been raised is important.

Now, the Minister may start.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: At the very outset, I had said and I would like to say again that the concerns of the hon. Member. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister has started the reply. Please sit down. This is much more than what is required.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have already said that all unparliamentary words will be removed.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, although it is a State matter, I appreciate the effort of the hon. Member. I have said that he has very appropriately raised it. Let the Government give an answer properly. But all sorts of things are being brought in. Ordinarily, State matters should not be raised, but I have not taken objection on this ground in this matter. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: That is what I am also anxious to listen to.

Now, the Minister may go ahead.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I

\* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

have said it at the very beginning and I would like to reiterate it that the concerns of the hon. Members, not only the hon. Member who raised it but also of the rest of the hon. Members from West Bengal, have really been communicated to the Planning Commission earlier also and these points, which have been raised, have been deliberated upon extensively. The planning and development of a particular area, with allocation of funds, is actually the responsibility of the concerned State Government and the Central Government supplements basically the efforts of the State Government in the various developmental projects and also in the development of backward areas through various means.

I would like to emphasise over here the means which we use to do this and that is the weightage for backwardness. There is a formula which is used for the distribution of Central assistance. Successive Finance Commissions have laid stress on this backwardness formula for actually determining the share of the Central tax proceeds. Basically, the weight of the inverse of *per capita* State income criteria takes note of this backwardness. The Eleventh Finance Commission has assigned a weight of 62.5 per cent for the award period of 2000 to 2005 which is higher than the weight was assigned by the previous Commissions. In addition to this, they have also used the criteria of "area" and the "index of infrastructure", which helps backward States. Basically, larger area and lower development of infrastructure is associated strongly with backwardness and in recognition of this, the Eleventh Finance Commission has assigned a weight of 7.5 per cent to each of these in place of five per cent, recommended by the Tenth Finance Commission.

Now, assessing the requirement of the revenue gap Grants is also an exercise which basically accords special consideration to the backward States. The States which are relatively more backward are not able to raise finances and that much money as the better off States can and this gets built into what we call Revenue Gap grants.

The Finance Commission also takes note of specific requirements of each of the States when they come to visit the States. Such requirements, then, are met through the recommendation of Grants for special problems and also upgradation, and, thus, provide an opportunity to the backward States, actually, to put forth their claims. Various programmes like the Tribal Sub-Plan, the Border Area Development Programme, the Hill Areas Development Programme, the Desert Development Programme, the Drought Prone Area Programme are all programmes which have been, particularly, drawn up for fixing the levels of allocation to the States, which are suffering from these particular realities.

Further, there are a number of programmes which are only drawn up for poverty alleviation, and those for employment generation, infrastructural development watershed development and social security are there to improve the life of people in the rural areas and to assist all those people who are below poverty line.

To encourage speedy industrialisation, there are other schemes in the industrially backward areas. There are, actually, category-A and category-B districts which have been identified for the purpose of Income-tax concessions. In fact, there are various schemes for infrastructural development of the industrial sector. These are coming under the scheme called Growth Centre Schemes, scheme for integrated infrastructure development and others.

The Mid-Term Appraisal of the Ninth Plan has highlighted the fact, that, the root cause of underdevelopment is not just paucity of funds alone but also efficiency and efficacy of the delivery mechanism and the systems of governance.

Finally, we find that owing to the financial problems that some of the States are undergoing, Plan funds are diverted for Non-Plan purposes, and Central assistance remains unutilised because of the lack of the counterpart funding and the allocations are not, therefore, utilised to the maximum. During the Ninth Five Year Plan period, the actual expenditure anticipated expenditure, against the originally agreed outlay for the Annual Plans have been in the range of only 68 % - 81 % in the State of West Bengal as compared to States like Andhra Pradesh where it is 86 % to 106 per cent; in Karnataka, it is 93 to 106 per cent, in Kerala, it is 88% to 108 per cent. This highlights the need on the part of the State Government to actually improve their fund utilisation so that they come up to the levels of other better performing States. The States also need to improve their transparency and upgrade their systems of delivery by ensuring a degree of commitment, motivation, professional competence and definitely, the integrity of the political and bureaucratic systems. In the Tenth Plan, it is proposed to focus on reduction in these regional disparities. We are going to try and make effort.

I would like to say, briefly, the steps which we have taken to do so in North Bengal. Under the Hill Areas Development Programme which covers Darjeeling District of the North Bengal region, Rs. 22.23 crore have been released during each year of the Ninth Five Year Plan.

A Dutch-assisted agricultural project is being implemented in North Bengal. Two phases have been completed. Phase III, with a financial involvement of Rs.

33.06 crores, including the State Government's share of Rs. 2.55 crore, needs to be dealt with immediately. In the first phase, the total area which is covered for irrigation facilities is 2,300 hectares, and the number of farmers who have been benefited are over 4,000. In the second phase, the area which is covered through different irrigation facilities is almost 10,000 hectares, and the number of benefited farmers is over 53,000. Work in phase III has started from 1st January, 1995. The *Uttarbanga Unnayan Parshad* now has been constituted in 2000-2001, under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister, a Minister, elected from North Bengal, as Vice Chairman, Members of Parliament, Members of the Assembly, *Sabhapathies*, and District Magistrates of the five districts of North Bengal as member. The *Parshad* monitors planning and implementation of the development schemes in this area. The State Government has proposed to allocate Rs. 112.53 crore to this *Parshad* during the Tenth Five Year Plan.

Sir, the study that I had mentioned before, the "Research study for the comparative backwardness of North Bengal region", has been carried out. The report is in the process of finalisation. The State Development Report, which is, basically, for the State of West Bengal, which includes North Bengal, is also in the process of being finalised and is being prepared by those particular institutes.

Sir, I would say over here that there are a few issues which the hon. Member has raised. He said that North Bengal is an important strategic area. We also agree with him that special attention should be given to North-Bengal. Discussions on the Xth Plan and the Annual Plan for the state are slated for 29.05.2002 between the Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission and the Chief Minister of West Bengal and the concerns of the hon. Member would be kept in mind and also communicated.

As far as the issues of no colleges, flood ravages, railway links and putting up a Task Force are concerned, basically, infrastructure deficiency and backwardness, the hon. Member would agree, lies in the realm of the State Government. But as far as setting up a Task Force and talking to the Law Ministry on the interpretation of article 371, is concerned in relation to right to equal development in the context of North Bengal, I would say that we shall, certainly, consider these points and send an appropriate reference to the Law Ministry.

Sir, as far as the concerns of the *Rajbanshis* are concerned, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Member to the letter of Shri Arun Shourie dated 21.09.2000 in which he has told very clearly that there are a lot of

schemes, particularly for the *Rajbanshis* which are being taken care of through the State Government. Even though the Government of India has allocated funds for the development of such groups through a whole lot of schemes that are there, issues like promotion of Hindi and looking after these people basically is in the purview of the State Government and they should take necessary steps to preserve the identity, culture and language of these people. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Is there any special Plan allocation for North Bengal? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Discussion on issues of Bengal itself is being undertaken very shortly. Your concerns would certainly be carried to the Chief Minister of West Bengal and the Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission. ...*(Interruptions)* We would certainly bring these concerns to their notice. These would be discussed and talked about. It cannot be done without a discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Then, what for was this discussion over here? ...*(Interruptions)* It is an amazing attitude. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, why are we having a discussion on this under this motion? ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): We did not ask for it. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, as far as Mahanadi is concerned. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, the notice which he gave was for reported regional imbalance in various parts of the country but not a single word here has been said by the hon. Minister about the other parts of the country. ...*(Interruptions)* We did not expect such irresponsible comments against the State Government... *(Interruptions)* It is an irresponsible comment by the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): Sir, the hon. Member has used the word 'irresponsible' against the hon. Minister. It should be removed from the records ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, I object to it. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I repudiate this ....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: May I ask the hon. Member to let her complete the statement?

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: I have given the figures. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: It is an irresponsible remark by the hon. Member. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will remove it from the record, if it is unparliamentary.

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: I have made it very clear. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you have made your point. You please conclude now.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: What is the responsibility of the Central Government. ...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, I have made it very clear that fund allocation has not been fully utilised by the State Government and it should be utilised. ...(Interruptions) I would like to assure the House that the Government of India would continue to take necessary and appropriate steps for the removal of imbalances. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Minister, would you consider, in consultation with the Ministry of Water Resources. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Dasmunsi you can put a question only after she has finished her statement.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Sir, finally, the Central Government recognises the fact that the solutions to the chronic problems would be resolved at the local levels and we would be completely supporting the steps. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: So, it appears that West Bengal has been recognised as a non-performing State in comparison to other States. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Now, before taking up 'Zero Hour', I would request Shri Pramod Mahajan to present the Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

12.39 hrs.

## MOTION RE: THIRTY-SEVENTH REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Thirty-seventh Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 14th May, 2002."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Thirty-seventh Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 14th May, 2002."

*The motion was adopted*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House shall now take up 'zero hour'. Shri Madan Lal Khurana.

....(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): I also gave notice, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: On this important issue, I have received a number of notices. Those who have given notices are - Shri Madan Lal Khurana, Shri Ramji Lal Suman, Yogi Aditya Nath, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, Shri Radhakrishnan, Shri Naval Kishore Rai, Shri Kirit Somaiya, Choudhary Tejveer Singh, Shri Prabhunath Singh, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra. These are the hon. Members who have given notices on the important issue of attack that took place in Jammu and Kashmir.

This issue is very important. The hon. Members are all aware that the hon. Prime Minister has made a statement in this regard in the House that if required he was prepared to call a meeting of the leaders of different groups. I want that the decorum of the House be maintained. If the hon. Members want to speak, I have no objection. But then the other issues of important nature will not be taken up. I think the discussion can take place after the Prime Minister calls, if he considers it necessary, a meeting of leaders of different groups and the hon. Members can speak then.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, there is no point in having a 'zero hour' discussion on this. I would suggest that you call a meeting of the leaders. We can find out time in the next two days when we can have some kind of a structured discussion where the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the Defence Minister would be present. ...*(Interruptions)* I have no problem with one Member speaking on this. If ten Members speak on it today, there is nobody to reply to it at this juncture. If we all agree, we can have a structured discussion on this issue in the next two days where the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and everybody would be present. They will hear the views and reply to them. That will be a proper way of discussion. I do not think a 'zero hour' discussion on Jammu and Kashmir would be proper.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (ULUBERIA): The House can condemn it unanimously now and it can be discussed later.

MR. SPEAKER: That is also one of the suggestions made to me by a number of Members.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR): There can be condemnation from the Chair. Let the Chair condemn this.

*[Translation]*

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA (DELHI SADAR): Mr. Speaker, Sir, you had called my name. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I am speaking about you only. You had suggested that a unanimous resolution be passed on such an important issue. It was your suggestion. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (LATUR): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is the correct procedure and a proper discussion will also take place. The incident can be condemned on your behalf as well as on behalf of the House. The subject demands a proper discussion. All the Members should get an opportunity to speak. Therefore, a day can be fixed for discussion as per your convenience. That is our view. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have called my name. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You may proceed.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: I am also a Member of this House. I have given the notice at 9.00 in the morning. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: He is only giving a suggestion.

*[Translation]*

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I raised the issue before the commencement of the Question Hour as it is a very important issue. In my opinion, this is a grave incident that took place after the attack on Parliament on 13th December. That is why, I raised it before the Question Hour. At that time the hon. Prime Minister replied that since the hon. Minister of Defence is visiting the site and Shri Advani is also not present, therefore, the reply will be given tomorrow.

I would like to make two suggestions. First, as you said a resolution should be passed by the House today itself. I would like to submit that Lok Sabha should pass a unanimous resolution condemning the massacre and expressing its resolve to be united against terrorism and issue a stern warning to terrorists. Such a resolution should be passed unanimously.

Secondly, as I said, 37 innocent family members of the armed forces including women and children, were massacred in a terrorist attack at Kaluchak on a Himachal Roadways bus plying Jammu-Pathankot national highway on Tuesday morning. How long would such massacres be allowed to continue? We have to convey to Pakistan in clear terms that enough is enough. ...*(Interruptions)* After the attack on Parliament on 13th December, hon. Prime Minister had said that now there would be a decisive war. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are aware that hon. Prime Minister has also made a submission.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If you want a discussion now, it would be concluded after making of a statement. There would not be the need for another discussion then.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: I would only like to submit that a unanimous resolution be passed by the House today itself.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, I come to another subject.

Shri Bhan Singh Bhaura.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (SOUTH DELHI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have given a notice on West Bengal under Rule 184. What happened to it?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will decide that and let you know tomorrow.

SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA (BHATINDA): Sir, I would like to raise the following matter during 'Zero Hour'.

The Bhatinda District in Punjab is fast emerging as one of the important districts of India, and as a recognition to this fact, the Government of India has already announced many schemes both developmental and otherwise.

One such scheme announced by the Central Government was to set up a refinery in Bhatinda which would facilitate curb the unemployment problem. Secondly, it would also add to the prosperity of the country as well as Punjab.

Sir, with much fanfare, the inauguration of the construction of Guru Govind Singh Oil Refinery took place. The task of building it was assigned to the Government-owned company, Hindustan Petroleum. But I am sorry to state that till now, the whole project has been stuck under various Government Departments. Nothing concrete is in sight about the completion of the project.

Therefore, I would like to draw the attention of the Central Government to this fact and urge that all the Departments concerning the project sit together to thrash out the bottlenecks so that the project is completed.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PARBHANI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to raise an important issue in Zero Hour. Aurangabad is a historical place in

Marathwada. People of all the eight districts of Marathwada have great respect for the son of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Raje Sambhaji. Raje Sambhaji had made many sacrifices for Marathwada, so much so that Aurangzeb had blinded him. Aurangabad also has world famous ancient statues and paintings in Ajanta and Ellora Caves, which attract tourists from all over the world. The people, MLAs and MPs of the region desire that the name of Aurangabad airports should be changed to Raje Sambhaji Maharaj airport so that his and also the glorious past of Maharashtra becomes known all over the world.

Therefore, through you, I request the Government to respect the wishes of the people of Marathwada and change the name of Aurangabad Airport to Raje Sambhaji Maharaj airport.

[English]

SHRI KHAGEN DAS (TRIPURA WEST): Thank you, Sir.

I would like to raise one most important issue, which is about repatriation of Reang refugees in Tripura to Mizoram. During the period between October 1997 and January 1999, a large number of Reang tribals had entered Tripura, from Mizoram. Their current approximate number is about 31,000. They are accommodated in six relief camps. On humanitarian grounds, the Government of Tripura has accommodated them in six relief camps. The Government of Tripura has taken up the issue of the immediate repatriation, with the Government of Mizoram as well as with the Government of India.

There had been a number of meetings. The Chief Minister of Tripura has taken up the issue with the Union Home Minister, seeking his intervention, to resolve the issue. The Union Home Minister also has taken up meetings. Officials have also held several meetings and several decisions have been taken. But till now, no final decision has yet been arrived at and not a single refugee has gone back to Mizoram.

The refugees have created several problems in Tripura. They are: 1) deforestation, 2) encroachment of land, 3) competition with local population for employment, 4) rise of crime graph, etc. Their presence has also imposed a substantive administrative burden on the administration and impacted adversely on developmental efforts.

Delay in resolving the issue shall only serve to further complicate the situation on the ground.

MR. SPEAKER: You may please be brief. I have

to call the next hon. Member to speak on the next subject.

SHRI KHAGEN DAS: I, therefore, urge upon the Central Government to take urgent pro-active steps to ensure repatriation of Reang refugees in a time-bound manner. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Kumari Mamata Banerjee. She has given a notice on atrocities on minorities, etc.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (CALCUTTA SOUTH): Yes, Sir. You have said already that tomorrow you will give your ruling on the subject.

I have given a notice for discussion under Rule 184, on atrocities on minorities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, children and women. Atrocities are going on continuously in West Bengal, in Bihar, also in Gujarat and in other parts of the country. We are very much concerned about this; that is why, we gave a notice to discuss the subject under Rule 184.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have just now mentioned that you will take a decision and let us know tomorrow. You are kind enough to do that and we would appreciate, if you could give us a positive ruling.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI (KHAGARIA): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to submit to the hon. Prime Minister, hon. Minister of Agriculture and hon. Food Minister that even today the condition of farmers is bad. Our farmers are still waiting for someone to emancipate them as Lord Ram did to Ahilya.

Even today, the farmers do not get improved seeds, fertilizers, adequate irrigation. They do not have technical know-how and the Market has not been provided to them. Through you, I would like to request the Government to constitute a National Agriculture Commission so that the problems of the farmers could be solved. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (FIROZABAD): I have also given a notice about farmers. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do they relate to the same issue?

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY): My issue relates to a scam involving thousands of crores of rupees. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

Throughout the country, millions of workers and employees are worried about the safety of their deposits. I wanted to raise the matter, but I am not being permitted to raise it now. ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: I have a notice with regard to farmers, it is a very serious matter.

MR. SPEAKER: I would allow you after Mrs. Margaret Alva.

[English]

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (CANARA): Sir, we celebrated 50 years of the founding of Parliament on the 13th May. There was a great deal of talk about the achievements of Parliament since its institution. I must point out however that despite the role played by women in the freedom movement and the guarantees given under the Constitution, participation of women in the two Houses has been far below what it should be, though we represent 50 per cent of the population.

Sir, we are today eight per cent and we have never crossed ten per cent. I am, therefore, today standing on this question, just after that historic occasion, in Parliament, to say that the commitment made to the women to bring the Women's (Reservation) Bill through consensus, be kept. The Prime Minister has made a promise that he is working on a consensus. We never seem to hear about it. I would, therefore, demand today that as a tribute to 50 Years of India's Parliament, the Women's (Reservation) Bill be listed for discussion, debated and if they do not want it, be defeated, but let it come to Parliament. Let it be debated and decided on. ... (Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, we also support it. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All women Members are supporting it.

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH (AURANGABAD, BIHAR): Sir, if necessary, we should have a Special Session for this.

MR. SPEAKER: All women Members can stand up and say that they are supporting it.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (MIRYALGUDA): Sir, we, gentlemen, are also supporting it.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I am sure, Sir, you, from the Chair, are also supporting us. ...*(Interruptions)* I am, therefore, appealing you to take an initiative to list it for discussion. ...*(Interruptions)* I would also like to say that a book on the Contribution of Women Members of Parliament, since the Provisional Parliament, may also be published. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN (TIRUNELVELI): Sir, we are also supporting it.

MR. SPEAKER: Most of the Members have supported it.

12.56 hrs.

### RE: NON PROCUREMENT OF WHEAT AT MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE

*[Translation]*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (FIROZABAD): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this year, the Government have declared the minimum support price of wheat as Rs.620 per quintal. It was also said that procurement centres would be opened from 1st of April. So far as I know, no purchase centre was opened in Uttar Pradesh till 10th April. And if even the procurement centres were opened, they had no sufficient facilities viz., no sacks, no balances for weighing etc. In all, there was no arrangements to procure wheat from farmers. Wheat traders procure wheat in connivance with agents from the farmers. And the farmer's wheat is not procured when he goes to sell it off. These people buy wheat from villages at the rate of Rs.500-550 per quintal. Thereafter, they take it to the traders procurement centres. This is a very serious matter. Farmers are being looted. The farmers are getting minimum support price at the price of merely Rs.500 or Rs.550 and not at the declared prices of Rs.620/- per quintal. The farmers are suffering heavy loss. They are deliberately being harassed and the Government are not taking any action.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, a notice was given in this regard and even hon. Minister of food and public distribution was also given a notice to the effect that he should be present here in the House. Wheat traders are harassing the farmers in procurement centre. Sir, I need your support and demand that the hon. Minister of Food and Public Distribution may kindly give his statement immediately and tell how to stop this harassment of farmers with regard to procurement of

wheat and the concrete steps being taken by the Government in this regard.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (SAMBHAL): Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all, the minimum support price of Rs.620/- per quintal fixed for the farmer's wheat is not sufficient. Last year the minimum support price of wheat was Rs.610/- per quintal. The rate of fertiliser, power and water have increased considerably, but this year, the Government have increased merely rupees ten which is not sufficient at all. As told by Shri Ramji Lal Suman that the farmers are compelled to sell off their wheat at the rate of Rs.500 or Rs.550/- per quintal. And at certain places, the farmers have also sold their wheat at Rs.450 per quintal. One more problem is that there are no sacks at the purchase centres and the officers ask the farmer to go back whenever he goes to sell his wheat over there. I do agree with the fact that the traders in connivance with the officers of the Food Corporation of India, purchase the entire wheat.

13.00 hrs.

I have a suggestion that if the Government wishes to strengthen the position of farmers, then it must compensate the farmer. Our hon. Minister of Finance is sitting here. I wish to say that if the farmer is not happy and prosperous, the country can never remain happy and prosperous, no matter how many foreign companies come here. It is the farmer who can compete with the foreign companies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund or the foreign loan and the poor economy of the farmer would effect the country. It is really unfortunate that farmer of an agriculture dominated country is committing suicide. Please do not say that such incidents have taken place in Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar or Maharashtra. There is no State in India where farmers have not committed suicide. Farmers are being humiliated, Government recovery is being made, but the farmers are not being given the outstanding payment of sugarcane. But if any amount is outstanding against the farmer he is unable to pay it back, he is put behind the bars. Strict treatment with regard to recovery of payment of charges of power and water is being meted out. I, therefore, through you, request that the hon. Minister of Food and Public Distribution may kindly take serious note of it as this is an important matter. The farmer has to sell his wheat within 15 days, though at a lower price of Rs.450 or Rs.550 per quintal. ...*(Interruptions)* He has to sell his wheat even in loss due to poverty. ...*(Interruptions)* So kindly give him compensation and it should definitely be given. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Chhatrapal ji, have not given notice in this regard.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH (BULANDSHAHAH): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have given notice on this matter itself.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Chhatrapal ji, please speak. His notice is on the same subject.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Chhatrapal ji, please speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is his notice and that is why I have given him permission.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH: The wheat of farmers in Uttar Pradesh is getting wasted. ...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH (BIKRAMGANJ): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the same subject.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You can also associate.

[Translation]

SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH: Wheat has been brought after six months and there was good cultivation of wheat but today there is no one to purchase it. With regard to procurement especially. ...(Interruptions) An agency in Uttar Pradesh wishes to procure wheat but wheat is not taken in godowns of ICI as there is open competition. ...(Interruptions) Whenever the wheat procured by any agency, reaches FCI godowns, the officers or labourers there ask for Rs.300 or Rs.400 per truck of wheat. I have told this to the hon. Minister of Food and Public Distribution but other agencies find it difficult to procure wheat due to corruption in the FCI. There is lot of corruption in the godowns of FCI. Due to this, payment is not being made to the agencies and they are also unable to purchase it. The hon. Minister of Food and Public Distribution should give special consideration on this and ensure the procurement of wheat. My second point is that NAFED is not being given funds

to purchase Mustard. 'NAFED' wishes to purchase Mustard but the Finance Department did not provide for. ...(Interruptions) Hon. Minister of Finance is sitting here. I wish that the hon. Minister of Finance may provide funds to 'NAFED' as soon as possible. ... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): We are listening to everything patiently, should we shout to listen anything. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR): Sir, I associate myself with what has been said by Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav and Shri Ramji Lal Suman. Sir, I believe it is a matter of extreme importance and urgency. The Government should immediately respond and take appropriate action.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, Shri Ramji Lal Suman and others from both the sides have raised a very important issue. I will communicate it to the Minister of Food.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Ramdasji, please speak.

...(Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (VAISHALI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the farmers are dying. ...(Interruptions) The farmers do not have weighing machines. ...(Interruptions) Condition of farmers is same in the entire country ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Ramadasji, please speak your subject is also very important.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (PANDHARPUR): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a matter of happiness that the name of Mumbai Victoria Terminal Railway station as also Mumbai Airport has been kept on the name of Chhatrapati Shivaji. Mumbai had been the place of work of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar who is also the Chief architect of our Constitution. I, therefore, demand that the western Railway Station of Mumbai Central should be named after Bhimrao Ambedkarji. We had raised this demand also during the tenure of Mamata Banerji as Minister of Railways, but nothing has been done in this direction. We request Pramod Mahajanji to kindly ask the hon. Minister of Railways to name the Western Railway Station of Mumbai Central after Bhimrao Ambedkarji's name.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: A decision was taken during the time of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehruji that no place would be named after any person but will be based on some book or anything else.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: But now they are naming. I, therefore demand that if a place has been named after Chhatrapati Shivaji, then other place should be named after Babasaheb Ambedkar ji also.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.05 p.m.

13.06 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Five Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.*

[Translation]

14.09 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled after lunch at 14.09 of the clock.*

(SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA in the Chair)

## RE: POWER AND WATER PROBLEMS IN DELHI

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (MAHARAJGANJ, BIHAR): Madam, Chairman, entire Delhi was deprived of power last night. Not only the M.P. area, but even water could not be supplied in the entire city due to power problem. Hon. Members also sit late in the House.

Hon. Madam, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the House that action should be taken in this matter and the Delhi Government should be directed for ensuring proper power arrangement in Delhi so that people may not face problem. There are a lot of factories etc. in Delhi, people from neighbouring rural areas come here to earn livelihood, they are also facing a lot of problem in the absence of power and are not even getting water.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs may kindly see that the M.Ps. may not face problem.

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): I have come to

know about this problem in the morning itself and I would take the necessary action as soon as possible.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please listen, the Minister of power is giving reply.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): Madam, Chairman, the hon. Chief Minister of Delhi had come to the Ministry of power and met our hon. Minister Suresh Prabhuji. She demanded for an additional 100 megawatts of power and the Central Government also promised to give it. But the Delhi Government would look into the work of distribution. It is very right that there is problem of water and power due to the summer season, but the Central Government have performed their duty with full responsibility. I wish to say only this much.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Kindly ask the Delhi Government to do the needful as we are facing problem due to this summer heat.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: We are not having a discussion on that.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister is replying to it. You have raised a question. When the hon. Minister is replying, please listen to her.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Madam, she is addressing me. I do not understand it. She has raised the matter. The hon. Minister has responded to it. But she is addressing that issue to me. ...(Interruptions) Have I got any right to reply? ...(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing this issue. We are going to taking up Matters under Rule 377.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (PONNANI): Madam, I am just on a point of information. We understand that the hon. Finance Minister is to make a statement. We have been waiting for it all the time. If we can be told about the time when the hon. Finance Minister would make a statement regarding that scam or whatever it is, that will be a matter of convenience.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Can I just respond to that? I believe that the statement is being made at five of the Clock today.

We are now taking up Matters under Rule 377.

[Translation]

14.13 hrs.

### MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

#### (i) **Need to include Tharu tribe in Bihar in the list of Scheduled Tribe**

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH (MOTIHARI): Madam, the forest area in the foothills of the Shivalik mountain range covering a stretch of 800 square meter in the Mainataad, Gaunaha, Ramnagar and Bagha blocks under the West Champaran district of Bihar state is called as 'Tharhut' area, where people belonging to the Tharu Caste reside and who are extremely poor, illiterate and backward. The population of these people is around 2 lakhs. Similarly, in Uttar Pradesh also, people belonging to the Tharu Caste reside in Gorakhpur, Deoria, Gonda, Balrampur, Khiri, Lakhimpur, Baharaich, Pilibhit and Nainital district and the population of these people in all is around 4 lakhs. In Uttar Pradesh, the Tharu caste has been included in the list of Scheduled Tribes but in Bihar, despite similarities in every aspect with the people of Tharu Caste in Uttar Pradesh, the people of Tharu Caste in Bihar have been included in the list of Extremely Backward Castes. Despite being in the same nation and having similarities with the same caste of its neighbouring State (i.e. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh), this unequal treatment by the Union Government is very much against the provisions of Article 14 and 15 of the Constitution.

I, therefore, through you, urge upon the Government to take appropriate action to include the Tharu Caste of Bihar in the list of Scheduled Tribe like that in Uttar Pradesh.

#### (ii) **Need to provide stoppage of some express trains at Kaushambi and Fatehpur railway stations in U.P.**

DR. ASHOK PATEL (FATEHPUR): Madam, Janpads Kaushambi and Fatehpur fall in between the Janpads Allahabad - Kanpur. Many trains pass through these Janapads, but people here face a lot of problems while going to Ajmer, Jodhpur and Bikaner due to non-stoppage of trains at the said Janpads.

I, therefore request the Government to make a halt of some of the trains at Fatehpur and Kaushambi stations so that the travellers going towards Ajmer, Jodhpur and Bikaner from Fatehpur-Kaushambi may not face problems.

#### (iii) **Need for early construction of an overbridge on railway crossing at Bhitauni-Shahpura by-pass on Jabalpur-Bhopal National Highway No.12, Madhya Pradesh**

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NARESH TRIPATHEE (SEONI): Madam Chairman, there is a need to construct an overbridge on railway crossing at Bhitauni-Shahpura by-pass on Jabalpur-Bhopal National Highway No. 12. Since it is a National Highway, there is heavy traffic on this road. The filling station of Bharat Petroleum and Indian oil depot are situated on both sides of railway crossing in Shahpura-Bhitauni due to which besides passenger and goods trains, petroleum rake also passes through this crossing quite often and the main gates of railway crossing remain closed for hours together. As a result thereof, there is heavy traffic jam on both sides of railway crossing due to which passengers have to face difficulty. Hence, I would like to request the Government of India to construct an overbridge at this railway crossing at the earliest in public interest.

#### (iv) **Need to provide financial assistance to Government of Rajasthan for providing rope-way at certain places in Jaipur**

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (JAIPUR): Madam Chairman, it is not possible to reach the places like Nahargarh, Jaigarh, Ganta and Ganeshgarh in Jaipur in the absence of rope way. Like the temple of Mansa Devi in Haridwar, it is very essential to construct rope-way at these places. The Jaipur Municipal Corporation and the State Government are also ready to cooperate in the completion of this work.

Therefore, I request the Union Government to provide financial assistance for the construction of rope-way at the above mentioned places in Jaipur.

#### (v) **Need to expedite opening of Passport Office in Surat district, Gujarat**

SHRI MANSINH PATEL (MANDVI): Madam Chairman, more than 20,000 cases of issuing passports of south Gujarat are pending in the passport office of Gujarat. There is also a shortage of staff in Ahmedabad passport office. People in South Gujarat have to travel hours together and stay in Ahmedabad for a couple of days for passport. The place for opening passport office in Surat district has been selected

but the work of completing formalities is going on at a slow pace due to which the problems of people are increasing instead of decreasing.

I, therefore, request the Government to expedite the work of opening the proposed passport office at Surat.

**(vi) Need to secure release of Indian soldiers imprisoned in Pakistan**

[English]

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): Madam Chairman relatives of 54 Indian soldiers reported to be missing during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war have, for the last three decades, continued to struggle ceaselessly for their return.

It was a letter from a Pakistani prison, sometimes after the historic release of 93,000 Pakistani prisoners of war and return of 616 Indian soldiers that sent a clear message that some of the Indian soldiers had not been released by Pakistan. Ever since then, relatives of these unfortunate soldiers have gathered more evidence about their languishing in Pakistani jails, denials by Pakistan notwithstanding.

They have undergone untold suffering and agony but have moved on relentlessly with fortitude hoping that one day the Government will secure their release. Some initiative was taken by our Government during 1985-89, but things have not changed. Thirty years is a long period. The release of 54 soldiers taken captive during the 1971 war must be accorded top priority by the Government and all diplomatic means deployed for their release.

I urge upon the Government to take necessary action in this matter.

**(vii) Need for early construction of a bridge on river Geruwa to connect Hanwara (Jharkhand) and Sanhaura (Bihar)**

[Translation]

SHRI SUBODH ROY (BHAGALPUR): Madam Chairman, there is no bridge over Geruwa river between Sanhaura block in Bhagalpur district, Bihar and Hanwara in Jharkhand state due to which despite this area being highly fertile as regards agricultural production and busiest commercial centre, it is still backward. Though 55 years have passed since independence still no effective steps have been taken in the field of agriculture, trade, education and health for the development of this region. As a result

large number of youth of this region are bound to lead aimless lives due to poverty, death, illiteracy and unemployment.

Therefore, the Government of India is requested to construct a bridge immediately over Geruwa river to connect Hanwara (Jharkhand) and Sanhaura (Bihar) for the all round development of the said border area of Jharkhand and Bihar so that the movement of traffic and development of trade between the two states could take place.

[English]

**(viii) Need to approve the proposals of Government of West Bengal for construction of new National Highways in the State**

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (TAMLUK): The Government of West Bengal has submitted to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways the following proposals for new National Highways in order to add 1231 kms. during Tenth Plan.

1. Nandakumar to Digha Chandaneswar 91 kms.  
(Orissa Border)
2. Radhamani (Jn. of NH-41 with SH-4) Anantapur- Panskura- Mechogram- Ghatal- Borda- Kharar- Hazipur- Arambagh- Bardhaman- Narja- Muratipur- Natunhat- Futisanko- Kuli- Moregram (Jn. of NH-34 with SH-7) 275-10 kms.
3. Kona Expressway-Vidyasagar Setu-Kolkata-Diamond Harbour
4. Kulpi-Kakwip-Namkhana-Bakkhali 133 kms.
5. Gazol-Buniadpur-Patiram- Trimohoni-Hilli 100 kms.
6. Raniganj-Pandabeswar-Dubrajpur- Suri-Moregram 141 kms.
7. Tulin (W.B. Bihar Border)-Purulia- Bankura-Bishnupur
8. Arambagh-Bardhaman-Mogra- Iswargupta Setu-Kalyani
9. Haringhata-Gaighata-Petrapole- (W.B. Bangladesh Border) 391 kms.
10. Coastal Highway from Haldia to Digha 100 kms.

I urge upon the hon. Minister of Road Transport and Highways through you to take steps so that the aforesaid schemes are approved and implemented during Tenth Plan.

**(ix) Need to ensure comprehensive study of B T. cotton seed before it is used in farming**

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (FIROZABAD): Madam Chairman, it is being said by Private sector seed Producing Companies that the production of B.T. cotton will increase and its cost of production will decrease. But so far no official test has been undertaken in this regard. Even in cotton producing countries of the world like America, Australia, South Africa, Argentina, Mexico, Indonesia, the production of cotton is allowed only under some restrictions. Permission has to be taken from the concerned Government Department and cultivation is done only under the guidelines issued for the purpose alongwith monitoring of the Department.

The report of B. T. cotton producing Institute, itself gives information about the ill effects of B.T. cotton on the public health in the country. Even the company has not conducted tests on the produce in the northern Part of the country. Still the seeds of B. T. cotton are being sold to the farmers of cotton producing states of northern India like Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Western Uttar Pradesh. Giving free hand to farmers to produce these crops without testing and checking the ill-effects, is not in the interest of the nation.

Therefore, the Government is requested to get the matter investigated by three or four Government and non-Government scientific institutes separately and take further steps after going through the investigation report.

**(x) Need to allocate additional funds for the benefit of senior Citizens in Andhra Pradesh under Annapurna Scheme.**

[English]

SHRI RAJIAH MALYALA (SIDDIPET): There are a large number of destitute Senior Citizens above 65 years of age who have been left out under the Annapurna Scheme as well as National Old Age Pension/State Government Old Age Pension Scheme. A total of 4.66 lakh beneficiaries under National Old Age Scheme with an annual outlay of Rs.41.94 crore and an additional 8.53 lakh beneficiaries under State Old Age Pension Scheme with an outlay of Rs.76.80 crore per annum being provided assistance.

I request the Government of India to consider, as a

special case, allocating additional funds for one lakh beneficiaries under Annapurna Scheme for Andhra Pradesh and release the necessary amount for implementation of the same during the financial year 2002-03. We assure you Sir, that on getting the additional sanction, due care will be taken to implement the scheme and to cover a large number of eligible destitute people who have been identified and found eligible.

**(xi) Need to accord sanction to the drinking water proposal of Government of Maharashtra under Accelerated Water Supply Programme**

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PARBHANI): Madam Chairman, the Union Government provides 50 per cent financial assistance to state Governments for drinking water scheme under Accelerated Water Supply Programme. The Maharashtra Government had sent a proposal for approval to Union Government in 1995 for Drinking water supply schemes for 40 cities having population of more than 20 thousand. During last seven years, only 20 schemes have been approved and the work on these is going on whereas schemes for 20 cities are still pending with the Government for approval because the population of these cities have crossed 20 thousand.

Therefore, through this House, I urge upon the Government to raise the population criteria for schemes under Accelerated Water Supply Programme upto 40 thousand and accord approval to the remaining 20 water supply schemes as soon as possible so that the work on these schemes may be started in a time bound manner.

**(xii) Need to open computerised reservation counters at Gummidipoondi and Tiruvellore Railway Stations, Tamil Nadu**

[English]

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (SRIPERUMBUDUR): In my Sriperumbudur constituency, sub-urban train traffic has a main role for the migrants, poor labourers, State and Central Government employees. But there is no proper reservation counter in my constituency. Hence, I request, to install, computer reservation counter at Gummidipoondi and Tiruvellore Railway Stations. Also, thousands of people are crossing the rail level crossing at Avadi market which expose them to accidents. I request the Government to construct a road under bridge at Avadi.

**(xiii) Need to revive Kharagpur Railway Workshop under South Eastern Railways**

**SHRI PRABODH PANDA (MIDNAPORE):** Kharagpur Railway Workshop under South Eastern Railway is now in poor health. The steam Locomotive POH shop had been converted to Electric Loco POH shop in 1985. The target of out turn gradually enhanced from three locos to five locos per month and it had proved its worth by beating the target. In addition to that, it undertook the workload of full and partial re-cabing, twin pipe modification, dual brake conversion, 6 P conversion, high-speed gear ratio conversion so on and so forth. It could do the job towards camber rectification and rehabilitation of locos sustaining substantial damage in major accidents. It had achieved success in incorporating Microprocessor controlled unit, development of improvised Alarm Chain Pulling System and Air Flow Measuring System. Now the workload and target of this workshop has radically brought down. Similar curtailment of workload is being imposed upon the other branches like Diesel Loco, Carriage and Wagon POH shops and the biggest printing press of Indian Railways. I urge upon the Railway Minister to come up with an effective step in order to save the Railway Workshop in Kharagpur.

'MGA's - Managing General Agents. Nowadays, the Government hesitates to use the English expression 'broker'; but 'broker' is the appropriate term to be used here. In the name of intermediaries, actually the Government had even at that point of passing IRD Bill had in mind issue of allowing brokers. It seems that we have not learnt the lessons of the 1992 scam.

The Public Debt Office of the Reserve Bank of India has not been modernised till today. The recommendations have been that all transactions in the financial market should be in the demat form only. It has been broadly done in the equity market but it has not been done in the bond market or the debt market. We know what is happening today. No less than 18 to 19 co-operative banks belonging mostly to the western part of the country and some in the eastern part have virtually been used by fraudulent market operators taking advantage of the physical form of transactions, which were allowed in spite of the recommendations of the JPC on the 1992 scam. They have been allowed in EPF and we know that the Seamen's Provident Fund has been misused. It is an unhappy situation. What will happen to those unfortunate people? About Rs.93 crore have been misappropriated.

[English]

14.30 hrs.

**INSURANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2001 - CONTD.**

**MADAM CHAIRMAN:** The House will now take up Legislative Business, item No.15 - 'Insurance (Amendment) Bill'. The time allotted for the Bill was two hours. We have taken one hour and twenty-five minutes already. The balance is only 35 minutes.

**SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGLY):** Madam, I rise to oppose the Insurance (Amendment) Bill. The Bill contains three major provisions to allow the co-operatives in the insurance sector, to let them become insurers, not just corporate agents, to allow entry of brokers as intermediaries and to enable the IRDA to specify new modes of payment through credit cards, smart cards, etc.

In the Malhotra Committee Report itself and also subsequently in the IRD Act, there has been provision for intermediaries. Who is an 'intermediary'? 'Intermediary' is a rather vague sort of expression. There have been agents who are intermediaries. There have been surveyors who are intermediaries. It is now proposed to have a third-party administrator. For example, in the case of a mediclaim service, they would be dealing with the settlement of the claim and everything else. In the United States, they are known as

When it comes to the co-operatives, we know that they have political influence from very high quarters. People with political connections wanted co-operatives to enter the insurance sector and the Government decided to allow that. Have they got the expertise? Have they got the knowledge of insurance? It was told by the hon. Minister when he introduced this Bill that it would help in the rural sector and that it was expected that the entry of co-operatives in the insurance sector would increase insurance coverage, especially in the rural areas. This is the view of the Government. I am quoting the opinion of no less an expert than the former Chairman of LIC. It is because of his credibility and professionalism that he has been elevated to the post of Chairman, SEBI. What he has to say? The Chairman, LIC in his deposition before the Committee on the issue of opening up the channel of Insurance intermediaries has observed as follows:

"That in very many countries, it has not been adopted. Countries like Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia have not adopted this system of intermediaries in the form of brokers and others."

I wanted to emphasise this point. The Government says that it will help the rural insurance sector and the Chairman has to say that with the opening up of the new channel of distribution, the influence of bringing in new

business into rural areas, if at all, will be very marginal. This is the admission of the Chairman, LIC. I have with me views of many experts who say that it is not going to improve the situation, rather it is going to deteriorate the situation.

Madam, I am asking the hon. Minister one thing. Can the Government do it? What is said in 64 (VB) of the Insurance Act? Is it not disallowing receipt of premium before assumption of risk by the insurance companies? Now that the premium is being proposed to be collected through the broker. He will deduct his commission. He will be allowed to settle the claims virtually. He will perform as a full-fledged insurance company and he will have no responsibility at all, as it has happened in the case of UTI. It was by an Act of the Central Government – the UTI Act – the provisions of belonging to a Central Act. Now, the Government says, these sponsors IDBI, SBI and LIC should bear the loss suffered in the case of Monthly Income Schemes and Assured Income Schemes. The SEBI is considering this; the sponsors have said that on this particular thing that, they are not responsible. Who will bear the loss suffered by the small investors? So, also the insurance companies will say that they are not responsible. It has happened in a country like America. It has been elaborately stated how in a country like America these brokers have caused havoc to the insurance industry. If that can happen in a country like America, you can well imagine what may happen in our country with our experience of the recent scam, the current scam, the scam being looked into by the JPC and the Scam of the Harshad Mehta and his accomplices, so many Ketans – Ketan Parekh, Ketan Sethi, so many Agarwals – they are causing havoc. What will happen? We shall come back to the pre-nationalisation days. When the issue of cooperative had come up, even at that point of time on the floor of this House, the hon. Minister had to say, 'no', 'we have the experience of the pre-nationalisation days. We would not allow it'. The brokers virtually will become surrogate insurers. It can not be allowed. I think the hon. Minister will explain it, while replying. Is it permissible by 64 (VB) of the Insurance Act? It says that the premium will have to be received first; only after that the assumption of risk by the insurance company is possible. In such a situation, I am totally opposed to the Bill.

Madam, I am just mentioning some of the objections made by a very important Committee of Parliament - the Committee on Public Undertakings. It was Chaired by Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra. There was unanimous recommendation. What do they say? They said that "we strongly express our opinion against introduction of brokers". It is on record. What is the testimony made by a very important person like Shri R.N. Malhotra? It is said that Shri R.N.

Malhotra has stated that intermediaries may be permitted. I am having a document with me. This is the deposition made by Shri R.N. Malhotra himself before the Fifth Standing Committee on Finance on 17th January, 1997. Shri R.N. Malhotra, who actually initiated through his reports, the reforms and the changes in the insurance sector, said, in respect of the report of the American House of Representatives: "The insurance companies that became insolvent had delegated most of their functions, such as, underwriting, collecting premia, settlement of claims and re-insurance, to Managing General Agents." That is the expression used in America, whereas in England and our country, they are considered as brokers. The MGA's are not insurance companies and generally are not well regulated. This dangerous and wholesale delegation which reduced the insurance companies to mere post offices was presumably resorted to because the insurance companies concerned did not wish to develop their own sales process to undertake the planned rapid increase and diversification of the insurance business." That is the deposition made by Shri R.N. Malhotra himself.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I must mention to you that the time allotted to your Party is seven minutes, but I am giving you 15 minutes. You have already taken 12 minutes.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I shall try to finish. ...*(Interruptions)* Am I saying anything irrelevant? I am coming to the deposition of the Chairman, LIC. What does he say? He says: "That my officers, my men who are directly engaged in the sales, have done an admirable job." Seven lakh agents have built up with their sweat and labour, this insurance industry. They have been fulfilling so much of social obligations. I think this Government is out to ruin that particular insurance sector. What will happen to the existing agents? The Standing Committee Report has stated that on an experimental basis, it may be only for two years and with adequate safeguards. What are the adequate safeguards? The Government says that they have noted the recommendations of the Standing Committee. What has been noted? What are the safeguards? Can the Government provide any safeguards? There are so many Regulators - RBI, NABARD, SEBI, Department of Company Affairs. If there is one more Regulator here, that is, IRDA, what will happen? As it is happening in the capital market sector; with the insurance industry which is performing well in spite of the competition offered by the 16 or 17 private insurance companies that have come up, we believe that the Government should not be in a haste, either in the matter of allowing the co-operative sector or in the matter of allowing the brokers in the insurance sector as intermediaries. I am not opposed to modernisation of the payment system.

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

That can always be done - upgradation, changes, etc. etc.

Madam, I would not take much time of the House; I shall conclude very soon.

Madam, the hon. Minister of Finance, while moving the Bill, had repeatedly assured that the insurance sector should be restructured and strengthened and that nothing will be done to weaken it. But such a very step is being taken through amendments to this Insurance Act to weaken the insurance sector. He has deliberately avoided the mention of the word 'broker' and used the word 'intermediary'. May I know one thing: has the induction of brokers has helped in any country of the world. In some countries of the world, the houses of brokers are larger than those of the insurance companies. The whole game is 'loot the public money' as it happened in the pre-nationalisation days.

I warn the Government that the Government should not be in a haste to allow the cooperatives in the insurance sector and to allow brokers or even the corporate agents. Of course, the financial sector reforms are necessary. But, in the name of financial sector reforms, we do find that there is no regulation. One is saying that he is not responsible; the other is saying that he has no responsibility. What is happening? It is scam after scam that is happening and public money is being looted; the small investors are being looted like anything - sometimes in the form of vanishing companies or in the form of plantation companies or in the form of UTI or in the form of sharemarket scam or even in the Government securities.

I am concluding my speech. I would earnestly appeal to the Government that this amendment is contrary to the existing provisions of the Insurance Act; it is against Section 64(VB) of the Insurance Act. The experience the world over is that allowing the intermediaries like the brokers, like the cooperatives who are presenting an ugly sort of story currently also over which we have hardly any control is disastrous. The RBI says that it is the responsibility of the Registrar of the Cooperative Societies. There is multiplicity of regulations and all those things. This has complicated the situation.

Therefore, we should wait. The recommendations of the Standing Committee are there that the safeguards should be there. I do not think any safeguard is possible in the obtaining situation. So, the Government should withdraw the Bill unless they are determined to cause disaster to the Indian economy, to cause disaster to our prestigious insurance sector.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi to speak now.

[Translation]

SHRI C.N. SINGH (MACHHLISHAHAR): Madam Chairman, I have also given notice, please give me time for speaking, too. Nobody from Samajwadi Party has spoken yet. ...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: We don't have time now. Only 35 minutes are left.

SHRI C.N. SINGH: But none from my party has expressed his views on the Bill. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): We had abundant time yesterday. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI C.N. SINGH: It was not so. It is necessary for us to speak on the Bill as we want to get it withdrawn. ...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I had called your name yesterday. Please address the Chair. Remember that the Chair had called your name. Yesterday, but you were not present in the House.

SHRI C.N. SINGH: The Bill should have been introduced earlier. But when another Bill was introduced, I thought that it would not be introduced.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Madam, at the beginning of the 13th Lok Sabha, our Party did extend support to the Insurance Regulatory Bill after careful consideration of our commitment in the election manifesto, of our own understanding of liberalisation of the economy and the opening up of the doors. But we made several cautions in our contribution at that time including a few amendments which were officially accepted by the Government for investment in the social sector priorities. Also the hon. Minister of Finance has solemnly assured this House that in the course of expansion of this industry, there will be no threat of retrenchment or sufferings of any people within the insurance sector.

I know the Government will take the plea that the Bill has received full endorsement, if not unanimous but with a dissenting note, by a Standing Committee which has been chaired by our partymen, both Shri Shivraj Patil and Shri N. Janardhan Reddy. I also know the Government will take the plea that they are not doing anything contrary to the declaration of the hon. Minister of Finance in the

House in terms of their assurance against retrenchment etc.

Yet, Madam, the time has come to point out a few important things before the hon. Minister of Finance through you, to which I trust and hope he would give due cognisance.

When the GIC (Amendment) Bill came, we gave a critical support and finally when the hon. Minister of Finance gave us an assurance on the floor that if required in future, keeping in view the market situation, appropriate amendment could be considered later on, we felt the commitment of the hon. Minister was genuine and accordingly we extended him the support. Today, before I initiate my talk on behalf of our Party, I want to mention this. My talk on the subject would be very brief. I will not take longer time of the House. I know that the House has to dispose of many Bills today.

I trust the hon. Minister of Finance, after having heard us, shall keep some room open where his re-thinking in the entire matter could be brought in future, if it is required. It is because we are at an experimental stage. Large number of private companies have not yet entered into the field and the kind of expectation that you have that there will be a big entry of private insurance companies in India and from Kashmir to Cape Comorin they will go around in each village, town and city and there will be a climate of competition in the insurance sector in the country - nothing of that sort had yet taken up. Yet, I congratulate the people of LIC, especially for their in-built strength and mechanism. They have been able to make their growth substantially at the face of the competition which shows that internal plans of LIC with the Government of India policy to maintain such a strong public sector was not in vain.

We are simply bringing an amendment in this Insurance Bill only to ensure two passages. The first passage is for the cooperative sector and the second is for the so-called brokers and intermediaries. So far as the cooperative sector is concerned, it is a fact that there are exceptions - either in Madhepura or in Nagpur - where the cooperative bosses indulged into economic offences, manipulations and misappropriations. The law of the land will take its own course. I am thankful to hon. Member Shri Kirit Somaiya who brought it to the notice of the House yesterday with a very positive demand for trial by CBI etc. I talked to the hon. Chief Minister of Maharashtra yesterday. He is equally strong in this matter to deal with this firmly because in such matters, cutting across party lines, we shall not compromise with the offenders.

Therefore, I do not like to castigate and accuse the

cooperative movement of the country as a whole as if they are black sheep. Therefore, I am not opposing the cooperative sector's entry in the insurance sector because the cooperatives have an age-old accountability to their society, the nation and to the movement. Therefore, if the entry of the cooperatives in the insurance sector is there, I do not think it will create a problem or it will damage the growth or it will not create such kind of accountability which we expect from individuals. It will be much more than that and, therefore, we are not opposing the entry of cooperative sector into this area.

But we have very strong reservation, suspicion, and apprehension on the entry of brokers. Now, the role played by the stock market brokers for the last few years is to be seen. During the time of Shri Manmohan Singh, Harshad Mehta was there; during the time of Shri Yashwant Sinha, Ketan Parekh was there. I am not saying about the Finance Ministers' specialisation. What I am talking is that the stock market brokers are amply justified that due to the ultimate pressure of the people of India, of the Parliament of India and of several of its Committees, their days are numbered and their capacity of manipulation is dried out. Now, they are only waiting for their trial in the court. If they decide that there is a fresh ground now to suck the insurance sector and take shelter there and if we legitimise their entry by this Bill, then I think the hon. Minister of Finance - if not you, any other Finance Minister who will be sitting there in future - shall have to repent it.

I am not saying that I am forecasting it. It is my strong apprehension because brokers do not have any kind of accountability. What accountability do brokers have either to the Parliament or to the institution or to the Executive? You can say that you will catch him and try him. He may be tried, but the person who paid the premium, the person who insured himself, who will protect him or who will ensure him his contribution back? Therefore, this floodgate opening of the brokers in this sector at the cost of the age old tradition of the agents, who toil till the end of their lives to secure insurance, to arrange the premium payment and to plan his own due share with his commitment, would be in jeopardy.

Several things have been cited. While the Finance Minister takes the course of Standing Committee headed by a member of our Party, it is an irony that I am taking the shelter of Public Undertakings Committee headed by Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra. But the Finance Minister will praise Chairman from our Party. I will not praise him. I will say with caution - we cannot cast aspersions on Standing Committees as they are the Committees of Parliament - that they give in their recommendations their own wisdom,

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

but the Standing Committee Reports are also subject to scanning and scrutiny.

A new behaviour has been developed by the Government of the day that whenever something suits them, they take shelter of the Standing Committee and whenever they feel that the Standing Committee's mandate is not helping them, they ignore the Standing Committee Report. Hardly any Report is debated or discussed. I can give you example of hundreds of Reports of the Standing Committee where not a single direction has been honoured by the Government. But sometimes, somehow they get a plea and come with a strong arm and say that here is the Report of the Standing Committee which gave us endorsement. I say that here is the Report of the Public Undertakings Committee which gave them the other recommendation as to why brokers are dangerous. I thank the Committee headed by Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra. They worked in depth and gave a detailed analysis. They gave the example not only of national insurance companies operating in Hong Kong but also the future dangers of the brokers in this sector. Why did he not give cognisance to that part also? He simply avoided the recommendation of the Public Undertakings Committee headed by his own colleague in the party. Possibly, he will say that in a liberal economy, he is so liberal that sometimes he endorses the recommendations of the Committee headed by others and not his own party colleague. That is a different thing.

I would like to request the Finance Minister not to ignore the observation of Shri R.N. Malhotra. He may not be a politician. Our Finance Minister was also not a politician from the day one. He was sitting in the Finance Ministry as a bureaucrat and later on, he came to politics. I feel proud of the wisdom, intellect and understanding of Shri R.N. Malhotra. He is a great son of this country. He himself chaired the Committee on Reforms in Insurance Sector. He has said categorically the danger of brokers entering into this area, comparing it with the MGAs in the United States. They often copy the United States in many matters, especially on the opening of economy and on the insurance sector. Their own House Committee of Senate, not today, in 1999, made detailed investigation and came out with the observation on how risky is to operate through MGAs in a floodgate open manner in the insurance sector and how much payment they had to pay and suffer. It is an observation of the Committee of the Senate. Will the House not take cognisance of the observation of the House Committee of United States in this matter? Will not the House take cognisance of the observation of Shri R.N. Malhotra, a giant in this sector, who is more competent than the Members of Parliament in the House. If he would have joined politics, he could have also been a Minister.

I would request the Finance Minister that while he talks of liberal thoughts, he may please try to accommodate these kinds of views also. I would request him not be in a hurry to bring a Bill and to pass a Bill with all these provisions endangering future and future growth of insurance sector.

I do not like to narrate all those areas which have already been quoted by my dear colleague, Shri Rupchand Pal of CPI(M). I would only say that the brokers, while they take entry without commitment and accountability, can take care of their interest and commission, but ultimately, there is no law - I will be too happy if the Finance Minister can cite one - there is no provision under the Bill by which he can book a defaulting broker to the extent he is not only penalised, but the money which he defrauded, is also realised for the benefit of the person who pays the premium.

15.00 hrs.

There is no such protective clause. Therefore, I strongly appeal to the Minister that he should reconsider the entire provisions of the Insurance Bill, if it is possible for him.

The Economic Times of 27th July, 2001, published an article about the role of stockbrokers, which the Minister is aware. It says:

"The stockbrokers are increasingly looking beyond traditional securities trading. While income from securities trading and bear/badla brokerage has almost dried up due to a sharp decline in volumes on the bourses over the last four or five months, a growing number of stockbrokers are now widening the scope of their activities to distribution of mutual funds and insurance products. As regards distribution of insurance products, we are waiting for regulations for corporate insurance to be finalised ... which clearly indicates that stockbrokers, some of whom are indulged in fraud, scandals and have expertise in internal rigging are interested to enter the insurance sector as brokers where they expect payments of commission to be in the range of 17.5 per cent. Some of them may be captive broking units on behalf of the corporate houses operating as self-bid insurance companies without the protection of the law."

These are the issues which have been cited by Shri Rupchand Pal, myself, Shri R.N. Malhotra, the Committee on Public Undertakings and other experts, who pointed out that MGAs, who are treated as brokers, are mainly interested in underwriting more and more business to earn commission, often under-pricing insurance products and

ignoring the quality of underwriting. If the Western world could not accommodate and afford it, should it be proper on the part of developing nations, like India, which are yet to experiment the ultimate day of competition between the private sector and the public sector, to accommodate this provision at this stage, without having a stabilised infrastructure, structure and the institution to cope with the threat of competition at this hour? I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to this. I hope, the Minister will give his kind consideration to this matter. Thereafter, we shall consider whether we should extend support or withhold our support or not at all support.

I again appeal to the hon. Finance Minister to please reconsider the whole issue and tell the House as to how you would deal with the brokers who are working in such a fashion that it has been proved many times in the world to be disastrous to the insurance sector.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (VAISHALI): Madam Chairman, hon. Finance Minister has introduced Insurance (Amendment) Bill for the consideration of the House. I heard his party colleague Shri Kirit Scmaiya on the Bill yesterday. All through his speech he gave arguments against the Bill, but in the end he supported the Bill. It was an example of "free speech but regulated action". It means he spoke reasonably but in the end he had to support the Bill due to party pressure. Shri Rupchand Pal also spoke at length. I won't repeat the views of Malhotra Committee, Employees Association, the Chairman of LIC and the Standing Committee on the Bill.

15.04 hrs.

(DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA in the Chair)

We used to level allegations that this is a Government of brokers, but they even brought a law for it. Everyone is against the Bill. LIC has 1.19 lakh employees/officers, 7.5 lakh agents and 100 divisional offices. The body is being appreciated in all quarters for doing a good work in the direction of economic development. Why do they want to interfere? They invited private sector and they have already come. If an institution is doing a good work it should be extended support in place of pulling its leg.

Sir, I am surprised that they invited private sector. Foreign, multinational companies are coming in the market. And to cap all that, this Bill has been brought. It is like a pot of poison with milk as the topping. From outside it appears sweet as nectar and inside it is all poison. Hon. Minister

defends it on the pretext of cooperatives. Nobody likes to criticise a cooperative. Hon. Minister declared his intention to penetrate rural areas for insurance sector. Who will oppose that? But where is the role of brokers in all this? The law is meant to help brokers and middlemen. Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) have caused a lot of problems. A number of NBFCs were working in Bihar. They looted Rs. 10 thousand crores of hard earned money of the poor. ... (Interruptions) There are names such as Kuber, Burn India etc. Small investors have panicked. I apprehend that the brokers will do the same, what will the Government do, then? The lawyers and experts tell that there will be no control over the brokers. With so much liberty to the brokers, insurance can not succeed and the people will be ruined.

Sir, the USA has 3000 insurance companies 600 insurance companies went bust and they grabbed the money of the people. If it happens here, what recourse people have? People will deposit and pay premium through their hard earned money and the companies would simply disappear. Then, as usual, commissions will be constituted and inquiries would be conducted. So, the suggestion of Shri Rupchand Pal and Shri Munsii for withdrawal of the Bill is appropriate. If LIC is working properly why should it be interfered with or disturbed? Training arrangements for LIC staff should be made. It will need a large number of trained personnel. At present training is expensive. What measures have been taken by the hon. Minister to increase the number of training institutions which are 10-12 at present? He had announced that a separate company would be formed for agricultural insurance. He is very interested in bringing brokers and private sector but why his interest in that is so wanting? He had promised to set up a separate company for agricultural insurance. The crops of farmers often get ruined, they can be protected through insurance. Similar is the case of animal husbandry, which is the main occupation of the poor of our country. Government claims to penetrate rural area, which among the rural people would benefit? The farmers tend their cattle, cows. ... (Interruptions) They get disturbed if anyone mentions such things. I speak about my motherland, about rural folk, about the people who are the economic backbone of the country, who raise crops, who cultivate their fields, who invest their capital, who irrigate their fields and use insecticides and fertilizers. Their produce is damaged due to flood, drought and natural calamity. These reasons instigate them to commit suicide. Through you, I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to what happened to the agricultural insurance? The poor farmers have to take loans to tend their cattle. At present it costs Rs.20,000-25,000 to buy a cow or ox.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Chairman,

[Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

Sir, you are kind hearted and listen to the problems of farmers. Farmers tend their cattle, and if their cattle die due to any accident, the farmer is ruined. Thus cattle insurance would help him. Hon. Minister should inform us as to how the participation of farmers, poor people would be made possible in the economic development of the country? Brokerage won't do it is in itself a problem. Many names have cropped up in UTI scam. Prime facie, it appears that Government are encouraging brokers. Government should clarify on this point. My request is that the Bill should be withdrawn by the Government. With this request, I conclude.

SHRI C.N. SINGH (MACHHLISHAHAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to oppose the insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2001. Hon. Minister Yashwant Singhji is sitting here. He is a good and learned person. I have good acquaintance with him. I would submit to him to listen our views carefully and withdraw this Bill and also to repeal the Act formulated in 1999. A company named East India came to India and enslaved it for 200 years. Insurance Act was enacted in 1938, Life Insurance Act in 1936 and General Insurance Act was enacted in 1972 but the hon. Minister wants to achieve his purpose through this Bill within two years itself 1999 and 2002. I would like to say that he should not toy with Life Insurance and General Insurance Company. It will harm the country a great deal. Both these companies are the Government companies. These companies should be modernised and expanded to the maximum possible extent by the Government. I would like to know as to what is the need to bring competition in the field while others are earning profit and are favourable for the development of the country. If the Act enacted in 1989 is not repealed then the day will certainly come when our country will once again lose its freedom. All the forces of the foreign countries are concentrating on as how to loot the country by investing capital here. Our's is a poor country. The permission to have the ownership of 26 percent of equity given to the multinational companies should be withdrawn. The competition between the public sector companies and foreign companies is being created but the arrival of the foreign companies here should be checked. The slogan of Bhartiya Janta Party before assuming the reins of power was the 'boycott of foreign goods' and 'beware of the foreign powers'. Now the same party is taking such recourse after coming into power. This Government is going to mortgage the entire country to the hands of foreign powers. It is pursuing this goal in every possible way even to the extent of borrowing money. It is mistake on the part of the Hon. Finance Minister that he has gone over to the treasury benches while he should be sitting here in opposition. I don't know why a person with such a noble vision has brought such a Bill? A Japanese Insurance Company intend to enter into India which poses a danger for the country. I

would like to know the name of that company and its modus operandi to enter the country.

Sir, as per the Bill passed in 1999 the foreign companies can invest 26 percent of the capital but what benefit it will accrue? How much profit these will repatriate? It is being said that those companies would spend the money for development of the country but it is wrong. How many private companies applied for insurance? I have heard that 12 companies applied for it. I would like to know the names of the companies entering market and also whether they have started business and what benefit the Government and the public are going to get from these companies? Further how much control the Government would have over these companies.

Sir, Shri Raghuvansh Babu, Pal Saheb and Munsiji were the Members who spoke on it earlier to express their viewpoints. I would like to know as to why the Government is playing with Life Insurance and General Insurance and are bent upon receiving these?

It is said that brokers will be given 30 percent commission and the co-operative societies would cover rural areas. I would like to tell with reference to the co-operative societies specially in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh that those are engaged in loot in these areas. It has been said that the co-operative societies will extend their business upto the villages. Life insurance and General Insurance have reached every home in villages. No co-operative society and multinational company and private company will go to the villages. It is mentioned in this Bill that the payment will be made through internet and credit card. There is no internet and credit card facility in villages. So it is wrong to say that these will go to the villages. Hon. Minister should withdraw this Bill in view of the country's welfare and repeal 1999 Act and also give full space to Life Insurance Corporation and General Insurance to thrive in the country by not bringing any other company in their competition.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I must express my gratitude to the hon. Members who have participated in this debate, raised some very important issues for clarification in this House and also cautioned the Government on some of the apprehensions that they have in their mind about the future.

Sir, I must begin by paying my compliments to the Standing Committee on Finance which looked at this Bill,

as anticipated by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmuni, which looked at this piece of legislation and then recommended its adoption by this House without any modification.

I am also aware of the fact that there are notes of dissent.

Shri Dasmuni, when he was speaking on this, referred to the other Committee which was headed by a member of the Party to which I belong, whereas the Standing Committee is headed by a member of the Party to which Shri Dasmuni belongs. This only goes to demonstrate how in the Committees, the Members rise above political party considerations and then express their views absolutely impartially. It is not unusual at all that two Committees of Parliament consisting of two separate sets of membership should come to two different conclusions.

But it is not - I would like to emphasise this point - that the Government looks at the report of a Committee only when it suits the Government and ignores when it does not suit it. We give due respect to the recommendations of the Committee, especially the Committees when they deal with legislation. My own experience shows that we have, by and large, accepted all the recommendations that the Standing Committees of Parliament have made with respect to various legislations. That is an indication or proof of the effective manner in which the Committee system in this parliamentary democracy is functioning.

The Standing Committee recommended that this Bill should be adopted by Parliament without modifications. There are, as has been pointed out here, five elements in the amendments that we propose to adopt to the Insurance Bill. These relate to entry of cooperative societies in the insurance sector, change in the allocation of surplus between shareholders and policy-holders, allowing more flexible mode of payment of premium through credit cards, smart cards and over the Internet.

I would like to add - in reply to what Shri C.N. Singh was saying - that these are not the only modes of payment. There are other modes of payment, through cheque or through cash and all that. But these are the additional modes of payment, to take into account the modernisation of the whole system.

The other elements are, allowing more flexibility in the eligibility qualifications for corporations and finally, introduction of brokers as agents or intermediaries.

Out of these five elements which form part of the amendment-matrix of the Bill, the two which have attracted

the most attention of this House are the entry of cooperatives into the insurance sector and the licensing of brokers as intermediaries in the insurance sector. I would like to address the apprehensions of the Members with regard to both.

But before I come to that, I would like to share with this House what I had said 2½ years ago when we were passing the Insurance Regulatory Authority Bill at that time and when we were preparing for the amendments and opening up of the insurance sector.

The point which I had made - I would like to reiterate it now - is that we have tremendous scope in this country to expand the insurance business - life insurance, general insurance and also re-insurance. In all the areas, the potential of this country is far from realised. I have figures here which will show that we when we look at either the coverage of life insurance or non-life insurance. So, there is a tremendous scope.

Let us not think that it is a limited pie and that we are going to introduce more players to share that limited pie. The way I look at it is that we have a very expanding pie, a rapidly expanding pie where a larger number of players could not only make it expand faster, but also there will be room for everyone. This is the way we are looking at it. So, more the players, the better the expansion and the faster the expansion; and there will be enough for everyone.

In that view of the matter, there should be no doubt absolutely about either the competence or the effectiveness or the role of the public sector companies operating in life insurance and general insurance in our country.

I recall the debate in this House two-and-a-half years ago in 1999. Even at that time, apprehensions were expressed that with the entry of private sector the public sector companies will be damaged beyond repair, that they will lose their business and that the private sector will come and take over the entire insurance business. Nothing of that kind has happened. The private sector insurance companies, both in Life Insurance as well as General Insurance, have now been operating for over a year. They have also found their business and they are slowly expanding.

We know the way the Life Insurance Corporation has performed. In the year 2000-01, there was a growth of 64.98 per cent and in 2001-02 the growth has been 137 per cent. This is one full year where we have had competition from the private sector. There are ten companies in the private sector which are now operating in Life Insurance business. Despite that, the Life Insurance Corporation has expanded its business by 137 per cent. Similarly, in the General Insurance, during the year 2001-02 the growth has gone

[Shri Yashwant Sinha]

up to 11.4 per cent compared to only 5.9 per cent in the previous year. This is the expansion in the General Insurance business. So, there should be absolutely no apprehension that the public sector insurance companies are going to suffer.

Shri Dasmunsi is quite right in reminding me of the assurance that we had given on the floor of this House that nothing will be done to weaken the public sector insurance companies. In fact, everything will be done to strengthen them. That is the course of action that we have followed. It is with the support that has been extended and the environment which has been created that both the Life Insurance and the General Insurance companies have been able to expand in the public sector. They have been able to do it not in a monopoly situation which is what it was until a few years ago but in a competitive environment. And, therefore, the credit to the public sector insurance companies to that extent is much greater than would have been the case if they had operated in a monopoly situation.

With this, let the hon. Members of this House be in no doubt at all that there is going to be any damage to the public sector insurance companies. They have a head start over the private sector and they will maintain their position. The Government will do its best to ensure that public sector continues to flourish. This is the first point which I wanted to make.

Now, I would talk about the rural sector. It is very important to know where will the business expand. It will expand in the rural sector and the point which I would like to make, Sir, is that it is entirely wrong to think on the part of any Member of this House that rural business is a losing business. Rural business is a flourishing business and this has been proved by the public sector companies which are doing business. According to the census definition, 54 per cent of the business of LIC was, or is, in the rural sector. Now IRDA has revised that definition and, therefore, with a stricter definition that percentage has come down. But in the first year of operation, as against the stipulation of IRDA that the private sector insurance companies must have, at least, five per cent of their business in the rural areas, the actual business transacted by the private sector companies in the rural areas is over eight per cent. So, they are also going to the rural areas. They are going to the rural areas not so much for the love of the people in the rural areas but only because they know that there is a good business in the rural areas. Therefore, I have no doubt in my mind that in future the rural sector is going to grow, that the insurance companies will find it profitable to operate in the rural areas and they will expand their

business in the rural areas. We have a regulator in the IRDA which is watching the situation very carefully and giving directions as and when such directions become necessary.

Now, coming to the two issues which have been raised, I would like to point out that as far as the cooperative sector is concerned, it has its strength. I would entirely agree with Shri Dasmunsi when he said that he is not against the cooperative sector as such.

Nobody in this country can really be against the cooperatives. We have public sector, we have private sector, and we have cooperative sector. There are black sheep in all the sectors. We cannot single out the cooperative sector only because a scam has taken place in Nagpur or a scam has taken place in Madhavpura Bank or somewhere else to discredit the very strong cooperative movement in this country. I think it will be wrong on our part to condemn the cooperative movement as a whole. Let us not take any step which amounts to throwing the baby with the bath water. It is our responsibility to ensure that cooperatives as indeed anyone else who is indulging in wrongdoing is suitably brought to book. But that does not mean that we should completely condemn the whole sector. The cooperative sector has done good work in this country whether it is the urban cooperative bank movement or the rural cooperative bank movement or cooperatives in production or cooperatives in any other area. It is a strong movement. I think we all need to support that movement.

Now, it is true that when we opened the insurance sector for the private sector, the cooperative sector was not included in that. It is also true that we received representations from the people in the cooperative sector to asking as to why do we want to bar the cooperative sector from the insurance sector. We went into this question in detail, we examined it in all seriousness, and we found that there was a lacuna here that as indeed the private sector is in the insurance business, as indeed the public sector is in the insurance business, similarly suitable cooperative institutions should also be allowed to function in the insurance sector and therefore this amendment.

Now, we have very strict rules. They are much stricter than we have for banks. The cooperative banks have grown historically over a period of time. Rules are there, RBI is there, and the State Cooperative Registrar is also there. They are trying to enforce those regulations. But in the insurance sector, to begin with, we are going to have very strong regulation. The capital adequacy norms etc. are going to be the same for the cooperatives as they are for the

private sector. Therefore, I would like to say that because some wrongdoing has taken place in some cooperative bank or some cooperative society, let us not debar cooperatives from entering the insurance business. I would appeal to the hon. Members that if they have reservation, they should not entertain those reservations.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: They have no expertise.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, expertise is accumulated. What is expertise? It is your employees and expertise is the person who heads that. We have made provision that cooperative society will be allowed to enter only when it sets up a separate insurance cooperative, that the capital adequacy norms will be observed, and that they will be solely regulated by the IRDA in the insurance sector. Therefore, let me assure the House that it will be the endeavour of the Government, and it will be the endeavour of the regulator to ensure that the pitfalls of the cooperative movement and the failures in other sectors are not repeated in the insurance sector and that in the insurance sector the cooperatives function as strongly and in as healthy a manner as private sector or the public sector.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (CONTAI): The largest insurance company is the Western Cooperative.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: So, I do not think we have a reason to doubt the competence of cooperatives to be in the insurance sector.

Now, there is the question of brokers as intermediaries. Many doubts have been expressed in this House. Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh when he was speaking just now said that you are introducing *dalali* in the business and that the brokers are known to have indulged in wrongdoing elsewhere. Here again the same logic applies as to the cooperatives that because something wrong has been done by brokers in some other fields, therefore, we should not allow them here. I would like to explain that we must be able to understand it very clearly. As far as life insurance is concerned, there are agents. It is not the Government's case at all that we are going to, in any way, affect the livelihood of the lakhs of agents of LIC or even the private companies because they are also operating through agents. It is in that context that IRDA has said that the norms that they have laid down - educational qualification, experience, training, etc. - will not apply to the existing agents. The existing agents will carry on like they have been carrying on. It will apply only to the new agents who will enter the field of insurance. In the insurance business the world over, there is something which is very very professional, which

is a matter of great expertise today. I am talking not of life insurance here. I am talking of general insurance.

In the general insurance how does an agent function? An agent belongs to a public company, whether in the public sector or private sector. He is an agent either of LIC or of Tata AIG or any other insurance company. He goes on behalf of that company to the client to secure business for that company. Suppose I am a person or an entity seeking an insurance. I have some very special requirement. Whom do I go to? Therefore, this whole system of intermediaries has developed.

If you are looking for a very specialised product, you go to an intermediary. The client goes and tells the intermediary that these are his requirements and he needs a policy of that kind. The intermediary will know what kind of products exist in the insurance sector. Or he will then on behalf of his client go to four or five insurance companies and ask them whether they have a product or whether they can create such a product and what is the most competitive offer that he could get for his client. So, the client service is something which can be secured only through a competitive system of intermediaries. It cannot be done so well by agents, especially in general insurance where I said the number of specialised products, the number of unique products will have to suit the convenience of just one client sometimes. There could be a product which would suit just one client. Even that kind of product can be offered by an insurance company on most competitive terms. That is why, the world over there has been this system of intermediaries which could be corporates, which could be individuals also.

I would like to assure the House that they will not collect premium. They will not settle claims as Shri Rupchand Pal was suspecting. They will not become a surrogate insurance company. Their duties will be very clearly defined and regulated by the IRDA. The danger that happened in USA and in some other countries where the brokers were operating has been taken care of. There were Principal Agents, there were Chief Agents and in the USA they were known as Managing General Agents. That is not the system that we are introducing through this amendment. In fact, we are abolishing this system which existed in our country before insurance was nationalised. Let the House be in no doubt that we are not replicating in this country the bad practices which have prevailed in other countries or which had prevailed in India before nationalisation. What we are trying to do is totally a new concept which has found favour in many other countries, which have competitive insurance market for them.

[Shri Yashwant Sinha]

A point was made by Shri Kirit Somaiya, whether we can wait for three years for life insurance and introduce it only in general insurance sector. It is a good point and most certainly the IRDA will take this into account. The IRDA will be regulating this sector. So, IRDA will determine when they will go for it. Here is a legislation which is an enabling legislation, which will in course of time allow this to happen in all sectors. But the timing of this is something which will be determined by the IRDA. The nature of it will also be determined by the IRDA. Under this Insurance Act, they will be framing rules and we will make sure that when the rules are framed, all these issues are taken into account.

So, I would not be going into many other details. I have the Malhotra Committee Report here. It also recommended the intermediaries. But, I am not going into that. We have gone by the consensus which was evolved in the Government which was reflected in the Standing Committee of Parliament. Let me also assure the House that we had many apprehensions when the insurance business was being opened up for competition. Even at that point of time predictions were made that the country will become a slave of western powers of multinational corporations and all that. Nothing of that kind has happened and nothing of that kind will be allowed to happen. I would like to repeat in this House what I have said on that occasion and other occasions that, as a nation, we must have the confidence to be able to face the world. What kind of a nation will India be if we run away getting scared of foreigners in this field or that field and getting scared of competition? We are capable of facing competition. We are capable of standing on our own legs. We have the best talents. I know that our insurance officials, when they were sent for training and orientation in some of the foreign partners of our insurance companies, were found to be so good that those companies wanted to retain them. If they went to US, they said: "Please leave these men here because we like them." If we sent them to Europe, they said: "Please leave them here because we want them to continue here." This is the talent that this country has and with this talent, nobody can keep India down. Nobody can create a condition where we will find ourselves wanting. So, I strongly recommend that we have no reason to apprehend. We have the capacity to face competition. The public sector has the capacity to face competition. While we are implementing this legislation and framing rules, we will take care of the concerns which have been expressed in this House. We will make sure that the public sector is protected, the public sector flourishes, that those who are engaged in the business of public sector are also fully protected and nothing is done which will, in any way, harm the public sector in this country. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: What is the accountability of the intermediaries in the whole text?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: They will be fully regulated by the IRDA. They will operate within the discipline of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I had asked about the provision under Section 64 VB that with the receipt of premium before assumption of a risk by insurance companies, the brokers will collect the premium subsequently at a later date.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: No. I have just now clarified that the brokers will not collect the premium. I have said that the brokers will not collect the premium. They will not settle claims. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Will they not be given under writing?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: They will be operating with the insurance companies.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Is it not violative of Section 64 VB?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: No, it is not. If it is violative of Section 64 VB, then the Standing Committee would have said so.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I am asking your view about it. I think it is violative of Section 64 VB.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I do not think so. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I want to know whether an intermediary will be attached to one insurance company or many others.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: He is not an agent to one insurance company. An intermediary, as I tried to explain in the House, is in the business of finding the best product for a person or an entity which is seeking insurance policy. I explained this to the House. Suppose I am interested in general insurance and have a business to insure. I want that this business should be insured in the following manner, that I should have the following risks, covered for a following number of years, etc. And I am looking for a very special product. I will go to the intermediary and say that this is my requirement and ask whether he will find me an insurance company which will give me this product at the most competitive rate. The intermediary will then go around to find out whether such a product exists or not. If such a

product does not exist, then he might even talk to the insurance companies to create such a special product for that particular client.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: You are speaking about consultants and marketing.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: This is what I have tried to explain. An agent at this point of time is doing it for the insurance company. Who is the agent loyal to? The agent is loyal to the company. This intermediary will be loyal to the client. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Insurance Act, 1938, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the House will take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

#### Clause 2 Amendment of Section 2

*Amendment made:*

Page 2, line 5,

for "2001"

substitute "2002" (3)

(Shri Yashwant Sinha)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 2, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 2, as amended, was added to the Bill.*

#### Clause 3 Amendment of Section 2C

*Amendment made:*

Page 2, line 25,

for "2001"

substitute "2002" (4)

(Shri Yashwant Sinha)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 3, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 3, as amended, was added to the Bill.*

*Clauses 4 to 9 were added to the Bill.*

#### Clause 10 Amendment of Section 42A

*Amendment made:*

Page 3, line 15,

for "2001"

substitute "2002". (5)

(Shri Yashwant Sinha)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 10, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted*

*Clause 10, as amended, was added to the Bill.*

*Clauses 11 to 18 were added to the Bill.*

#### Clause 1 Short title and commencement

*Amendment made:*

Page 1, line 3,

for "2001"

substitute "2002" (2)

(Shri Yashwant Sinha)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.*

#### Enacting Formula

*Amendment made:*

Page 1, line 1,

for "Fifty-second"

*substitute "Fifty-third"(1)*

(Shri Yashwant Sinha)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

*"That Enacting formula, as amended, stand  
part of the Bill."*

*The motion was adopted.*

*Enacting Formula, as amended, was added to the Bill.*

*The Long Title was added to the Bill.*

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I beg to move:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

15.49 hrs.

**SALARY, ALLOWANCES AND PENSION  
OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT  
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2002**

*[Translation]*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, be taken into consideration."

There is a very small amendment. The House is aware that the minimum amount of salary being given to the ex MP's completing the term of four years was raised from Rs.2500 to Rs.4000 per month by the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2002 on 14.9.2001. However it did not cover two categories of Members of Parliament. First category included those Members who did not complete four years despite serving for two terms and the second category comprises of Minister of interim Parliament who used to get Rs.2500 hence it should be enhanced to Rs.3000.

I urge upon the House to pass this Motion without further debate. If there is any suggestion, it would be included in the comprehensive Bill when one will be brought.

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (SHAJAPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I agree with what has been said by the hon. Minister and appeal that this Bill be passed.

*[English]*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Sir, we are all supporting this Bill. But a message always goes wrong if they bring forward the Bill in a piecemeal manner. Every time, the Government brings forward some Bill on the Salary and Allowances. A message goes to the media that Members of Parliament are getting everything which is absolutely not correct. The Government should also give a comprehensive statement to the public through the Ministry saying that the Members of Parliament working in India are taking the least benefit when compared to the Members of Parliament of the rest of the world. What kind of people do we represent? We represent millions and millions of people comparing others in the world. Our task is most hazardous in nature. No Member of Parliament in the world represents more than one million people. When the Government brings forward such piecemeal Bills, the newspapers create an impression in the minds of the public that again we are taking something more. For God's sake, please bring forward a comprehensive Bill once and give a justified response to the public. So, I would request the Government to bring forward a comprehensive Bill and send a message to the public how much the Government is giving and now much it is not giving. Otherwise, we will unnecessarily be criticised outside the House. So, I would request the hon. Minister to give a comparative note to the public saying that you have brought forward this Bill for the provisional Members of Parliament who are elders and senior Members. Why does the Government not bring forward a Bill comprising every thing? That is my submission.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (CHIRAYINKIL): When the other Bill relating to enhancing the salary and allowances was brought forward earlier, I was the only Member who opposed it for the simple reason that it would give rise to severe criticism from the public. Every day, the Government is bringing forward one amendment after another amendment. If the Government has got a clear idea about the present situation, then, it should bring forward a comprehensive amendment. Mr. Minister, you have not done that. You are making the Members of Parliament a mockery in the eyes of the public. As I said earlier, you bring forward piecemeal amendments giving enhancement of Rs.500,

Rs.3000 and like that. This will create a very bad impression among the public. I would request you not to do that. Please study the situation. ...*(Interruptions)*

Even now, this Bill is defective. There are some ex-MPs who have completed three years and more. They will not get a single pie. You may see that a large number of Members, who have completed more than three years, will not get pension. On the other hand, a Member of Parliament, for the simple reason that he was a Member of Parliament for two terms in the House, is entitled to get it even if he has not completed four years. This is also a lacuna. So, Mr. Minister, you must give consideration. You should reduce the number of years to two or three. ...*(Interruptions)* The point is that the provisional Members of Parliament are allowed to get it. You incur expenditure on that count.

Why do you not do that? Those Members who have not completed four years will not get it. It is not because of their fault. ...*(Interruptions)* There are some Members who could not complete four years for the simple reason that the House was prematurely dissolved. It was because of their fault.

So, these ex-MPs who have served a tenure of 3 years and 9 months or 10 months could not get pension. So, the Government should consider their case also, make a detailed study and bring a comprehensive Bill. With these words, I wholeheartedly support the Bill.

*[Translation]*

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, when this Bill was introduced in the House on 14.9.2001 discussion was held on it. Government does not have any intention to bring Bill in a piecemeal manner but as some lacuna existed at that time in that approximately 20 Members of interim Parliament could not be covered. Their salary remained Rs. 2500 only and it was not increased. Similarly those Members who did not complete three four years despite two Lok Sabha terms were also not included in it. A few Members were included in it. I agree with this view of Shri Radhakrishnaji and Munsiji that there is no need to bring the legislation in perceived manner. In future any action would be taken as per the consensus evolved on this matter. It is understood by me also that this decision has been blown out of proportions in the newspapers through there is nothing in it. I am of the view that all of us know and agree in this count. I urge upon the House to remove this shortcoming through passing this Amendment Bill with the support of you all and in future whenever any Bill will be introduced with the consensus and consent of all.

*[English]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, be taken into consideration."

*The Motion was adopted.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 2 was added to the Bill.*

*Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.*

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

15.57 hrs.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

AND

BILLS AS AMENDED BY RAJYA SABHA - LAID

*[English]*

SECRETARY GENERAL: Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha :

'I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Constitution (Ninety-third Amendment) Bill, 2001, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 28th November, 2001 has been passed by the Rajya Sabha, in accordance with the provisions of article 368 of the Constitution of India, at its sitting held on the 14th May, 2002, with the following amendments:

## ENACTING FORMULA

1. That at page 1, line 1, *for the word "Fifty-second" the word "Fifty-third" be substituted.*

## Clause 1

2. That at page 1, line 3, *for the figure "2001" the figure "2002" be substituted.*

I am, therefore, to return herewith the said Bill in accordance with the provisions of rule 128 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha and request that the Lok Sabha may concur in the said amendments in accordance with the said rule read with article 368 of the Constitution.'

2. Sir, I lay on the Table the Constitution (Ninety-third Amendment) Bill, as returned by Rajya Sabha with amendments.

15.59 hrs.

CABLE TELEVISION NETWORKS (REGULATION)  
AMENDMENT BILL, 2002

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we take up item no. 17. Shrimati Sushma Swaraj.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move:

"That Bill for making more amendments in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Bill, 1995 may be taken up for consideration.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (CHIRAYINKIL): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am on a point of order. I do not want to stand in the way of the Minister taking interest in these matters.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan, kindly quote the rule. Under what rule are you raising your point of order?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: If I remember correct, it is Rule 74.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Rule 74 deals with Motions after introduction of Bills. This is not the proper rule. So, I am not allowing you.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Please read the proviso to Rule 74. It deals with the right of a Member to raise an objection to the Motion at this stage. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have read the rule. This is not the introduction stage.

16.00 hrs.

This is the consideration stage.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have given my ruling.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: For Heavens' sake, you refer to Rule 74.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Now, he believes in the Heavens.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Rule 74 relates to 'Motions after introduction of Bills', and not at this stage.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, you read the last portion of that Rule. The Members are given a time of two days. The Bill was introduced yesterday. We leave the House by 8 p.m. We do not get time to study the Bill. That is the right of a Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Bill has already been introduced.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I am not opposing the introduction. I am only opposing the consideration of the Bill.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I think, the Member was absent yesterday when the hon. Minister sought the opinion of the House whether it would be considered and passed. I think, the House gave its consent.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Yes.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): We got the copies. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Bansal, the Rule says:

"...unless the Speaker allows the motion to be made."

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I am only pointing

it out. Hereafter the Member's right cannot be curtailed by the whims and fancies of the Executive. The Government must have an idea about the legislation to be made in this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have disallowed the point of order. When your turn comes, you can speak if you want to say something.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Now, resume your seat. I have given my ruling. ...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not waste the time of the House. I am now allowing you.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please resume your seat.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I would like to thank all the hon'ble Members of this House for granting permission to hold an immediate discussion on this Bill in view of its importance. As Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi has also said, I would like to tell Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan that he was not present in the House yesterday. This Bill was circulated yesterday and not today. At the time of introduction of the Bill I sought consent of the august House for holding a discussion on this Bill immediately. I am grateful to this House and thank all the hon'ble Members for giving their consent.

Sir, through this bill a small amendment is proposed to be made in Cable Network. Though small, it is a very significant, relevant and timely amendment. The time when Cable Industry came into existence all the channels were 'free-to-air' channels and thus Cable Operators used to provide their services to people at a fixed monthly fee. Though this amount of fee varied from city to city and area to area but it was paid on lumpsum basis. But gradually broadcasters started converting their channels into pay channels. Pay channel means subscribers will have to pay more money for viewing that channel. Cable Operators started charging that money from subscribers. Consequently more free channels were converted into 'Pay Channels' and subscribers have to pay more money. This problem kept on growing and subscribers were worst affected. Members of almost all the political parties personally made a complaint to me in this regard. Questions were raised in both the

Houses and several editorials were published in newspapers. It was questioned whether the government is incapable of dealing with this problem and why they are not intervening? Later the government convened a meeting of Cable Operators. Cable Operators explained that they have to charge money from subscribers so they could pay to broadcasters of pay channels otherwise from where they will pay. Then the matter was discussed with broadcasters and they also explained their problem. They said that Cable Operators made under reporting about subscribers of their programme. For example, if a cable operator provides cable service to 1000 houses they say that they have only 200 subscribers. Thus they cannot recover the money they have invested. Then we felt that it was a three-dimensional problem. Subscribers complained that cable operators fix the cable charges arbitrarily and exploit them. Cable operators complained that broadcasters are converting their free-to-air channels into pay channels and compel them to charge more money from subscribers to pay them. Broadcasters complained that cable operators made under reporting and deprived them of their due money. We felt that they are absolving themselves of the responsibility by blaming one-another. Broadcasters say that Cable Operators are exploiters and they are the exploited. The Cable Operators also put the same blame on broadcasters. As a result of this subscribers are suffering from both the sides. Neither they have option to view their desired channels only nor have they any choice to pay for those channels only which they want to view, undesired channels are being thrust on them and they are forced to pay for all the channels. Thus they are the worst affected.

Sir, we have constituted a task force comprising representatives from all these three units i.e. representatives of subscribers, cable operators, broadcasters, a master service operator, entertainment officers and officers from Ministry of Consumer Affairs. Today in this House I would like to congratulate the task force for their prompt and laudable work. The task force was constituted in September, 2001 which submitted its report after conducting a comprehensive and deep study and holding discussion in meeting convened regularly at interval of three months. This report revealed that all these three problems can be solved if conditional Access System (CAS) is introduced by the Government. Though the Government has the right to introduce CAS but these are not covered under any Act. Thus through this bill this amendment is being brought to empower the government to introduce CAS.

I would like to explain in brief as to what we will do after getting this power and what is CAS system in this context. I would like to tell the hon'ble Members that we

[Shrimati Sushma Swaraj]

are going to intervene in this matter to a limited extent and this will change the whole scenario of Cable Network. We are going to ensure that the basic needs of entertainment are provided by every Cable Operator at reasonable rates. So far the pay channels are concerned CAS should be installed and subscriber should be asked as to what channels he wants to view and fees for those channels should be charged accordingly from him. This power will be acquired by issuance of a notification. The first thing is that basic entertainment facility is provided to subscribers at reasonable rates and in respect of pay channels subscribers should decide what they want to see in their houses as per their interests and fees for only those channels should be charged. This will solve all the three problems. Subscribers will not be exploited and view their desired channels. Cable Operators will not be forced and blamed for charging arbitrarily. Broadcaster will also be benefited as the system will be so transparent that Cable Operators will not be able to make under reporting even if they want to do so. This will sift truth from falsehood. This amendment along will be able to provide meaningful solution to all these three problems. Therefore, at the very outset I have stated that though small, it is a very significant amendment.

With these words, I shall request all the hon'ble Members kindly to pass this Bill.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved :

"That the Bill further to amend the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, be taken into consideration."

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I have a point of clarification.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not now.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (SRIKAKULAM): When you make your speech, you can ask the clarification.

16.10 hrs.

(SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*)

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in a market economy, it is the forces of demand and supply which are constantly at play. This may sound all right and be acceptable in a developed society. But in a developing society like ours, fighting as we have been during the last 50 years against poverty, it is not only desirable but also imperative that Government intervenes in certain important matters relating to the public and check the exploitation

of public by various service providers, whether they are the otherwise big business houses or the MNCs.

Of late, this Government has been obsessed with globalisation of economy and privatisation of Public Sector Undertakings and in that process it has abdicated its own important functions to safeguard the interests of the public. It is a digression, but an apt example in this case would be, the increase in the prices of vital drugs. In this perspective, the present Bill, which I also perceive to be a departure from the present day policies of the Government, is a welcome step. I must say this at the very beginning because this seeks to keep a check on the subscription rates for the cable television connections. For quite some time now, the cable operators, as the hon. Minister also referred to, being obliged to pay more to the various broadcasters of pay channels, continue to increase the price for the consumers. It was just out of their control, out of the hands of the consumers as they are helpless persons. They just had to pay what they were asked to pay.

With the proliferation of the pay channels in the days to come, this problem could be further compounded, further aggravated for the consumer because he would have to pay for all the channels, maybe, even a 100 pay channel which he may not really want to see or to have access to. He could actually land up paying exorbitant prices for the entire package of the channels. Understandably, therefore, various consumer organisations across the country had been demanding that the Government takes some decisive action in this matter and check the profiteering urge amongst the cable operators and the broadcasters and regulate the subscription rates.

Convinced of that need, the ideal course of the Government was, I think, just to seek legal authority to intervene in the matter and to take steps to regulate the subscription rates. To that extent, I would again say the provisions of this Bill need to be supported.

Sir, the hon. Minister was, perhaps, eager to address this problem because whether it was in the Consultative Committee or in the Standing Committee or otherwise, we were all certainly pressing her. But I do not know what really was the reason. Why this one small step that she wanted to take and which she claims to be a significant step took a year and a half? Was it so difficult? What was the problem with the Government? Did not the Government realise the difficulty of the people?

Why has it taken so long for the Government to take this step? Today, we are certainly supporting this Bill at a time when we have the Convergence Bill, which has to

repeal the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act. Despite that, we are agreeable to this but I would like to know what really was the reason for this delay. Why did the Government not act in time? I would say that this step is late and it does not give too much to the people. I would make my submission about it shortly.

I would again say that the hon. Minister has done well to distinguish between the free-to-air channels and the pay channels. It was the need of the hour. A bouquet of free-to-air channels offering programmes on education, entertainment, information, sports, etc. would now be available to the subscriber, as she says, at a nominal rate, though in the Act the Government only assumes the power to fix the maximum rate. Therefore, we would like the hon. Minister to assure this House about the ceiling on maximum rates for particular services. I nevertheless agree that from time to time rates would have to be revised and therefore a power like this is necessary. So, I would personally support this provision.

As I said, while drawing distinction between free to air channels and pay channels, she has also segregated all the pay channels, though I do not know whether 'segregation' is the right word to be used. This means, a person could go in for one or two or a larger number of pay channels. This is something that was needed. Here, a person would be required to pay only for the channels he wishes to access and would be spared of the liability to pay for all the channels that would be available through the cable operator.

The assumption of a right to fix rates for each channel is also desirable. I find here that though the Bill has a provision giving the Government the right to fix the maximum rate of a bouquet of free to air channels, nowhere in this Bill do we see a provision that gives the Government the right to fix the rates for pay channels. This is where I initially raised a doubt. In a market-driven economy where you leave everything to hawkers, they fix the rates on their own. So, where is the provision where by she would ensure that a particular channel that might be trying to dominate the entire scene today would still not jack up the prices? If you want to give me an answer that it is for the subscriber to opt for the channel or not, I think, that would not be a very satisfactory answer because once we have accepted the intervention of the Government, we would want that intervention to be effective and in people's interest. This is what I find lacking here.

I think, one consequential provision in the Bill would lead to a situation where a consumer would lose on the

roundabout what he gains on the swings. I agree with the conditional access system being introduced. I also accept that if you have to make a distinction between free to air channels and pay channels, you have to provide for what is called the 'addressable system' and I take it that this is the system, which in common parlance we call 'set top box'. According to the definition - we would also understand it to be so - it is an electronic device through which signals of cable television networks could be sent and decoded at the premises of the subscribers. It is all right but there are fears - this is where I would like the hon. Minister to kindly intervene - that the cost of these set top boxes could be exorbitant and prohibitive for an ordinary subscriber, thus denying him the benefit intended by this new provision. If the cost of the set top box were very high, it would mean a capital investment. Maybe, for a particular person, it might not be difficult to pay Rs.200 or Rs.300 a month but he could find it extremely difficult to afford a set top box. We should visualise this kind of a situation also. Therefore, are we really giving the subscriber something or not? This is the assurance I would like to have from the hon. Minister because while we, in the Bill, reserve the right of the Government to regulate the maximum subscription rates in basic tier of free-to-air channels, there is no provision whereby we could force the manufacturer or the dealer of set top boxes to ensure that the prices do not rise above a particular level, or, in any case, to get the prices approved by the Government or any governmental agency. I would have wanted a provision like that in the Bill which, I think, is lacking. This gadget may become indeed very difficult for many people to afford.

There is another reason connected with this. Let us say a person can afford to pay for all the pay channels. Now, according to the present scheme of things, you are taxing him. He will pay the price fixed by you for the free-to-air channels, that bouquet of the free to air channels. Then, he wants all the pay channels and certainly he would have to pay for that. But then all those channels will also have to be routed through that set-top box. If a person wants all the channels available, why should it be that he would still be required to install a set-top box? That means he is paying much more than what he would otherwise pay. So, what benefit are you according to him? I think, there should have been a provision to exempt people.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal, please conclude.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, I am sorry, if you are checking me on this also. I will just sit down. We agreed to the passing of this Bill. It does not mean that we want every Bill to be rushed through. If that is the approach of the Government, I would certainly feel bad about it.

*[Translation]*

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would request you to allow him to speak. All those points he wants to say should come.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the House agrees to it, the Chair has no objection. I have no problem at all if all the hon'ble Members who are likely to speak give some of their allotted time and give him a chance to speak.

*[English]*

SHRI K. YERRANNIDU: We will reduce our time.  
...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: We wanted this Bill to be referred to the Standing Committee. We wanted certain matters to be discussed. Well, going by the Government's desire, we agreed that this Bill to be taken up for discussion today. But that does not mean that you just pass it. If you want to do it, I will just sit down. That ought to be the approach.  
...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (MAHARAJGANJ, BIHAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, is the time of two hours is not sufficient for this Bill?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: It seems that Prabhunath Singhji has not read this Bill and he does not know how important is it.

*[English]*

Sir, this Bill was not slated to be debated. There was no time fixed by the Business Advisory Committee. Naturally, I cannot say that it is one hour or two hours. But since it has been the desire of the House yesterday, we agreed to pass the Bill. Since there was no time allotted, I presume that this Bill requires justice. There are a number of good suggestions to be made to the hon. Minister. If any hon. Member wants to make any good suggestion, let him make. Let the discussion be concluded and then the Bill should be passed. We are here to pass the Bill and not to obstruct the Bill.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, I was submitting, at present, there is no provision in the Bill to enable the Government to control the price of the set-top boxes. I would really want the hon. Minister to assure this House that the manufacturers of these devices would not have a field day and profiteer at the cost of poor viewers. This is the genuine concern which I personally envision and which some people have spoken to me about. I would like the hon. Minister to address this issue.

Sir, I am just coming to one or two provisions of the Bill. In the proposed sub-section (8) of the new Section-4, sought to be incorporated into the Bill, it has been provided and I quote:

"The cable operator shall not require any subscriber to have a receiver set of a particular type to receive signals of cable television network."

But a similar provision in case of an addressable system, that is, set-top boxes is missing. Now where is the guarantee that there will not be a captive market for one manufacturer or importer of this set. I understand that there are thirty three million cable houses in the country. People would like to have these. If you give some benefit that by only choosing one or two pay channels and by working out the economics thereof, if I find this to be more economical, maybe, I would like to go for a set-top box, but then, as in the free market, I should have the liberty to buy any set-top box and instal that, provided it is compatible with the system, as we do in the case of telephone instruments now. There was a time when the Telephone Department was issuing you a telephone instrument. Now you can go to the market to buy anyone. Similar should be the provision here. That, I find, is specifically missing in this Bill. An amendment to that effect in this sub-section (8) should have been provided for.

While I welcome the desire of the Government to control the subscription rates etc., in a federal set up, I find one area to be quite nebulous and hazy. I am not disputing the basis thereof, but it may turn out to be quite impractical. It says that while fixing the rates, the Central Government may specify different maximum amounts for different States, cities, towns or areas, as the case may be. Suppose I live in a small town or a remote town somewhere in Tamil Nadu or somewhere else. The Government or any officer in the Ministry may not even be aware of the name of the town. Are they going to fix the rates for each town? Why should this authority not be delegated to somebody down the line? I can understand the Central Government fixing the broad parameters for the States or for the districts. They say,

for the small town somewhere, different rates ought to be fixed. I am not disputing the basis thereof, but will it be practical? Will the Government at the Centre be able to do it? Therefore, this power has to be left to somebody else.

A short while ago, I referred to the possibility, or rather certainty of the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act being repealed subsequently by the Communication Convergence Bill. That would be done and, I am sure, once certain steps are taken under the present amendment, they should be carried on thereafter. But I was trying to go through the provisions of the Communication Convergence Bill hurriedly. These provisions, as such, do not find mention in the Communication Convergence Bill and, maybe, you have to do something in this regard.

In Clause 18, there is an omnibus power being conferred on the Regulatory Authority. If I may just quote from the Communication Convergence Bill, 2001; Clause 18, sub-clause 2(iii) says:

"Without prejudice to the generality of the provisions contained in sub-section (1), The Commission shall –

(iii) determine appropriate tariffs and rates for services, wherever considered necessary and keeping in view the objectives and guiding principles in this Act."

So, a doubt really crops up in my mind that though these provisions are salutary – though I have tried to give reference to some lacunae which I think exist in this Bill – but after this new Convergence Act comes into force, whenever it does, after a few months, will the provisions there be enough to carry forward what's now being done or what will be done under the new provisions? That is what I would like the Minister to ponder over and, if necessary, take appropriate steps to see – maybe by just bodily lifting it up – that this is again somehow incorporated in that Bill. How it is sent to the Committee or how does the Committee take it up on its own, those are separate questions, the nitty-gritty of which I do not have to go in to here now. But that is one thing which would have to be addressed to. So, whatever you say now, ultimately the Commission may also not end up saying, 'well, I do not have the power,' or somebody may not be able to challenge it then. I know of certain powers or certain provisions which would continue to prevail even after the enforcement of the Convergence Act, as and when passed. But, that is a point on which specific attention needs to be paid. Having said that, I would only, once again, while accepting the provisions of this Bill like an assurance from the hon. Minister, as I stated some time earlier, that no provision of it should prove to

be counterproductive for any section of the society, to the people who can pay and to the people who are not in a capacity to pay and for that, anybody. This provision, which we are accepting, we are agreeing to its being incorporated in law, even for a short period, should be immediately seen to be in the interest and benefit of the people and nobody should be able to derive any benefit at the cost of the people.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL (BALAGHAT): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I thank you and then thank hon. Minister for introducing Cable Television Network (Regulation) Amendment Bill. I have risen to speak in support of the Bill.

Sir, the reason for my supporting the Bill is that in this very House, when I had raised this matter under Rule 377 on 17.8.2001, I did not know that the Government would bring the Bill so soon and in so much detail. At that time the cable operators of towns and small localities were facing difficulties. I had sought to know why cannot we have an addressable system in India as in America? Taking care of that the Government come forward with this Bill that explains everything in detail. Secondly, I had asked about this as a supplementary to question No.522 on 2 May, 2002 and hon. Minister had given a categorical assurance that the amendment is likely to be introduced in this very session. I once again thank her and express my gratitude to her.

One thing that I would like to say is that my learned colleague of Congress Shri Bansal, who is also an advocate, had repeated both the things in speech. It is quite clear that on the one hand when hon. Minister said that it was an opportune time then he said that it is much delayed one, in my opinion the two things are mutually contradictory. He also said that the Bill does not protect the interests of consumers, they will suffer on this account. I would like to point out to him what is written in the fourth point of amendment 4(a).

"If the Central Government is satisfied that it is necessary in the public interest so to do, it may, by notification in the official Gazette, specify the maximum amount which a cable operator may demand from the subscriber for receiving the programmes transmitted in the basic service tier provided by such cable operator"

It clearly means that the Government are quite conscious about the protection of consumer's rights. It has been clarified in the point. Second thing is that some of the representatives come from areas such as Purvanchal or naxal affected as is my area. Actually, no telecast facilities exist there. If

[Shri Prahlad Singh Patel]

anybody makes a demand for lowering cable rates, that point has been addressed in No.5.

"May specify maximum amounts for different states, cities, towns or areas, as the case may be".

All such problems have been carefully addressed in this Bill. Pay channels have come as a problem before the society. It is true that we will have to reconsider this aspects as and when situation demands in future but in the present circumstances, this amendment guarantees protection to consumers. It should be viewed through this example. If a consumer, does not wish to view a certain channel and if that channel is thrust upon him as one in a group, the pay channels offer and is made to pay for that channel, too, the Bill mentions about the procedure of such listing. Second very important thing is that free-to-air channels have been put in the category 1-10. It has been guaranteed, otherwise, on the cable T.V. the picture quality of the DD-1 or DD-2 channels are so poor that no one wants to view them. This problem is promised to be addressed by the Government. It is a very serious matter.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to say that as a result of the circumstances that have arisen, we have been suffering both financially as well as culturally. It has happened in the last one or two years. None of us dares to oppose electronic media as the news channels have a very important place among them. That is why we avoid taking on them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I felicitate hon. Minister for it and would like to say that it is the most opportune time to introduce the amendment Bill and it is a courageous step. Even with respect to the Act mentioned by Shri Bansal, I regard the presentation of the Bill as relevant and topical with regard to the prevailing situation and train of events, it is very important to present the events in a true perspective. Shri Bansal has tried to draw attention to this point. He is quite right that with reference to print media, we have Press Council of India but when misinformation on the part of electronic media-whether news channel, press related or entertainment channel occurs, we do not have any recourse.

Sir, time and again I have said on my behalf and on the behalf of my organisation, that there was Prasar Bharati Board when there was just one official channel - whether for regional programmes or for entertainment - but now the Government have to find a way out to communicate its policies to the people - even though it have to suffer losses but we have to take concrete and effective steps to communicate our plans to the people in an honest and

truthful manner so as to provide a solution to their problems in keeping with their aspirations.

Sir, I thank hon. Minister for introducing the amendment Bill and through you, would like to submit that it is a very important step in that direction. On the issue of freedom to electronic media, we have to admit that the present need is on regulating the freedom of media. Probably, the Bill keeps it in mind and we need to consider it.

Sir, there may be argument about the price of set top box, as mentioned. If we have to pay Rs.100 to the cable operator in place of Rs.300, we would be saving Rs.200 but if they have to pay Rs.3500 or 4000 for set top box, then the consumer will definitely feel the burden. I request the Government to focus on these issues and find a way so that the consumers are not burdened. Therefore, the Government should pay attention towards it. With these words, I conclude by extending my wholehearted support to the amendment Bill.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (ULUBERIA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, one of the purposes of this Bill is to stand by the lakhs of subscribers. It was discussed in several fora and to defend the interest of the subscribers, some measures were essential. I thank the hon. Minister that she took note of this necessity and after discussion at various levels, she has brought this Bill to protect the consumers. To that extent, it is a laudable effort on the part of the hon. Minister. There are many arguments in support of Bill. We know all arguments in favour of the Bill and hon. Minister has placed them before the House.

You know that the frequent increase in cable charges by the cable operators is becoming a concern everywhere. It started with Rs. 30 or Rs. 40 and now it has reached up to Rs. 300 or Rs. 350 in certain cities of this country. There is an anxiety that it would soon reach Rs. 500 in the metropolitan cities. In that way, it is a major problem for this entertainment industry and the consumers of the commodity. So, this is the most important thing and the Government has to look into that matter.

Then, another problem was that the broadcasters' arbitrary fixation of the price of their products. That was also a matter of concern. In this Bill, there are certain provisions to control those matters. I thank the Minister for taking note of that. But there are some questions which are to be replied, and there are also confusions which are to be clarified.

In the Bill, there is a provision for fixing of the subscription charges. Shri Bansal has mentioned about it. I want a clarification on this. What will be the criteria for fixing the subscription charges? We have urban areas, we have metro areas and we have rural areas. There are different areas with different type of consumers. What will be the criteria for fixing the subscription charges? It should be very transparent, and it should not be arbitrary because arbitrary actions on the part of the Government are not uncommon in our country. On many occasions, the Government takes arbitrary decisions that go against the interest of the people. There should be caution. Therefore, what should be the criteria? It should be very transparent, it should be reasonable and it should not burden the common consumers. That is something which must be clarified.

The second thing is about the mandatory control. The mandatory provision is always against the spirit of autonomy. We are always in favour of media's autonomy. When the mandatory provision comes, then it becomes contradictory with the concept of autonomy. How will the Government ensure that through the mandatory provision there will never be any encroachment on the media's autonomy? That is also one area of concern, which the hon. Minister should clarify.

The third area is about the control to be exercised by the Government. In our country, unfortunately, there is always the chance of misuse of the powers of the Controller because the Controller is a human being and he is guided many times by personal or group interests rather than by national interest. It has its impact, and we have seen it. I would like to know whether this control would be utilised to encourage or discourage certain programme content. Those who are in the control or are at the helm of affairs, if they do not want to telecast certain content, they can control it. They can misuse their power. We have seen how these things happen. We have seen how the Tehelka people, when that episode was publicised, have been punished, how Shankar Sharma is being harassed, and how the powers that be are targeting those people who have exposed certain things. There is always a danger in this type of control. When they are introducing this mandatory provision and if they want to exercise such control, it should not be misused in any way. We have seen how the Star TV was punished because of their clear and categorical telecast of the reality in Gujarat. These things are happening behind the scenes. This anxiety is there in the minds of the people and, therefore, this point should be clarified by the hon. Minister.

As Shri Bansal has mentioned, after some time, after passing of the Convergence Bill, this Act may become

irrelevant. It may become irrelevant within two months, three months or six months. When the Convergence Act comes into operation, then this Act will become irrelevant. Then, what will be the consequences?

You will be surprised to know that a huge business interest is involved in this. I want a clarification in this also.

Sir, it has been reported that attaching one analogue box to your television set would cost you about Rs.3,000/-. It is estimated that there are about four crore television sets in the country today. So, if everyone who has a television set were to attach an analogue box to his/her television set, then a business worth Rs. 12000 crore would be on offer. Again, if one decides to go in for attachment of a digital box, instead of an analogue box, then that would cost Rs. 7,000/-. In that case a business worth Rs. 28000 crore would be on offer. There has been a talk outside that a few people who have access to the corridors of power are trying to influence the power that be and are trying to corner this huge business that is likely to be on offer after the passage of this Bill. They want to control this business and earn huge profits out of this. I would like this point to be clarified by the hon. Minister. I would like the hon. Minister to clarify as to what would be the cost of set top boxes — either the analogue box or the digital box. Would it be Rs. 3,000/- or Rs. 7,000/-? It would be a huge burden on the customers. Is the Government, in a way, proposing to waive off the tax of consumers in other areas? Who would bear this additional cost? It is because the cable operators would have to bear the cost for only putting the system in place but finally the consumers only would have to pay for the set top box. Now, the consumers pay Rs 100/- or so per month for viewing cable channels but now they would have to shell out Rs. 3000/- or 7000/- at a time for purchasing the set top box. So, the consumers now would be paying the fees of almost seven to eight years just at one go! Again, within a period of seven to eight years, the technology of the television that is supportive of the system, that is being thought of now, would also become obsolete. So, I would like to know whether paying Rs. 100/- or so per month would be beneficial to the consumers or paying Rs. 7000/- at a time would prove to be beneficial to the consumers. I would like to be clarified on this point.

Sir, my next point is about the monopoly of the cable operators. The provisions of the Bill have a tilt towards monopolisation. It appears that gradually the small cable operators would have to wind up. This industry is ruled mostly by criminal elements. The big brothers in this industry,

[Shri Hannan Mollah]

through their muscle power and financial strength, would like to snatch the business of the smaller cable operators of other areas and wipe them out of the market and a stage will come when there would be only five to six major cable operators in this field and they would cover the whole of the country and the small cable operators would be totally eliminated. How does the Government propose to control this menace? How does the Government propose to protect the interest of the small cable operators? This is also a very big anxiety for us.

Sir, technology has been developing very fast. We are in an era of optical fibre cables. With the laying of optical fibre cables we would have the concept of broadbanding. One single service provider would then be able to provide television, internet telephony and computer from a single channel. If that technology comes in, then this set-top box would become completely obsolete and irrelevant. We all know that Web TV is already in vogue. If this technology comes in another one or two years, then this set top box would become redundant. What would then happen to the Rs. 28000 crore worth of products that were purchased by the operators and the consumers? Would they throw it away when a new technology would come in? This is growing very fast. If there is only a small time gap left, why should we now force people to spend huge amounts of money on this? We should understand this aspect also.

As Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal has proposed, certain provisions of this Bill should have been there in the Convergence Bill so that the continuity remains. I would request the hon. Minister to clarify as to what is the reality behind this. These are several confusions in this. If these issues are clarified, it would be absolutely in the interest of the consumers and it would be a welcome step. But if those 'ifs and buts' are allowed to remain, this will lose its meaning in the minds of the people.

With these words, I conclude.

**SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (SRIKAKULAM):** Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Cable Television Network (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2002 is expected to regulate the cable operators. Its primary objective is to ensure that every subscriber receives at least a minimum number of free-to-air channels at a reasonable cost. I welcome this Bill moved by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. In my view, it is already delayed. This Act should have been amended one year before.

Forty million homes in India are connected to cable television in our country today. Now we have free-to-air

channels and pay channels. After this Bill comes into force, free-to-air channels would be provided to the consumers at minimum cost. In the present system, consumers are paying more money for the free-to-air channels as well as pay channels. Different pricing mechanism is followed in different areas of different cities. At the time of notification of this Bill, we have to provide a transparent system. Different pricing mechanism would be evolved for different areas in the country, like rural areas, municipalities and corporations. Under the provisions of this Bill, the consumer would only pay for what he watches. The consumer is empowered in this Bill to choose what should come on the television inside his home.

After the set-top boxes are provided, the consumer would be required to pay money for the channels that he would wish to watch. The set-top box is an expensive gadget. It would initially cost around Rs.1500 to Rs.2000 and the cost would come down with volumes. The cable operators are now collecting their charges in cash. No definite record is maintained by them as to how much money they are actually collecting from the consumers. There is no transparent system. When the consumers install set-top boxes in the changed scenario, the system would become transparent. If money is collected by way of Demand Drafts and cheques, the details of income recorded properly and the Government would get more tax revenue. If duty on set-top boxes is reduced and the set-top boxes are made available to consumers at lesser prices, more number of people would start using them to get one or two free-to-air channels according to their interest and choice. This would attract huge investments. This is likely to lead to large-scale mergers between cable companies and content companies. The merger of international giants like AOL and Time Warner can be taken as an example for this.

After this Amendment comes into effect, a lot of investment may come to India. In this regard, our Chief Minister has also requested the hon. Prime Minister to have this Bill passed as early as possible. If it is passed early, it would protect the consumers. Side by side, we have to evolve a transparent system also. It is because after the passing of this Amendment Bill, if it is not going to help the consumers, it would be a waste. That is why even at the time of notification, without the set-top box also everybody will get free-to-air channels through the master cable operator.

So, in this scenario, the Government should analyse and fix the minimum and maximum amounts for these free-to-air channels. Then the common man would be able to get and utilise these free-to-air channels at lesser amount.

Sir, I welcome and support this Amendment Bill. With these few words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARM RAJ SINGH PATEL (PHULPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether pay channels have been allowed through Cable Television Network (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2002 and whether charges would be taken from the consumers through the pay channels or the cable operators. I feel that these pay channels are going to create more problems for the consumers. Any programme telecast by the Doordarshan or Government medium was free of charge. There was no charge for that. But I do not understand the current trend of competition amongst the channels and payment of money to them. I wish that the Government should ask the broadcasters of the channels to be allowed about the rates at which they would telecast the programmes in various districts and towns. The show telecast their rates on television be it Rs.10, or Rs.15, or Rs.50 for the information of the people so that cable operators could be protected from the allegation that they are overcharging and the people know the truth that whether the Broadcasters or the cable operators are over charging.

16.58 hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

So far as the cable operators are concerned, I think that people from good families have not entered this profession. Unemployed youth have invested some money in it. It may not be so that police start their exploitation and fix their rates for 100 channels shown by them and when they come to know that he is showing them to 1000 people and they may again fix their rates. We are trying to protect the consumers, cable operators by making this law, but all may go in vain and Channel Broadcasters may actually get benefit of it. I, therefore, request the Government to seek the information regulating the rates from the channels to be allowed so that people in towns and districts may know the rates of these channels. They may also know that which channels are to be shown by the Doordarshan or cable operator free of charge, this picture should be cleared before the people. With these words, I conclude

17.00 hrs.

[English]

#### STATEMENT BY MINISTER

**Election Campaign Publicity Material Printed by Flex**  
**Industries and Transfer of Official in Central**  
**Economic Intelligence Bureau**

MR. SPEAKER: The Finance Minister will make a statement now.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Sir, I am on a point of order.

Article 75 (4) says:

"Before a Minister enters upon his office, the President shall administer to him the oaths of office and of secrecy according to the forms set out for the purpose in the Third Schedule."

The Minister swears before the President. The Third Schedule says:

"... I will faithfully and conscientiously discharge my duties as a Minister for the Union and that I will do right to all manner of people in accordance with the Constitution and the law, without fear or favour, affection or ill-will."

When the Minister makes a statement, I expect that it will satisfy me. In that case, I will not question; otherwise, I will need your ruling.

I want to know whether in discharging his duties, any issue came to his notice pertaining to conflict of interest and whether at that particular point of time, he has divulged that interest to the appropriate agency of the Executive.  
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order because the statement is not before us.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: After the statement is made, you can give your ruling. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me first hear the statement.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: That is the point that I am making. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: But at this point of time, there is no point of order.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: The statement should satisfy us. ...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): The statement has to be to the satisfaction of the Finance Minister.  
...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: No. While discharging his duties. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: He knows his duties. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: If there was a conflict of interest and if he has reported that conflict of interest to the Executive agency, we have no objection. If he has not, then we would like to know whether he is discharging his duties conscientiously, as per the oath under the Constitution. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: There is nothing before us now on which a point of order can be raised.

Now, I would request the hon. Finance Minister to make a statement.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Sir, the issue of my so-called links with Shri Ashok Chaturvedi of Flex Industries was raised in this House on May 13, 2002 by hon. Member, Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal. A demand for a statement from me on this issue was also made in the House. My colleague, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs had assured the House that I would make a statement on the issue on May 15. This statement is in response to that demand and the subsequent assurance, with your approval.

Sir, for my Lok Sabha election campaign of 1999, I had got some publicity material printed by a few printers in Delhi. Flex Industries, which is also in the business of printing, was one of those printers on whom I placed some printing orders. These printed materials were subsequently dispatched to me at Hazaribag by rail. For the supplies received from Flex Industries, as indeed from other printers, regular bills were raised by these firms and full payment was made to them. My records reveal that for the supplies received from Flex Industries, they had submitted five bills amounting to Rs.45,583/-. This amount was duly incorporated in my statutory return on election expenses filed with the District Election Officer of Hazaribag Lok Sabha constituency. These records should be available with the Election Commission and the District Election Officer.

The raids on the Office of the then Chief Commissioner of Excise Shri Someshwar were conducted by the CBI on November 7, 2001 after which Shri Someshwar and Shri Ashok Chaturvedi were taken into custody. The investigation in the matter is being conducted by the CBI which does not fall within the area of my ministerial responsibility. The CBI is neither required to report to me nor has it kept me

updated on the progress of the case from time to time. There is, therefore, no conflict of interest between my present assignment and the investigation by the CBI in the case against Shri Someshwar and Shri Ashok Chaturvedi.

Shri Kailash Sethi, the then Deputy Director General of the Central Economic Intelligence Bureau had been on deputation to this organisation from his parent Department of Customs and Central Excise. His transfer back to the Department in December 2001 was done on administrative considerations and in public interest.

I would also like to add that I had nothing at all to do with the transfer of Shri M.S. Bali of CBI as alleged by the hon. Member, Shri Bansal.

The fact that I purchased some election publicity material from a supplier can, by no stretch of imagination, be construed to mean that I have a relationship with him. I cannot also be expected to guarantee his good character and good conduct forever. I would like to state categorically that neither my dignity as a Member of Parliament nor my effectiveness as Minister of Finance in this Government stands compromised as a result of this entirely routine, transparent and aboveboard transaction.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): Sir, I would like to know one point from the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)* Kindly permit me, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are aware of the rules. On such issues, no clarification is permitted.

I, now, call upon Shri Kirit Somaiya.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal, please sit down. Will you please sit down?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Mulayam Singh, please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I am not inclined to permit any supplementary on this issue because rules do not permit that. Shri Somaiya to speak on the Bill.

17.07 hrs.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing, whatever is being said after my ruling, will go on record.

*(Interruptions)\**

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Kirit Somaiya, please continue. What Shri Mulayam Singh is saying is not going on record.

*(Interruptions)\**

# CABLE TELEVISION NETWORKS (REGULATION) AMENDMENT BILL 2002 ... CONTD.

*[Translation]*

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA (MUMBAI NORTH EAST): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Bill introduced today in the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the discussion being held today, I support the hon. Minister of Information and Broadcasting, and also support hon. Finance Minister. On the allegations and counter-allegations made, he gave clarification and the manner in which he left shows that if hon. Minister had been asked before making any allegation, it would have been good tradition in democracy.

Sir, I also welcome and support the suggestion made by Mulayam Singhji. I would like to say that the title given to this Bill is "Cable Television Network (Regulation) Amendment Bill",

*[English]*

It is not the Cable Television alone, it is actually the Consumers' protection Act'.

*[Translation]*

Discussion on the Bill introduced by the hon. Minister was initiated in January, 2000. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): ...*(Interruptions)\**

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (RATNAGIRI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, what he is saying for us is. ...*(Interruptions)* He should tender apology. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down, I have not allowed him to speak.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: He is saying that ...*(Interruptions)* What is this? He should tender apology. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All such expressions made by him be expunged. Please sit down.

*[English]*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): As per the Parliamentary convention to stage a walk out and to come back depends on the Party. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: He is bent upon selling everything of the country. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): He has looted the country for 50 years. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. You staged walk out and then you came in. I do not feel that any discussion should be held on this subject. He staged walk out, it was his right and now this question is over. Kirit Somaiyaji, now please start with your speech.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, please give me one minute.

MR. SPEAKER: If I give you one minute, I shall have to give two minutes to him also. Kirit Somaiyaji please start with your speech. I am not allowing anyone to speak.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that allegation has been levelled against the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You wish to speak on which subject? I am not allowing you to speak. Kirit Somaiyaji please continue with your speech.

*[English]*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: When others were given the opportunity to speak after the Statement of the Minister, why should we not be given the opportunity. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Therefore, I am not going to permit anybody.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: I support the Cable Television Network Bill. ...*(Interruptions)*

\*Not recorded.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Shri Kirit Somaiya is speaking on the Bill. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Bansal ji, how could you people make allegations without any proof only on the basis of newspaper reports. What wrong Mulayam Singh ji has said. You have made allegations against the hon. Minister only on the basis of newspaper reports and without any proof as such if he does not give reply. ...*(Interruptions)* You make false allegations. ...*(Interruptions)* What wrong has Hon. Mulayam Singh ji said. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: It seems he is 'Yudhishtira' here who spoke only truth. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Geeteji, Dasmunsi, Priyaranjan Dasji, the allegations and counter allegations should not take place here. you sit down. I do not want to run the House like this. Is this the way? I am repeatedly telling that a subject had come to the fore and it was a serious subject, hon. Minister gave the reply. After that there is no need for discussion. The opposition has the right to stage walkout but what is the need to discuss it afterwards.

*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You listen to my view point. The speech of Shri Kirit Somaiya has started on the Cable Television Network Bill. Hence I won't permit anyone.

[English]

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, he spoke something else before that. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will remove all that from the record.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: When we staged a walkout, there was submissions allowed to go into the proceedings on that very subject. ...*(Interruptions)* That is why, we are saying that it not correct. We should also be allowed. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: No. I have not allowed him. I am not taking his submission on record.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI (KHAJURAHO): Mr.

Speaker, Sir, my views should also be listened. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want to speak on Bill?

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: I want the clarification by the hon. Minister on the statement. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have concluded that subject.

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am on a point of order. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have given rulings on all the points. There is no need to extend it further.

*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a case of sour grapes for some of the problem. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Are you speaking in Cable Television Network Bill or on any other subject because it is not permitted to speak on this subject.

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am referring to the Cable Channel operators while talking of sour grapes. I do not intend to say so about Congress.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Now the grapes have been sweetened for you.

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir,

[English]

Please see the statement of objects and reasons. In the third line it is written 'undesirable programme'.

[Translation]

In fact very good provision is going to be made through this Bill. You know that the entire family watch T. V. programmes together but some of the channels and programmes are such that those cannot be seen collectively.

17.17 hrs.

(DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA in the Chair)

We will be able to check those programmes through this new Bill. Besides, there are some unwanted channels for which people do not want to pay. We can also stop that also by this Bill. Welcoming this Bill I would like to say that it would benefit the consumers. Alongwith it I would

like to place some figures also. The discussion on it has been going on for quite long.

[English]

I would like to bring it to your notice. What is the revenue at present being carried by these foreign T. V. channels. I would like to mention specifically the foreign T. V. channels.

[Translation]

I am thinking to cover Zee and STAR T. V. channels is local T.V. coverage. Ten T.V. channels have got the registration of their company in foreign countries.

[English]

Either in Hongkong or Singapore. Now almost every T.V. channel has its headoffice on paper in Mauritius.

[Translation]

How much revenue is being earned by those through advertisements? They say that they should get the money through cable.

[English]

STAR T. V.'s total revenue earning was Rs.950 crore; Zee T.V.'s earning was Rs.660 crore and Sony's earning was Rs.450 crore.

[Translation]

That much revenue these are receiving through advertisements. Even then they want the common consumers to pay for their programmes. Two channels namely STAR Sports and ESPN have the right to telecast a Cricket match or tournament. These channels double their rates as soon as a cricket match is round the corner. Hence this Bill has lacunas in it. You have to modify it further.

[English]

There is a monopolistic law and provision here in India. The Ministry should take it up.

[Translation]

Earlier STAR sports had 94 independence channels but later on this channels merged and turned into a monopolistic company. In fact, a common consumer can not take on a multinational company, hence the Ministry should take this subject in its hands.

I would like to draw your attention towards another subject.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the discussion on this subject had started in January 2000. Several states have started to formulate law in this regard.

[English]

Whether the Union Government is empowered to bring such a legislation, whether the State Governments have got that authority, which are the State Governments which have introduced this, what will be the impact; whether there will be any conflict.

[Translation]

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any such study has been made in this regard. If so, what decision has been taken thereon. Just 2-4 days ago the discussion between the Cable operators and consumer organisations has started. Several T. V. channels have started to threaten to double their rates because this Bill would have to be passed by Lok Sabha, once it is introduced by the Government. I am grateful to Shri Bansal and Dasmunsiji for supporting this Bill instead of referring it to the Standing Committee and similarly it would be introduced in Rajya Sabha. It has also supported the cause of fighting against the arbitrary behaviour of the private T. V. channels.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, several people have complained to me about the threats received from T. V. Channels owners that the rates would be doubled immediately by revising contract if this Bill is introduced. I would like to request the Government.

[English]

Can they freeze the charges that exist as on today?

[Translation]

This Bill will go to Rajya Sabha and then to the hon. President for his approval, once it is passed here. If the T. V. channels increase their rates in between, what would happen? Hence, I would like to request the hon. Minister to pay attention towards this subjects. It is written in the Bill that it will be implemented in phases. Firstly it would be implemented in metro cities and then in the big cities like Hyderabad, Bangalore, Bhopal, Jaipur etc. People in Hyderabad want to watch a Telegu channels and not Gujarati channels.

[Shri Kirit Somaiya]

[English]

Why should I pay for the South Indian channel if I do not want to see them?

[Translation]

All the private channels take money collectively. I would submit that this law be implemented in the remaining cities also.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my friends have told that the speculations are rife that the cost of these boxes would be around 5 to 10 thousand rupees. Who is going to be benefited out of it. It will affect the consumer only.

[English]

It is because the consumer will have to pay Rs.5000 to Rs.10,000 more.

[Translation]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to request the hon. Minister to tell about his concept about it. He should make available boxes in large number. Besides, what would be the locus standi of the Convergence Bill after passing this Bill. Will the provision be made in parts or whether a Bill has to be introduced again. There is a great likelihood of positive impact in it. Today there are 3.8 million viewers of T.V. Channels. What will be its positive impact on it? Will these private channels would be free to air? I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how much revenue is earned by ESPN and STAR T.V. by telecasting a cricket match? The Doordarshan has the right to telecast the cricket matches played in India. What is its revenue earning through it? As per my information, Doordarshan is free to air, it has earned a good profit in the last two years. When Doordarshan is free to air and has earned so good benefit then the people have the right to ask as to—

[English]

why pay channels are charging so high?

[Translation]

I welcome the hon. Minister for bringing such a good Bill in the interest of the consumers and support it.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Mr. Chairman, Sir, before supporting the Bill, I would like to express my apprehensions in this regard. While clarifying

about the objectives of bringing this Bill, the hon. Minister had said that since she had a lot of concerns for the consumers, she brought this Bill so early. I have great regards for her concern. I also support her sensitivity towards consumers and the intent of providing relief and protection to them. However it would have been a matter of great happiness. If the NDA Government had been equally sensitive towards all the sections of the society. Today the interest of the pensioners is declining. The Government have no sentiment for it. The Finance Minister did not compromise even after the MPs belonging to NDA pressurised him in this regard. The interest on bank deposits is also decreasing and it is being cut down further and the NDA Government have no sentiments for that also. Many consumers also watch T.V. in India and only one Minister in the Government has the sympathy for them. Today the steps taken by the hon. Minister in response to increase in rates by cable operators is worthy of being appreciated. However I would like to convey to the hon. Minister that I have doubt on Government intention and am saying why it is so.

The Minister belongs to the party which was supporting the cause of delegating more powers to states as was recommended by the Sarkaria Commission which was constituted during the Congress regime. However today it seems that it has changed its stand. There was no channel in the country other than Doordarshan after enactment of law in 1995. Other channels started functioning in 1997 and overtook the entire scenario by 1999. The Government kept mum for four years in paying attention towards the problems of the public and in bringing this Bill. I would like to make this point clear before the Government that this Bill introduced by the hon. Minister would certainly be passed by us and there shall be no hindrance in its passage but the Government should give clarification in regard to news being published in the newspapers for the last one week in which it has been mentioned that though everything in regard to the Bill is all right yet no criteria have been fixed for the cost of the box required. Is there any lobby of contractors waiting behind the screen with the hope of getting the deal to supply this box and make money. Will this burden be shared by the consumers or can a box be indigenously developed? If so what will be its price? The Government should make a suggestion in this regard. Do the Government have any information in this regard, it should be clarified first.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say another thing that if someone has all the pay channels at home, he won't need the box. However, he will have to pay for the box. Doordarshan is the symbol of our country's dignity. I would like to give an information which will please Somaiyaji. Being the President of football association, I was associated with ESPN and STAR 4-5 years ago. Uplinking was done in

the country. However when we contacted the potential the sponsor, they declined to accept sponsorship in case the programme was telecast on Doordarshan stating that its production is not good and its colour and camera is also not found. Such views were expressed by the companies like coca-cola, Hindustan Lever etc.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dasmunsi, please wait for a minute. We will take up 'Half an Hour' Discussion at thirty past five-six more Members are to speak on it and it will take approximately one hour. Thereafter the hon. Minister will also give reply which could further take half an hour. If the House permits, it could be done later or should it be pursued right now?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Yesterday also Half an Hour Discussion was taken up after the completion of the Bill.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): Sir, actually the Business of the House that has been circulated says that it is to be taken up at 5.30 p.m. or as soon as the preceding items of business are disposed of, whichever is earlier. Actually, it has to start at 5.30 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should we take up the Half-an-Hour Discussion now?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, yesterday, when the Bill was being discussed, the Half-an-Hour Discussion was to be taken up. The decision taken at that time was that the Bill should be discussed and passed first and then the Half-an-Hour Discussion could be taken up. It was done because the Bill had to go to Rajya Sabha. That being so, I would now request that we can continue this discussion. Let the discussion be over. The Whip of the Government contacted me and told me that they cut short the number of speakers from their side. I am the last speaker from our Party. So, this discussion can be completed shortly and then the House can take up the Half-an-Hour Discussion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think after passing the Bill, the Half-an-Hour Discussion can be taken up today itself.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Yes, it can be discussed today itself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am seeking the permission of the House. If the House agrees, the Half-an-Hour Discussion can be taken up later.

[Translation]

SHRI MATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: I think that her suggestion for taking up the Bill before Half-an-Hour discussion be accepted.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the House agrees, after passing the Bill, we will take up the Half-an-Hour Discussion. Do you all agree to it?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Dasmunsi, you can continue your speech.

[Translation]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, an officer of the Doordarshan asked me to be a part of Doordarshan team being the citizen of the country and leave the foreign company. The feelings of patriotism overtook me and I left that foreign company. However, I would like to tell the hon. Minister as to what happened thereafter? I left it but more than half the sponsors deserted us on the ground that our projection was not upto mark. I would like to say with pride that the Doordarshan team has made a lot of progress in the last 6 months and these are giving improved performance. If this tempo continues then the people will also remain with Doordarshan. As for live telecast is concerned, the sports channel is covering very less. The marketing network is also very limited, hence the Government are not getting more programmes on live telecast. There is a need to pay attention towards it.

Now, I am talking about my apprehension. Whether one agrees or not, Doordarshan is still functioning under the control of the Government indirectly. To cite an example, if Zee TV had not been available in the country and the *tehlaka* episode had not been covered on 13th March the country would have been kept in dark. Doordarshan did not show anything on the day on which Zee TV showed. It was not even mentioned in Doordarshan for four days. The private channels and broadcasters...

SHRI HANAN MOLLAH (ULUBERIA): The attack on Parliament was shown.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Yes, Sir, the transparency with which it was shown on other channel was missing on Doordarshan. Hon. Minister should not mind what I am saying because tomorrow the seat she is occupying could be held by members of other party is

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

But I am impartial in my submission in this regard. Suppose a broadcasting channel starts covering Government's performance and deeds under various information news programmes and the entire control still rests with the Government hands, then there is a big possibility that the channel would be pressurised not to show those programmes in lieu of certain considerations. I would like to know as to what is the way out for this kind of problem of it occurs. A provision under clause 5 has been made as under.

[English]

"(5) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (4), the Central Government may, for the purpose of that sub-section, specify in the notification referred to in that sub-section different maximum amounts for different States, cities, towns or areas, as the case maybe."

[Translation]

India is a vast country. The TV channel started by Ramojirao of Telegudesam in Andhra Pradesh has started programmes in every language. Suppose that some TV channel on cable is telecasting programmes showing the Union Government in bad shape and lauding the efforts of State Government which is in conflict with the Union Government, what is the way out for that.

Sir, now the Union Government have powers to restrict the cable operators in fixing the rates. If the Union Government want to please some State Government, it is free to fix any rate in any district of the State but only in consultation with the State Government. If this clause ceases to exist then I feel that the Centre state conflict in regard to Doordarshan channel would go on continuously. I think hon'ble Minister should make following provision in the Bill-

[English]

"While fixing such amount, the Union Government shall consult the State Government."

[Translation]

I will provide protection to all.

Sir, my second apprehension is that the Government.

[English]

"...specify the maximum amount which a cable operator may demand from the subscriber for receiving the programmes transmitted in the basic service tier provided by such cable operator."

[Translation]

It is good. He has rightly said that if cable operators do not disclose as to how much money they are charging then they would be cheating the Government. Therefore it is a very good provision. Thus I would like to say that if the Government are able to manage it without the interference of Regulatory Authority, it would be better. If I want to appease any State or cable operator lobby over there, somehow I may fix very less price. We donot need to conceal it. Since all of us are politicians, we can make use of such lobbies, if it exists in our respective states. Therefore, I would like to say that it would have been better if Central Government was granted exclusive power in this regard and it should be left upto Regulatory Authority to fix cable rates in a State. Then there would be no apprehension of fixing less rates by a lobby.

In the end, I would like to ask hon'ble Minister, if she is so much concerned about the people, whether the rates proposed to be fixed by the authority would be lesser than the existing rates. Take the case of Delhi, here, the fee of cable operator including Pay Channel is Rs.300 whereas in some of the states it is Rs.100 or Rs.200. She should clarify it first. Therefore, I would like to ask her-

[English]

"Will the Minister assure that, after this amendment, the total subscription rate of free-to-air channels and all pay channels would not exceed the present subscription amount?"

[Translation]

She should clarify it first.

In the end I would like to make one more submission to hon'ble Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Would he kindly repeat it?

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Will the Minister assure that, after this amendment the total subscription rate of free-to-air channels and all pay channels would not exceed the present subscription amount?

[Translation]

It is very important because I apprehend that it would put more burden on the subscriber. Therefore, if hon'ble

Minister wants to do justice to the public, she should clarify that after passing of this Bill, the subscribers will not have to pay more amount than they pay at present. She should give this assurance in the House. What is your opinion about it? If after passing of this Bill, subscribers have to pay even Rs.5-10 more than what they are paying now, I would say that she is not sympathetic to the subscriber and it is not good to having brought the Bill and its passing.

Sir, I would like to tell one more thing — after passing from Rajya Sabha, the Bill will be sent to the President for signature which may take 7-15 days. In the meanwhile, if operators raise the fee under a conspiracy then the Government would bring an Ordinance to avoid such hike. She should assure the House that if enactment of such law is delayed, the Government would bring Ordinance and protect the subscriber. Therefore, all these things should be made clear first.

In the end, I would like to ask hon'ble Minister that for the first time in world's history, a biggest ever sports event 'World Cup 2002' is going to be held in Japan and Korea in Asia during 31 May to 30 June. Whether Doordarshan would make live telecast of the matches though Doordarshan can't afford paying so high rights fee.

As far as I know, Doordarshan has no such rights. Only one group has got these rights which telecast through cable operators satellite in India. It is Star Sports Channel and it has paid a rate of Rs.50 thousand. They have told that they would pay Rs.50 thousand and you may telecast sports events. As per my information, Doordarshan is asking for Rs.3 lakhs and it has said that if they do not pay Rs.3 lakhs then we would not telecast football matches.

My humble submission to hon'ble Minister is that in a day or two she should make some arrangement so that sports lover can enjoy the telecast of football matches of this World Cup.

I am sure, she would find some solution to it very soon since the World Cup is going to be held from 31 May, 2002 to 30 June, 2002.

*[English]*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM (THANJAVUR): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. We wholeheartedly welcome the amendment Bill, firstly, because the Government of India is well within its legislative powers to deal with the subject, and, secondly, because the legislative power of the Union Government is used for an avowed object of further regulating cable television industry which is already

being regulated by the Union Government through the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, (Central Act 7 of 1995).

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, if the hon. Minister feels to take it up tomorrow, we have no objection for the Half-an-Hour discussion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tomorrow, there will be discussion under Rule 193. It will take time. So, it will not be possible tomorrow.

*...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: After passing of the Bill, we will take it up. Tomorrow, it would not be possible because of the Bihar issue. There will be discussion under Rule 193.

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: The Cable television network is not the subject, which is specifically spelt out in the Union List, namely, List I of Seventh Schedule of our Constitution. Item 31 of the Union List empowers the Union Government to legislate regarding wireless broadcasting and other like forms of communication.

When the Constitution was framed, the cable television networks, communications through satellite signals and the modern optical fibre cables were totally unknown as they were either not invented or not in use. However, the founding fathers of our Constitution, with great foresight, intended to cover all future inventions in the field of communications. They intended all the forms of communications to be the Central subject only and, hence, used the words 'other like forms of communication' in Item 31 of the Union List.

Of course, the Union List in item 97 provides for residual powers to the Union Government to legislate on all subjects which have not been specified in Lists I and II, namely, the State List and the Concurrent List.

When such residuary power is not available for the State, it was only appropriate that the Union Government enacted the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1995 (Central Act 7 of 1995) in order to regulate the cable television networks throughout our country.

The patent Act, namely, the Central Act 7 of 1935 is going to be amended by the present Bill. This Parent Act 7 of 1935 has specified all Head Post Masters of the Head Post Offices as the Registering Authority. Therefore, no permission or licence is required to be obtained from any other authority. Because of this categorical provision, the earlier law passed in the year 1984 by the Tamil Nadu

[Shri S.S. Palanimanickam]

Government titled 'Tamil Nadu Exhibition of Films on Television Screen through Video Cassette Recorded and through Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1984', which required permission to be obtained from State authority, had become void to the extent of its repugnance to the Central Act. This has been stated by the Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu in his letter (ES) No. 1876 Home (Cinema-II) Department, dated 6th December, 1996.

It is possible that without knowing the constitutional position regarding the subjects for legislation or the legislative competence with regard to the subject of communication, the State Government by mistake may venture upon legislation on Union subjects. In such circumstances, the Union Government should remind the State Governments of their obligation to ensure compliance with the laws made by the Parliament. The executive powers of the Union Government available under article 256 of the Constitution can extend to giving of necessary direction to ensure compliance with the laws made by the Parliament.

When there is a Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act 1995, the Central Act 7 of 1995 to regulate cable television network throughout India, should there be laws passed by the State Governments for the purpose of regulating cable television network? If all the States and Union Territories are allowed to pass legislation on the same subject, we will be sure of having over 30 different laws operating on the same subject. Such a situation will nullify the entire Constitution, which has scientifically segregated the legislative powers of the Union and the State Governments in our country and will render the Constitution a mere mockery.

We want to know the constitutional position clarified by the hon. Minister. How is the Union Government going to prevent the potential mischief that will be created by a legislation on the same subject matter by a State Government either on communication or on cable television industry?

Is the hon. Minister aware of a law passed on the same subject matter by the Tamil Nadu State Legislature and awaiting the assent? Has the hon. Minister studied the above State Act? What are the views of the Union Government on the subject?

With these words, I support the Bill.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSHI PRASAD SINGH (VAISHALI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Cable Television Network Bill has been brought belatedly. 3 crore 80 lakh people are using cable TV in India. There are 30,000 cable operators and 75 channels.

Why it was not brought so far. It is right that the people work hard and invest their money so they should get some profit. Since TV has become very popular, the consumers are forced to see TV. Common man want to see TV. Doordarshan has one Metro Channel. We speak so much in the House and work so hard but the people in country side are unaware of all this as the rates of pay channels are very high. Therefore, my submission is that some regulatory authority should be constituted otherwise, if something goes wrong, where we would complain. One day, Aaj Tak was not available on TV in my constituency. When we inquired, we were told that it is because of some fault in cable. Where to complain in such a situation? Therefore, my submission is that there should be some regulatory authority which can take care of all this. Otherwise cable operators, broadcasters would quarrel with each other and ultimately they would pass on burden to the consumers.

A news items has been published in the Times of India - Cable rates to touch Rs.300.00. Actually, Cable charges are Rs.100-125, but now the following news-items has appeared

[English]

"Cable rates to touch Rs.300

Cable networks have decided to increase basic cable subscription to Rs.300 per month from May. The decision was taken by several multi-system operators who met in various parts of the country."

[Translation]

It means, since cable operators have a strong lobby and good influence all round, if all come together, what will happen to the consumers. Whenever they like, they will hold a meeting and hike cable rates. People have no option but to see TV. Therefore, there is a need to have a tough control.

Further it is included there:

[English]

"All leading players, including Siti-cable's Jawahar Goel, In Cablenet's R.J. Hingorani, Hathway and Ortel's Jaggi Panda met in Delhi last week as part of an all-India exercise to decide on the subscription hike. Many cable operators have already increased subscription..."

[Translation]

They all like extracting money. There is no control

over them. It is a chaotic situation everything is going on in uncontrolled manner. It is all a well considered move. This should have been checked in the beginning. Together itself it may be seen in the end:

[English]

"Broadcasters, however, want the Government to go slow on making conditional access mandatory. They fear that the number of subscribers will reduce drastically if Government decides to allow pay channels to be routed only through a set-top box. Consumer will have to buy a set-top box costing around Rs. 3,000 to watch pay channels."

[Translation]

First the consumer purchased a T.V., he pays Rs. 100-200 per month and now he will have to buy a set-top-box worth Rs. 3000. In view of T.V.'s popularity people are desperate enough to see it. The lobby of cable operator's should not be permitted to exploit their eagerness and some preventive measures should be taken in this regard. Hon. Minister has assured that through this Bill the Government would give relief to the subscribers. But, there is a need to constitute a regulatory authority for this purpose otherwise there may be clash between Broadcasters, pay-channels and cable-operators which would ultimately be harmful to the subscribers. Therefore, the Government should be cautious in this regard.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PARBHANI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I, myself and on behalf of my party support Cable Television Network Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2002. I would not make lengthy speech. In view of my experience in this field, I would like to make some suggestions before the House. An hon. Member of Rajya Sabha, Shri Ram Jethmalani had raised an unstarred question.

[English]

"Whether the Government has made a survey regarding the numbers of those households which watch T.V. programmes through cable network in the country."

[Translation]

The reply of the Government was as follow:

[English]

"The Government has not conducted any survey of the number of Cable households to assess the turnover of Cable industry."

[Translation]

Through you, I would like to suggest hon'ble Minister

that there is a need to conduct an official survey to find out the number of people watching Doordarshan, Cable Network and Private Channels separately. I would like to say something about rate also. Just now, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad ji has told that Cable users are going to be provided some relief through this Bill. My submission is that they should get maximum relief. Nowadays subscribers pay over Rs. 300 per month to the cable operators. We are a poor country. We should take into consideration that our paying capacity is very less. People are eager to watch various channels but people of class-III and IV are not in a position to pay so much amount. Therefore, I request hon. Minister to ensure that after passing of this Bill, Cable rates are not increased further.

I would like to add that rich people have monopoly in this field. Through this Bill, there is a need to give protection to small operators also. The Government should see that it is not commercialised. Cable operators should have some social obligations also.

So far, network of private cable operators is limited only upto cities or towns. Cable has not yet reached remote villages. People in remote areas are still deprived of Private channels. Therefore, my submission is that this facility should be extended in remote areas also.

Though this Bill should have been introduced long back, yet hon. Minister has introduced it at an appropriate time, therefore, I support it.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (MAHARAJGANJ, BIHAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am speaking in support of extant Bill. I would not take more time. While introducing the Bill, hon'ble Minister expressed everything briefly. Discussion has been held on three points - the broadcasters, cable operators and subscribers. The Bill introduced by hon. Minister in the House is going to protect interests of Cable subscribers. I am apprehensive on one-two points and I would like hon. Minister to clarify my doubts while replying to the question. As per the Bill, Cable operators would sit together and fix the rates to be paid by the subscribers.

17.59 hrs.

(DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH in the Chair)

Why fixation of rates is left upon Cable operators. A ceiling with regard to the percentage of benefit likely to be accrued to operators should be fixed. My submission is that the rates should be different in various states. For example - the per capita income in Maharashtra, Bihar and West Bengal differs a lot. Therefore, it should be fixed in

[Shri Prabhunath Singh]

proportion to per capita income. Some of the states are economically very backward. If finances of a state are in poor condition then how the economic condition of subscribers in that state can be sound.

18.00 hrs.

Under such condition I would like that the rates should be fixed on the basis of the economic condition of a state. Secondly, some channels charge no fee and some channels charge fee and they earn through advertisements which should be reflected somewhere. If any channel earn sufficient revenue then what is logic behind putting extra burden on consumers? It is a sort of business. They earn money through advertisements then what is need for putting extra burden. I would like to request hon. Minister to take it seriously and the Government should put some ceiling on the profit likely to earned by them. Subscribers are facing dual burden. Therefore, my submission is that the subscribers should not be forced to bear the burden of channel fee.

So far as entertainment channel is concerned, if any subscriber gets the connection he would have to pay fee and I have nothing to say in this regard. But other channels should be provided free to subscribers. So far as set-top-box is concerned, hon. Minister wants to provide maximum facilities to the subscribers. At present, cable operators have fixed a rate and if subscribers are further burdened after they purchase set-top-box then I think the purpose of the Bill being brought by hon. Minister will fail; Therefore, you must clarify who will have to pay for the box? Whether the Government or the Cable-operators would bear the burden, or it will have to be borne by the subscribers? My submission is that this burden should not be put on subscribers and further what steps the Government are taking for monitoring all this. As she was apprehensive that Cable operators will not provide exact data about users then what measures the Government have taken to ensure that the Government get exact figures of cable-users. With these words, I support this Bill. I would like to reiterate that she must take care that the extra burden is not put on subscribers. I conclude with these words.

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN (TIRUNELVELI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion. I would like to represent my views in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2002.

Sir, when I went through the article 254, there is a

proviso. Of course, the State is also competent to pass a legislation in the Cable Television Networks, and, at the same time, the Central Government has got power to pass a legislation, provided this proviso is helping the State.

Sir, article 254(2) says:

"Provided that nothing in this clause shall prevent Parliament from enacting at any time any law with respect to the same matter including a law adding to, amending, varying or repealing the law so made by the Legislature of the State."

Sir, the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2002 is going to be passed today. The object is to protect the interests of the consumers.

Sir, we stay in Humayun Road. The charges are different there as compared to South Avenue or North Avenue. There is a demand by cable television operators that the residents of Humayun Road should pay Rs. 250/- per month whereas the residents of South Avenue and North Avenue are paying Rs. 150/- per month. So, it varies from place to place. ...*(Interruptions)* So, this Bill is brought to protect the interests of the consumers. At the same time, not all the consumers use all the channels. The consumer can select the selective channels and he can pay for it. I think that is why the Cable Television Networks (Regulations) Amendment Bill, 2002 is introduced and is under the consideration of Parliament. There was a reference that the Tamil Nadu Legislature has recently passed a Cable Television Network (Regulation) Bill which is awaiting the Governor's assent. That Bill is intended to regulate the licensing system, to regulate the exhibition of cinema, dramatic performance, sports and entertainment on television screen through VCR multi-system operation on Cable TV network. From 1996 onwards, there was a situation that was created in Tamil Nadu where anyone could operate a Cable Television network anywhere in the State without a licence. Just to regulate their operations and to put down the monopoly of one TV. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sun TV.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Yes, Sun TV. So, to regulate their operations, this Bill was brought. Further, they were collecting from the consumers Rs.250 per month. Only with that object, this legislation was passed by the Tamil Nadu legislature. Nobody else was allowed to operate. Even without a licence, they were operating. Because they were in the Government, that TV had the patronage.

I was having both the Central Government Bill and

the State Government Bill and I was going through them. The Minister may also know about the contents of the Bill passed by the Tamil Nadu legislature. The two are totally different. As far as the competence of the Tamil Nadu Legislature is concerned, they are competent to pass this legislation. To what extent that competency comes in, that is not the question because the contents of both the Bills are different. The Central Bill is regulating it to some extent and the State Bill is regulating it to a greater extent. The Bill which the State Legislature has passed, regulates the licensing system whereas the Central Bill is to protect the interests of the consumers.

Then, I would like to say that the TV channels get lots of advertisements from the State Governments, from the Central Government and from different industrial houses. To facilitate the regulation of the rating of these advertisements and the benefit to the State Government or the Central Government, the licensing system is being introduced through a legislation in Tamil Nadu so that the Government should get some money out of the Cable network operation. Till the date the legislation was passed, there was no income to the State Government through Cable network. So, to facilitate the Government to overcome or tide over the poor economic condition, this was one avenue invented by the present Chief Minister, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi. *...(Interruptions)* This is one of the methods. Let the Cable TV channels share their profits with the Government. A TV channel started with a share capital of Rs.20,000. *...(Interruptions)*

AN HON. MEMBER: Which TV? Sun TV?

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: I do not know. They are giving the answer, Sir.

A TV channel started with a share capital of Rs.20,000, was able to pay a tax of Rs.14 crore a year and through that business, they were able to extend their operations to Andhra Pradesh (Gemini TV) and to Kerala (Surya TV). *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: Sir, they have been running this business for three generations. *...(Interruptions)* They have the capacity to extend their business to other States. *...(Interruptions)* They have submitted the accounts and paid tax also. What is wrong in it? *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: We want money to come to the Government. *...(Interruptions)* They were able to flourish by their political enterprise. *...(Interruptions)* Sir, I am not yielding. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, I am not yielding. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: You have also started Jaya TV. But failed. What can we do for that? *...(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): Shri Pandian, I still believe that you are an advocate. You speak legally. What is the residual power contemplated under the Constitution? *...(Interruptions)* If the State Legislature...

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Are you teaching Constitution and constitutional validity to me? *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: Why not? Anybody can teach anybody. When you are having ignorance of the Constitution, I am having every right to teach the Constitution to a fellow Member. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Please sit down. You are a 'bachcha' lawyer. *...(Interruptions)* Are you talking to me about the Constitution? *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: Why not? I think I am more competent than you. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: You cannot teach the Constitution to me. *...(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is not correct. The hon. Member Shri Pandian is making an allegation. *...(Interruptions)* He is casting aspersion against another Member. *...(Interruptions)* He is calling the Minister a 'bachcha' lawyer. *...(Interruptions)*

Shri Raja is also a lawyer. Sir, hon. Member Shri Pandian has to withdraw his remarks. It is not fair on his part. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHI SANKAR (CUDDALORE): You are a 'bachcha Puratchi Thalaivi'. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, I am doubting about the validity of his advocacy. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, I want your ruling. Shri Pandian is casting aspersion against a fellow Member. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: No. Why are you afraid of a fellow Member? *...(Interruptions)* The SUN TV was paying Rs. 14 crore per year as tax. *...(Interruptions)* Do not allow the cat to come out of the bag. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: Sir, these allegations have to be expunged. It is unparliamentary.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unparliamentary words should be expunged from the proceedings.

[English]

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, hon. Member Shri Pandian is casting aspersion against another Member. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: SUN TV has violated foreign exchange regulations. Do you agree with that? ...*(Interruptions)*  
The SUN TV has violated the foreign exchange regulations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Pandian, please speak only on the Bill. You confine yourself to the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speech of Shri Pandian only will go in record.

...*(Interruptions)\**

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: The SUN TV has committed foreign exchange violations. It is patronised by a Minister Shri Maran. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pandianji, speak on the Bill.

[English]

SHRI A. RAJA: If you are having real guts, why do you not speak on the constitutional basis? You go through the Constitution. Under item no. 97 of the Central List, there are residuary powers which are not conferred on the State Legislature. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Do not talk about the Constitution to me. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, it is patronised by Shri Maran. ...*(Interruptions)* You leave the Constitution. Have you paid Rs.14 crore as tax or not? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Pandian, please speak on the Bill and the related issues.

SHRI ADHI SANKAR: Sir, all the unparliamentary remarks should be expunged. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: He has 'cemented' the Sun TV and he has 'cemented' Andhra Pradesh, he has 'cemented'

Karnataka, he has 'cemented' Kerala and now he is 'cementing' Delhi. It is concrete. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, all these remarks should be expunged.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Why should they be expunged? 'Cementing' is not unparliamentary. ...*(Interruptions)* He has 'cemented' Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, the relevant records should be produced before you and then you can decide. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: Only fools can be afraid of words. Do not speak in such a manner. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pandianji, speak on the Bill.

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: For cementing, you need cement. To cement, you should have an industry. To start an industry you should have patronage. If you have political patronage, you can raise the price of cement. ...*(Interruptions)* There was a cement cartel through which the Sun TV was flourishing. ...*(Interruptions)* That is why I said that with a share capital of Rs. 20,000 they paid a tax of Rs. 14 crore. ...*(Interruptions)* I got the details in reply to a question in the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI V. VETRISELVAN (KRISHNAGIRI): Sir, what is this? What is the subject matter and what the hon. Member is talking? ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: No allegation will go in record.

[English]

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, I want your ruling. What is the Bill before us and what are we talking about? ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, I want a ruling. What my fellow hon. Member Shri Pandian is saying is not correct. He is deliberating on certain issues which are not at all relevant to this Bill. You please expunge all those things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Pandian you speak on the Bill only.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, I say that there was an entrepreneur, a political personality with political mileage who happened to monopolise the TV. ...*(Interruptions)*

Sumangali publication in Tamil Nadu was monopolising. Do you know what is Sumangali Publication, Sumangali Cable? It was in Tamil Nadu. It was patronised by one Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The discussion is not about Tamil Nadu. The discussion is about Cable TV.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ADHI SANKAR: Sir, Amma is not a *Sumangali*. Puratchi Thalaivi is not a *Sumangali*. Then, why is he agitating about that word *Sumangali*. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, this should not go on record. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: I want that all these things to go on record. ...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: No irrelevant thing will be recorded in the proceeding.

SHRI MATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Mr. Chairman, Sir, "Sumangali" and "Amma" words are in no way related to the bill. Therefore, I would humbly request Shri Pandian ji that he should speak only on this Bill and express his views. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: They monopolised the cable TV through political pressure. It is misuse of power. You talked about Rs. 45,000. Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi levelled an allegation against Shri Yashwant Sinha for a Poster Bill. There is nothing. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I have not levelled any allegation against the Finance Minister. The Finance Minister came out with his own statement. He himself is competent to make an allegation against himself. We have not made any allegation against him. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, actually, I would not have participated in the debate. Since he said that a Bill was passed which was against the Constitution, I wanted to set the record right. So, I participated in the debate. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Shri Pandian knows very well that it is against the Constitution, but in spite of that. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: No. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Do not hide all these things. You are a senior lawyer. You should know what is what. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: On the legal line, I will be the last person to mislead. Proviso to Article 254 reads:

"Provided that nothing in this clause shall prevent Parliament from enacting at any time any law with respect to the same matter including a law adding to, amending, varying or repealing the law so made by the Legislature of the State."

You are not repealing the law. The law is there. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU: You can have shelter only on this issue. There is no other way. The Tamil Nadu Government cannot escape from this. ...(Interruptions) You can take shelter only on this. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: To what extent is there repugnancy? If it is totally repugnant to the Constitution, law made by a Legislature is invalid. So, I am saying what is the extent of repugnancy. That is why, both are different. To this extent, the Tamil Nadu Government has passed a legislation to regulate the licensing system and not for anything else. ...(Interruptions) There is no court here. ...(Interruptions) The Central Government has worked out a law to protect the consumers. ...(Interruptions) This is to protect the consumers. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Sir, this Bill should be passed. You allow the Bill to be passed. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: You people are prompting me. ...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Pandian, please conclude.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Yes, Sir.

Sir, TV is a profitable business. Cable TV is another profitable business because you have about one hundred channels and you also have foreign channels. ...(Interruptions) Why should you expose your conduct. ...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: There is nothing wrong in it. I said what wrong I have committed. Have I committed wrong by speaking? The Minister will know the object of State legislation and the object of your legislation. Let the Minister say. If she says, I will take it. If she says that the law made by the State is repugnant, I will take it. ...*(Interruptions)* I am waiting for. ...*(Interruptions)* That is why, I said to what extent, the law passed by State Legislature is repugnant. The State Government has passed a law to this extent.

The Central Government has passed a law for protecting the consumer to this extent. The tempers ran high because of constant interference. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: It was irrelevant?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: What is the relevancy of that?

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: I watch Sun TV; I am also a viewer. Am I not entitled to talk about it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your time limit is over.

*[Translation]*

Now, please conclude.

*[English]*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Hereafter, I will talk like that. The Cable Television Networks Bill proposed by the Indian Government is a welcome measure. I welcome it. This law will protect the consumers interest.

In Parliament, there should be free and frank discussion and there should not be any interference. If there is interference, then problems arise. If there is any unparliamentary thing or if there is any untruth, please tell me, I will withdraw from this House. There is no question of expunging my remarks. Why do you want the reference to Sun TV paying Rs. 14 crore as tax to be expunged?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: You are inviting the trouble because of Sun TV. What relevancy has it got when you are discussing the Cable Television Networks Amendment Bill?

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: It is because they are Cable TV operators.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: You are not only a Member of the House, but you are also a lawyer by profession. You know what is the law and what the Constitution says.

*[Translation]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, your speech is concluded.

*[English]*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: From 1996 to 2001, all the Cable TV operators suffered at the hands of DMK, Government. There was an agitation. There was a conclave of all Cable TV operators where they had all congregated to discuss about it. The Chief Minister came to their rescue and protected these Cable TV operators.

I welcome this Bill.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, it is totally wrong. He has to substantiate whatever allegations he has made. Otherwise, everything should be expunged. Please take care of it.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (CONTAI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity, practically, at the fag end of the debate. I rise to support this Bill, although I do express some of my concerns.

First of all, this almost amounts to creating a licensing system for the cable industry. The cable industry has grown over the last 10 to 12 years and a very large number of people are employed. I think, this almost amounts to creating a new system of licensing. The reasons given, and I do agree with some of them, are as follows:

"The Government to prescribe, from time to time, the maximum amount to be paid by the subscriber to the cable service provider for the "basic service tier" consisting of the bouquet of notified "free-to-air" channels and to determine the number of channels to be included in this "tier" and the maximum cost for the same.. ."

Much depends on how the bureaucracy will operate this system. Normally, control leads inevitably to some extent of corruption. The Minister should give an assurance that this will not be allowed to degenerate into a system where the inspectors or the operators can go to any house, can go to anybody, and dictate their terms and also make money. Above all, what choice has the viewer got? I am talking about the real, ultimate consumer. In this particular case, when you have an open access system, ultimately, a viewer should decide what they should see and what they do not like to see. But to the extent that the Bill proposes to control things, like obscenity or too much of violence, sex and advertising some things which should not be done, are definitely welcome provision of this Bill.

Secondly, I think, we should be very aware of the fact that the technology is moving very fast. When you are talking about the cable system, we should know that the broad banding has practically come to the corner and is waiting in its wings. Now, technology is changing fast

and the digital system through optical fibre should become the order of the day in a very short while.

The Convergence Bill is pending before the House. I do not know what would be the fate of this Bill after that Bill is considered by the House. I hope there will not be any kind of a confusion. I am raising these points as my genuine concerns not necessarily as points of opposition to this Bill. This should be taken care of.

Sir, I would also like to know whether the experience of other countries also have been taken into consideration or not. In case of the United States of America, obsolescence sets in very quickly through the rapid spread of technology and the companies in the cable industry practically go out of their business. So, we should take care of this aspect. The Government should see to it that the present system which is already giving employment to a very large number of people in the country does not become a victim of a governmental system where a lot of the cable operators are compelled to close their shops and throw a lot of people into unemployment. In any case, the consumers should have the ultimate choice.

Sir, I am glad that the hon. Minister, in her introductory remarks, has clarified some of the doubts. I hope she will also clarify some of the doubts and concerns that I have expressed now. Since there is a shortage of time, with these few words, I strongly support this Bill and hope that this will be a beginning of a new era.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (PANDHARPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon'ble Minister has brought this bill to amend Cable Television Network Bill, 1995. Ever since, the TV network introduced in the country, people are getting information through it. Since 1995 this TV network is being run with the Government's permission Cable TV network is working properly in villages and cities but this TV network is not controlled by the Government to the extent as desired. It appears that due to this legislation of 1995, this Government's control on Cable TV network has loosened and less discipline is seen, therefore, the hon'ble Ministers has brought forward an amendments first in 2000, and now in 2002.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Cable TV network should not be given so much freedom. The Government is being defamed by it. The role of people should be transformed through this network. Today, inequality is on rise in the country. Therefore, there is a need to telecast such programmes by Cable TV network. You should telecast Ramayan and

Mahabharat on TV, but there is a need to bring changes in people's thinking about Buddhism. Today, terrorism is on increase in Kashmir. TV channels are telecasting news about it. TV network telecast many things after Godhra incident of Gujarat. They telecast what role the Muslims were supposed to play. The Government should have a control over it. The peace should be created in people's mind, but today it is instilling revolution in their mind. There is always a possibility to kill each other. Daily, same thing is being telecast on televisions. The Government should have a control on it as to how many times, it could be telecast.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, today, Doordarshan is unable to compete with private channels. People prefer to watch Star, Zee News, and Sahara Channel. There is a need to make Doordarshan more capable, so that everyone shall watch Doordarshan news, however, people do not often watch Doordarshan news. If you want to control it then Doordarshan should be made more capable. I understand that the bill brought by hon'ble Minister is a very good bill. This bill has been brought to control Cable Television Network. But it cannot be controlled by mere enacting this legislation. There is a need to groom good officers to implement it. You only make laws, and officers just get involved only in giving and taking bribe. This will not work. Hence, you should groom good officers and should enact such legislations, through which good officers could be groomed. Unless the officers are good, the legislations enacted by you will not be of any use.

I would like to submit to you, that TV network is engaged in earning money only. But it should not get engaged only in the business of earning money. It should also work in direction of bringing changes in the society whether it is Sun TV channel Pandian ji said, that Sun TV has paid the 14 crore rupees as tax. ... (Interruptions) But it has earned much more money than that. However, it has paid income tax amounting to Rs. 14 crore.

[English]

SHRI T.R. BAALU: The Sun TV has not deceived anybody.... (Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: An amount of Rs. 14 crore has been paid by them as income tax. ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: It has paid the 14 crore rupees as tax. It means that it is doing a good business. If they want to run such TV, you can launch Mun TV as

[Shri Ramdas Athawale]

well. People have all rights to do so. Therefore, I would like to say that you should have control over it. Sushma Swaraj ji is a capable Minister, therefore, she should try to control it. With these words, I support the Bill.

**SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI (KHAJURAHO):** Mr. Chairman, Sir, the basic objective behind the bill brought by the Government is that during the last few years many domestic and foreign channels have started charging money arbitrarily from the consumers. A large chunk of consumers in the country have their own economic limitations. Many people are not getting its benefit. The Government paid attention toward this and thought as to why not to control it in such a way, that maximum people should get its benefit. It is obvious, that the basic objective behind it can not be opposed and I whole heartedly welcome this bill.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to conclude after mentioning two points in brief. I would like to give two suggestions. First suggestion is that at present mainly two types of channels are being telecast educational and informal. Like National Geographic Channel, Discovery Channel, there are many other educational and informative channels. These channels could be an important source of knowledge for the people. On the other side, there are such channels, which are basically entertainment channels. There is a need of such entertainment channels, which could provide healthy entertainment to the society. There are some commercial channels also, which comes under third category. In previous session and in current session also, many hon'ble Members of different parties had expressed their concern that many such channels transgress our cultural dignity, and sometimes telecast such programmes which cannot be seen with the family. I would like to suggest that through the legislation which will be enacted by this bill, and which will empower you, you would get a very good opportunity that while using that right for fixing the remunerations, fees or subscription, you should keep in view that this right should be used as a weapon. I would like to suggest that the subscription rate of such channels which do not provide healthy entertainment, which telecast obscenity or violate our social dignity which do not provide any information to society, should be so high that less and less people should opt for it or should express wish to see them. The second thing is that the subscription rate of informative channels like one-two. I have cited, should be such that every man should be able to get its benefit.

I would like to give you another suggestion. Rapid expansion of sports activities has taken place during recent years. As Dasmunsiji has also stated that several national and international sport events are often organised. It has

been observed that some of the channels increase their fees just before such sports events. The Government may have a right to control it.

Sir, I would like to give a suggestion also. Cricket has become a very popular sport during last several years and cricket matches are played from time to time. A cricket series with the West Indies is going on. At present, test-matches are in progress and last match is likely to be over on 25th and subsequently one day matches will follow. Earlier, All India Radio and Doordarshan used to broadcast commentary in Hindi so that a large part of our population, especially Hindi speaking people and those living in rural areas could enjoy the game. But, as anti-Hindi lobby has come up very recently which tries to block Hindi commentary on one pretext or the other or by raising some technical issue. Therefore, my submission is that some sort of arrangement be made to provide Hindi commentary atleast during one-dayers especially as one dayers are more popular amongst the masses. Some sort of initiative should be taken right now and arrangement should be made for providing Hindi commentary of at least one-days match of current West Indies series. It is not a very difficult job and similar arrangement should be made in future for all types of international sports events such as Cricket since majority of people in our country are Hindi speaking. Therefore, it is imperative that they too enjoy commentary. I would like to urge hon. Minister to remove minor hurdles being faced in this regard and restore the old tradition of broadcasting Hindi commentary of sports so that our attachment towards Hindi can be reflected. Finally, I support this Bill.

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ):** Mr. Chairman, Sir, in all 15 hon. Members took part in discussion on this Bill. First of all, I would like to convey my thanks to them since their contribution helped in holding a meaningful debate on this Bill in the limited time.

Our colleague, Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal from main opposition party initiated the discussion. I am grateful to him because he welcomed the Bill and deplored the interference of the Government. But, in the beginning he said that the Bill has been brought belatedly.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, with due regards, I would like to tell Shri Bansalji that his this impression is not appropriate. Normally, the Government do not like to interfere in such matters and Governmental interference is not liked very much. But when an issue takes the shape of a problems then the Government cannot watch it mutely. Thus, as I have stated in the beginning itself that no sooner the issue

became a problem we held talks with stake-holders and then constituted a task-force and I had fixed a date also. We had constituted a task-force on 25 September, 2001. Today, it is 15 May, 2002. 7 months and 18 days have gone by and perhaps it is first time that the task force submitted its recommendations within 7 months and 18 days on such a typical issue. And the Government have prepared draft of the Bill which is supposed to be brought as per the recommendations of task force and even decide to bring it. Today, with the cooperation of all of you, same Bill is being discussed. This issue was not so easy. Introduction of such sort of system was not an easy task.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to tell Pawanji that the apprehensions expressed by him and other Members came to my mind also and these were projected before the task-force. I would like to give you just one example. I told them that though you have submitted the recommendations but you must tell me specifically regarding these all. I would like to tell Shri Pawanji that I asked them-

[English]

Amendments required in the existing law or formulation of any new law

[Translation]

Please also tell if any amendment is to be brought. I would like to give him just a glance of what I asked then-

[English]

- Complete data on Set Top Boxes (STBs), the available technologies, our own parameters of the capabilities of the STBs, cost of each technology or the Set Top Box incorporating such a technology, availability of the technology locally, current indigenous production of STBs, production capacity and estimated demand of STBs in India in case CAS is made mandatory.
- Estimated requirement of investment for the head and infrastructure, its existing availability in the market, its cost and the capability of the cable operators to make this investment, financing options available and which can be provided for facilitating such investments.
- Data on the number of cable operators, their distribution town-wise, details of MSOs, the pricing by MSO and cable operators, the prevailing cable rates in the last five years including the percentage hikes which have taken place.

- In the end, we asked them, if possible, to please quantify the benefits which will accrue to all stakeholders, especially the consumers, if CAS is mandated.

[Translation]

This issue is very difficult and highly technical. This all needed in depth study and until and unless I could not find a solution to these, it would not have been good for me to bring it to the House off handedly. I referred everything to CAS and sought reply to all this from task force. Therefore, I would like to tell you that I just cannot tell you the speed with which the task has been done.

Sir, what more concerns, I can express, than this. My apprehension is similar to that of hon. Members. When it was decided in BAC to refer it to the Standing Committee, I told that it is very urgent and needed today only and I requested the Members personally that since it involves social obligations, let us not delay it further and pass it. Therefore, I am very happy today that the Members realised it and the House granted me leave to hold discussion on it. I am greatly thankful to the Members for this. Therefore, I would like to say that it has not been brought belatedly but it would not be wrong if I say that it has been done with a supersonic speed.

Sir, in the beginning Pawanji made a mention about the rate of ST Box. I do not think there would be any Member who may have not expressed concern regarding rate of S.T. Box. As I told in the beginning that not only yours, it is my concern also. I want to make you aware and place before you the figures in this regard. SATMA is a manufactures association which deals in electronic equipments. It supplies ST boxes. We invited this company as we all are aware that ST boxes are not manufactured in our country. We asked them about the time by which they would be able to provide these boxes to us and at which rates. The rates which I am going to mention before you are given by the manufacturer itself. They said that 1,00,000 ST boxes will be provided at the rate of Rs. 2000 per box. 5,00,000 ST boxes will be provided at the rate of Rs. 1750 per box. Similarly 10,00,000 Set Top boxes will be provided at Rs. 1500 per box. These are the figures given by them. The company is demanding assurance from me in this regard. I can give assurance only on the basis of the written correspondence made by them with us.

These boxes will require in a large quantity. One, two or ten lakh Set Top box will not be sufficient. They have mentioned the rates on the basis of bulk purchase. Therefore, I think that the prices of boxes will go down further as we would require much more ST boxes.

[Shrimati Sushma Swaraj]

The most important is that some standards are going to be formulated in this regard because it is not a digital Set Top box rather it is an analog Set Top box. Analog Set Top box is the need of the hour because all the digital channel signals are decoded into cable head enter analog for the transmission because TV Sets in our houses receive only analog signals and not digital signals. Therefore, in time to come, analog set top box would become a commodity to be manufactured at places like Chandni Chowk and Lajpat Nagar. Therefore, there is a possibility that its prices may reduced to Rs. 1000 from Rs. 1500 or may be lesser than that as there is a simple principle of demand and supply. The figures I am putting before you have been given by them.

Shri Hannan Mollah and thereafter Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi have mentioned a point which hurt me a lot. They said that out side the House it is being propagated that the bill is being introduced only because of the pressure mounted by the Set Top box manufacturing industry as the use of Set Top box would become mandatory and would be installed in crores of houses. I hurt me a lot. Actually it shows the ill mentality of a person who is propagating like this outside the House. If it is so, the Government will never do anything mandatory. When the Government made it mandatory for the pillan rider to wear helmet, an allegation was levelled upon the Government that it is because of the pressure mounted by helmet industry. Helmet industry would be benefited by it. That's why Government are making it mandatory.

A few days ago Government made it mandatory to fasten seat belts for every person sitting in front seat of the car. It can be easily stated that it is being made mandatory under the pressure of seat belt manufactures. Helmet industry will certainly be benefited but it is the scooterist who would be safe in case of an accident.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: You have got the chance to clarify. We have just pointed it out but we did not want to hurt you.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: I am not quoting you. Rather I am grateful to you because it is you who brought such types of comments in the House and I got the chance to reply in this regard. I am not levelling any charges upon you. You came to know about the propaganda going on outside and has placed it before the House. Therefore, it is my duty to clarify it. The House is the highest institution

in the country. I can clarify it on the Floor of the House only.

I am saying that making it mandatory to fasten seat belts will definitely benefit seat belt manufacturers but ultimately it is for the safety of the person sitting in the car in case of an accident. Very humbly, I would like to say that I will reply to each and every question asked by the members and will try to remove their doubts. But if such type of propaganda is going on any where, I would like to dismiss it. At the very outset of my speech, I have mentioned that interest of subscriber was our Prime consideration. Luckily a system has been evolved which became Panacea for all the problems. It is saving the Cable operators from unpopularity and also solving the problem of reporting in broadcasting. But, as I have said initially, the subscribers are worst affected. They are suffering from both the sides. Unwanted channels are being shown on their TV Sets but they have to pay for all the channels. The objective of this bill is to safeguard the subscriber from such a situation.

Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal has raised two main question. The first is about the reasons for delay and the cost of STBs. I have replied in this regard and I thought it appropriate to take up the issue of irrelevant propaganda at the very beginning. Secondly, Shri Pawan ji has asked why rate of the pay channels are not being fixed. As the Government have fixed the price for basic pair, I think it would be very restrictive.

As I have stated in the beginning, generally Government do not interfere in these things. Our concept was that after bread and butter, entertainment is also a kind of food. Every man even the poorest of the poor, after having his meals, feels that entertainment is his next basic need. Entertainment after the hard work of the entire day, rejuvenate a person. Therefore, entertainment is also a basic need of a person. We interfere only to provide him basic need of entertainment at an appropriate cost. Rest of the things are left for market forces to decide. I often give an example and I feel it appropriate to mention here also. We decide that Dal, Chawal, Roti and Sabzi are the basic requirements of satiate one's hunger and should be provided At a fixed rate. Thereafter, the prices of all other additional items be listed separately. A person will choose items as per his pocket and taste. Similarly, we have made a provision for a basic tier of general nature which would include mix channels like Film Channel, News Channel, sports channel etc. We will provide this basic tier to the subscriber at an appropriate rate. Then we said that the cable operator shall display a list of pay channels which broadcaster is providing alongwith its rate.

The rest shall depend upon the choice and pocket of the subscriber. There is a saying that more sugar you put, more sweetness would be there. Anyone who can afford and has interest, can avail any number of channels as per his liking. Anybody who will be satisfied with the free to air channel will not need a Set box. He will have to pay the rate as fixed by the Government. We have tried to form a norm of providing maximum benefits to the common consumer through minimum intervention.

[Translation]

A question has been raised here that what is the need of STBs if someone wants to receive all the pay channels. Pay channel is a vague term in itself as just now I have also stated that all the free to air channels are being converted into Pay channels. Then what would be the need for STBs? We do not know how many more channels would be added in the list of pay channels existing today. All pay channels is not an ideal concept. These set of boxes are not proposed to be installed for viewing pay channels. One of the advantages of its installation is that it will bring transparency in the system? How that will be brought about? I would like to say that it will unravel the truth. Set of boxes will reveal the actual popularity of various channels. Which channels are liked and viewed most by the people will become known. There will be no use of introducing this system if this point is excluded because there is no other solution to the problem of under reporting. The figures regarding viewing of pay channels would be then available. I have told that number in the list of pay channels may increase or decrease. Today there are 33 pay channels and I have that list with me. It may become 34 or 32 tomorrow. All pay channels is a vague concept. Therefore, it is not possible to say that installation of S TBs is not necessary if someone opts for all the pay channels. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: At this rate, tomorrow all pay channels will become free-to-air channels.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Like Shri Yerrannaidu I also feel that broadcaster will know the real popularity of pay channels. When basic tier for it would be setup then they may opt for converting their channels into free-to-air channels. I feel that it will happen and then subscribers will be benefited.

Shri Prahlad Patel has supported the Bill. In this House I promised him to bring this Bill in this session itself and I

am satisfied that this Bill has been brought here in this session. I hope that he will also be satisfied as he raised this issue through various available means like questions etc. because he was greatly concerned. As far as the price of STBs is concerned, all the Members have repeated the points raised by Pawanji and I feel that a satisfactory reply has been given.

Shri Hannan Mollah also raised some points, one of them was regarding fixing of the subscription. Some other members have also raised this point and in its reply I would like to say that we are not fixing the rate of pay channels but rate of basic tier. Pandianji raised the issue of basic tier and I would like to respond to that—

[English]

Shri Pandian, I am replying to your question because you have said that subscription rates vary from place to place. They do vary but we will bring uniformity.

[Translation]

At present in Delhi also cable service operators are charging different amounts. The fixing of rate of basic tier and list of pay channels will enable us to provide uniform rate of cable services and it will also solve the problem of charging money arbitrarily. The issue of fixation of subscription transparently has also been raised and I would like to tell that the Government is going to adopt a transparent system for fixing rate of subscription and our two main objectives will be—relief to subscribers and no loss to the cable operators. These will be our touch stones for fixing subscription in transparent manner and there will be no arbitrariness. I have also explained position regarding business of STBs because I felt it necessary to clarify that in the beginning itself.

Another issue has also been raised here that in case optic fibre comes in, everything shall be come redundant. I would like to inform Shri Hannan Mollah that in our country not even one percent of optic fibre has been laid so far and we are imagining the situation of optic fibre being laid throughout the country. The question before us is that treatment for disease is required immediately. I am a diabetic patient and I would like to give this example if someone asks me not to take insulin injection as oral insulin is being introduced shortly and the insulin pens used by you will become redundant. I feel that I will die before oral insulin is introduced. In place of imagining that what may happen in future. I would like to say that the issue before us is that the problem being faced by us today required to be solved immediately. We can wait for optic fibre but technology

[Shrimati Sushma Swaraj]

is becoming redundant everyday. A particular type of computer is introduced in the market and become outdated after three months and a new computer is introduced. The people who have money can buy the new one. Technology is being upgraded rapidly and we cannot stop the fast speed of advancement of technology and that will also not be in the interest of the country. We can wait for optic fibre but it will not be rational if we say that T.S. should not be installed before that.

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Optic fibre is being laid in Tamil Nadu.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Yes. But I am talking about the whole of India.

[Translation]

So far as the question of subscription is concerned I would like to clarify that we are fixing the floor of the channels of basic tier, which means that number of channels and ceiling of amount. We are not making any more intervention in this matter. We will fix certain number of channels in basic tier. Prabhunath Singhji raised this point and its reply will also cover that. He is not here. He was saying that economic condition in various states is different and this rate should also differ. I would like to say that not only in different states but this rate will be fixed separately for various districts and cities because conditions vary in different areas. Unity in diversity is peculiarity of our country. We cannot compare cable services of Delhi with Bulandshahar or Bulandshahar with Noida and Noida with any small village of Khurja. Culture and cable services of different places vary and that is why the Government has taken a decision to fix rates of cable services of every state, city and district as per the requirements by issuing separately notifications.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it covers your question too. When you were speaking as MP, you said, why do not we talk to the states. Why Union Government will do it alone? I would like to say that this work, fixation of rates will not be done without advice of the State Governments. After all information for it is required. From where will this information come, it will not come from above, it to be collected from DMs, districts of the States and they have to decide. Therefore, the Central Government said, though broadcasting is the subject of centre, but it will be done after taking consultation from the State Government. It will be decided after collecting information from them. Therefore, State Governments will not be by-passed anywhere.

19.00 hrs.

Therefore, I would like to tell you, as you are thinking that the State Governments have been bypassed is not the fact. Secondly, you wondered, whether there will be any regulator to regulate irregularities in the cable or not and if so, in what way. I would like to tell you, that there is already a provision in the cable act proposed to be amended for what you want. We are having authorised officers. Authorised Officers are DM, SDM, and Police Commissioner of the District. If you visit Bihar, and find any irregularity in the cable, you can directly talk to any of three of them. These are our authorised Officers.

[English]

'Authorised Officers' means officer within his local limits of jurisdiction'

[Translation]

This act is already there, we are bringing amendments in it. In future also Authorised Officers will look into the irregularities. But today if any problem comes up, as you said some Regulator should be there and it is there. But the conversion Commission which will come in future, will be a big regulator, which will first look into the contents. But we have termed those officers as 'Authorised Officers' who will provide solution to your problem.

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: In some places, there are SPs in place of Police Commissioners, will you amend it also?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: There is no need of amendment in it. The State Government has been authorised to give it to anybody. Just now I have mentioned District Magistrate, Sub-District Magistrate and Police Commissioner, but beyond it

[English]

" And includes any other officers notified in the official gazette of the Central Government or the State Government to be an authorised officer for such local limits of jurisdiction as may be determined by the Government."

[Translation]

For this we have asked the State Governments to appoint Authorised Officer. Wherever Police Commissioner is not there, the State Government can appoint anybody as 'Authorised Officer'. There is already a provision in the Cable Act that they can appoint appropriate person for dealing with anything.

Shri Dhamraj Patel expressed his views. At the moment he is not present here. He said, it should be decided when, what and on what rate the broadcaster is broadcasting. If he would have been present here, I would have told him, but I would like to tell through the House that we have made provision in this bill, it will be mandatory for the broadcasters to display the list of rates of pay channels. He will write the rates of channel in that list. Kirit Somaiya-ji said that the name of this bill should be changed as Consumer Protection Act probably he felt that this bill is going to protect large number of consumers, therefore this name is more appropriate. But I would like to tell him that we are not bringing new bill, but amending the existing bill. In that case, the name of bill is not changed, however, your views are encouraging for us. You find this bill so much in interest of consumers that you talked of changing its name.

The two hon'ble Members, Shri Palanimanickam and Shri Pandian from Tamilnadu have almost said the same thing. They raised a question, that the legislative competence is lacking in the bill passed in Tamilnadu, because according to them, this bill was brought on the subject, on which only Union Government can bring the bill. Pandianji read out the copy of bill and said that there is no contradiction between both of them, though this pertains to different subject and our bill is on different subject. You may give copy of the bill to me, because this subject is not such on which reply could be provided immediately over here, because first it has to be read. We have referred this subject to the Law Department. They will tell us after studying it. So that pertains to fact. Both subjects are in front of us. Then it will be seen, which bill supersedes or overlaps the other one. We shall see it or after the Law Department renders its reply, then we will see.

I would like to give reply to Shri Dasmunsi. He raised many issues over here, many of them were not related with this bill, but were very important. At the moment, he is not present in the House. Had he been present? I would have replied to all his queries. But it seems to me, it is very necessary to give reply to the allegation levelled by him. He said, Doordarshan is still controlled by the Government. Doordarshan did not telecast news related to 'Tehliaka'. I would like to say that if he had mentioned the telecast of the exit polls on Doordarshan besides Tehliaka, then his statement would have been balanced. If Doordarshan would have been in Government's control, then in the exit poll of the four important states, where elections were held, where BJP was projected as a losing party, would not have been telecasted. It is the solid proof of our impartiality, that Doordarshan is not at all being controlled by the

Government. Doordarshan is working impartially, without pressure from any side and it is free from Government's control. Prasar Bharati is our baby, to maintain its autonomy is our duty. I think there is no need to give reply to the questions which are not related with this bill, and I have given reply to all important questions. Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi mentioned a thing in regard to Delhi. He belongs to a Hindi State. I would like to mention that he should not apprehend about the Government in this regard, because the Government whose Prime Minister is a Hindi-loving man, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, whose Minister of Information and Broadcasting is me, whose Minister of State in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is a person like Shri Ramesh Bais, and where the people like you are the custodians of Hindi, there Hindi will not be neglected in any case. This apprehension should not be there. We are trying to encourage Hindi as far as possible through the media and Doordarshan, and we will continue to do it in future also. I express my gratitude that many good questions were raised here, and I tried my level best to give reply to those questions. I would like to request that this Bill should be passed. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to know one thing. ...*(Interruptions)* Whether World Cup Football Tournament would be telecast on TV? The entire country wants to know this. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: Sir, already, the pay channel charges were fixed in the month of December, 2001. If this Conditional Access System is implemented to save the consumers from harassment, immediately they cannot put this set top box even in the middle period. What is the view of the Government? Even for the set top box not only for the pay channels but also for the video and internet if you add the technologies for the set top box, it will be useful in future also. What is the Government's view?

*[Translation]*

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: We will call stake holders and we will discuss and persuade them.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the entire country wants to know whether World Cup Football tournament would be telecast on TV? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Negotiations are going on. Only after negotiations are held. I will furnish your information. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 6 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted*

*Clauses 2 to 6 were added to the Bill.*

*Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.*

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted*

19.09 hrs.

## HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

### Power Theft

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now next item No. 20, Half-An-Hour Discussion will be taken up.

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA (CHANDRAPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for granting permission to take up half-an-hour discussion and allowing me to speak. The Chair gives permission for Half-An-Hour Discussion on those important questions which are not replied to properly during the Question Hour. Generally Half-An-Hour discussion is taken up at 5.30 pm and sometimes by taking up such important questions in the last, the importance and gravity

of the issue is lost. Therefore, through you, I would like to appeal to the Government that the time of Half-An-Hour Discussion should be changed like 'calling attention'. It should also be taken up after the Question Hour. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: That can be done by the consensus of the House. Please speak on the subject.

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: The subject of Power is an important issue for the country. The state of Maharashtra has been ahead of other states in power generation sector since long and therefore the hon'ble Prime Minister has selected both the Cabinet Minister as well as State Minister of power from Maharashtra.

Sir, I would like to say something to the ruling party. They have always criticized the progress made in power sector during the last 50 years. Through you, I would like to tell them that at the time of Independence in 1947 only 854 megawatt power was generated in the country and today 1,03,134, megawatt power is being generated. Out of this total production 25,574 megawatt power is generated by hydro-electric power plants, 73,273 megawatt by thermal power plants, 2,860 megawatt by nuclear power plants and 1,426 megawatt by Windmills. In spite of all this, in the coming 10 years during 11th Five Year Plan which means that by the year 2012 the country will need an additional 1 lakh megawatt power and for its generation, transmission and for setting up the infrastructure an amount of Rs. 8 lakh crore will be needed. During the Ninth Five Year Plan a target of 40,000 megawatt generating power was fixed but due to financial crisis we could generate only 2800 megawatt power. We cannot even express our views in Parliament without power as microphones used by us also operate by power. Power has its own importance in every sector, whether it is agriculture sector, industry sector or science and technology sector. It is an important Department, but the Union Government is not taking it seriously and it has become a weak and less important department during the last three-four years. As per a survey, by the year 2012, 1 lakh megawatt additional power will be required out of which 60 percent power is planned to be generated by thermal power plants and 40 percent by hydro electric power plants. A network of Power generation plants has been set up by NTPC through out the country but there is need to further strengthen it. I am saying so because NTPC does not get timely payment for the power supplied to various states. At present NTPC has to get Rs. 22,000 crore from various state governments and power stations have to face problems for not being able to make payments to Coal India or its sister concerns for the coal purchased by them. I would also like to say that the State Governments provide

subsidy on power and this problem would not have emerged if power was bought on cash payment by the states. With increasing quantum of power generation, the consumption of power is also increasing.

Sir, the thermal power station located in my Parliamentary Constituency Chandrapur is the biggest power station of Asia which generates 2340 megawatt power. It was inaugurated in 1984 by Shrimati Indira Gandhi. I would like to make a suggestion that Thermal Power Stations should be set up in those areas only where coal is available easily. The hon'ble Minister comes from Bihar. The coal producing area has been separated from his state. In our country power stations have not been set up in and around coal producing areas. I would therefore, like to say that in future power stations should be set up in those areas where coal is available in abundance because price rise can be checked if cost of power generation is reduced. Whether it is in agriculture sector, foodgrain or textiles. Price rise is directly related to power. Rapid increase in the tariff of power leads to power theft. Almost all the captive power plants set up by big industries and coal industries generate power at a cost of Rs. 1.10 to 1.20 whereas the production cost of power plants of different States is more than Rs. 3 per unit and it is provided to the industries as also for domestic use at a cost of Rs. 4 or 5 per unit. I would therefore, like to say that price of power for consumers should be reduced if the Government really want to check pilferage.

Sir, our hydro power projects have the capacity of generating 1.5 lakh megawatt power today and we have utilised only 17 percent of this capacity yet. Attention should also be paid to the PLF, Plant Load Factor in particular. Today overall percentage of Central Government is 72 percent and State Government's percentage is 65 percent. As a result thereof, the overall percentage of PLF comes to 68.4 percent which should be improved. In the context of transmission and distribution losses I would like to say that even today transmission and distribution losses come to 26.45 percent. In reply to a question he had stated the other day that the farmers resort to power theft.  
...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): He has perhaps mistaken me. It is not correct to say that I have stated that power theft by the farmers is the root cause of the problem.

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: I appreciate him If he did not say so. Farmers of this country do not resort to power theft but they expect from their state Governments to supply power to them at concessional rates. At present farmers

are facing lot of problems as the tariff of power is increasing day-by-day. The State Governments should make cash payment in the same year against the subsidy to the power plants be it under the State Electricity Boards or the Central Government from which power has been supplied to farmers at concessional rates. Similarly, I would like to reiterate the issue of granting permission for setting up captive power plants. The big industries like Steel, cement and paper industries should be given permission to set up their captive power plants. I would like to cite the example of the cement industry. There are four big cement plants in my district. L&T cement plant is incurring a loss of Rs. 3 crore every month but is earning Rs.4.5 crore per month as a result of power generated by its own captive power plants having a capacity of 46 megawatt. Despite the loss of Rs. 3 crore in cement plant it is earning Rs.1.5 crore due to power plant.

Sir, the industry sector should be given permission to set up their captive power plants and for this there should be no need to obtain permission from the State Governments or Electricity Boards so that power produced by NTPC or State Electricity Boards can be supplied directly to farmers and domestic consumers. I would also like to get information about the precautions taken by the government to check pilferage. The main problem in it is faced due to meter tampering, defective meters and irregularities in meter reading. I would like to cite an example of Maharashtra. In Maharashtra alone there are 1 crore 28 lakh consumer out of which 1.16 lakh consumers are provided electricity at a concessional rate. They are given subsidy for it. But on getting electricity at concessional rate they misuse it. Therefore, metering system should be made compulsory if farmers are provided electricity at a cheaper rate or totally free so that we could assess the consumption of power supply in proportion to the subsidy given. Irregularities in meter reading also take place due to it. Therefore, meter should be made compulsory. Maharashtra Government has set up vigilance squad in NSCB to check power theft. I would like to know about the Government plan to check power theft.

Secondly, people have no fear about the laws formulated to check the power theft. Power theft occurs in North India at a large scale where people adopt illegal means to take electricity direct from the mainline. Government should make some provisions to deter people from power theft. I would also like to know about the provisions made by the Government to check the technical, commercial and unwanted losses alongwith the power theft.

In this regard—

[Shri Naresh Puglia]

[English]

"The technical losses are due to energy dissipation in the conductors and equipment usually in the system of transmission and distribution of power. The magnitude of energy dissipation depends largely on the design of lines, pattern of loading and type of loads, etc. It is not possible to eliminate such internal losses in a system altogether."

[Translation]

Government are suffering 15%-18% losses due to all these things. What efforts are being made for undertaking reforms in this regard? Maharashtra Electricity Board requires 9 thousand crore rupees for undertaking all these reforms. Government should make arrangements for the funds required to check the technical and commercial losses all over the country. In this process Government should give the details of the States along with the amount given through the financial power corporation. There would be a need to reduce the rate of interest also. It would be difficult for the Government to make additional efforts at their own level for the supply of extra electricity of 1 lakh MW during the next 10 years i.e. till 2012, unless power corporation and financial corporations are strengthened and states are given financial assistance.

In the end, I would like to mention that several new power plants are being set up in Private Sector. For example a power project by Enron Company was set up in Maharashtra. As per the agreement, electricity was to be provided at the rate of 1.67 paisa but later on the clause was changed and they were proposing to provide electricity at the rate of Rs. 5-7 per unit. People of Maharashtra opposed it as a result of which Enron project had to be shut down. While signing and taking guarantee regarding any issue, Government should consider that it may not adversely affect the people. NTPC is able to provide electricity at the rate of 2.20 paisa but the multinational power projects are providing electricity at the rate of Rs. 5.7 per unit using our own land, labour and money power. Therefore, Government should stop their entry into Private Sector.

We had been to Naveli Lignite with the Standing Committee. They told us that electricity is generated at the rate of 70 paise per unit and they sold it to State Government at the rate of 1.05 paise. The reason as stated by them is that the raw material supplier and the power plant are located at the same place. Thermal Power Station at Chandrapur generates power worth 8 crores of rupees daily. I have also raised a question regarding Western Coal-

Fields under Rule 377. Thermal Power Station of NSCB has also moved to the High Court against that. Therefore, superior quality coal should be supplied to power stations. In 1986 when I had joined Rajya Sabha, coal and power departments were under one Ministry. Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to tell the hon'ble Prime Minister that if the coal and power Ministry is vest under one Ministry, I think superior quality of coal can be provided to power station. If Shri Suresh Prabhu heads both the Ministries, I think the department would function more efficiently and effectively. I hope Central and State Government would ponder over it seriously and hon'ble Minister, State Government and State Electricity Board will remove the condition to take NOC before installing captive power plant in industry. Efforts should be made to install more and more captive power plants in the country. The States like Maharashtra are required 9 thousand crore rupees. Government should inform the House about the funds required in toto for undertaking the reforms in other states also including Maharashtra and for their planning in this regard for the next 10 years. We should also be informed about the steps being taken to check power theft. I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA: The problem cannot be solved until the power theft is identified and is not termed as transmission and distribution loss.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (CHIRAYINKIL): I am not making a speech on power generation. I thought about the power theft. I am putting the question.

I am confined to two aspects. There are two aspects. One is power theft and the other is transmission losses. These two are the major reasons for the shortage of electricity, to some extent, and not fully.

As far as power theft is concerned, there was recently an inspection in the Kerala Electricity Board. If I am correct, theft costing about Rs.4 crore has been detected for the last so many number of years. I think on detection of these crimes, some officials of the Electricity Board were also involved. The Government ordered for prosecution. Now, we know we are facing a very acute shortage of power. Even the Central share is not at all given to the States because of the arrears of payment. Due to arrears of payment, I am told that they have stopped giving power from the Central pool. That also has created much difficulty to the States.

Theft also is detected. In my State peculiarly a former

Minister is also convicted for theft, and the conviction was upheld by the Kerala High Court. It is now pending before the Supreme Court on certain questions of law. That gentleman is now a MLA. He was formerly a Minister. He has been convicted for this very offence. I think the Minister is also aware of it.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (ADOOR): That is a different case. That is not a theft case. He is making a political speech.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: No, you are wrong. I tell you he was convicted for sale of power to Karnataka without the knowledge of KSE Board. What do you mean? You be seated. I can also charge. It was upheld by the Kerala High Court.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: You are misleading the House.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: You are misleading. When that is a fact, why do you unnecessarily intervene in certain matters?

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Why are you quoting here the former Minister of Kerala? He is not here.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I have not mentioned his name. Now there is a charge-sheet. Extensive trial was conducted. The trial court found him guilty. He went in appeal before the Kerala High Court on the charge of selling power to the State of Karnataka without the knowledge of the State Government. That was the charge.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: That is regarding some tariff rate. This is a different case.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: No. What is he after all?

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: We are discussing power theft.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: That is why I am telling. This is nothing but power theft.

The conviction was upheld in the Kerala High Court. Now, it is pending before the Supreme Court for final decision. I am not raising this point for any political gain but only to bring out the fact that power theft has become very widespread. I am saying this only for that purpose and not for defaming anybody. I am not saying that a particular Power Minister was corrupt. There is no corruption charge against him. The charge is only that he sold it to Karnataka

without the knowledge of the State Government. He did not sell it for any personal gain. The sale was not for a personal gain but it was found to be an offence and he was convicted.

Power theft has become very widespread now. It is not only in Kerala but everywhere there is power theft. The Electricity Boards are also in one way or the other connected with the offence. There is an Electricity Regulatory Board constituted in more or less every State. They have started functioning also but the Regulatory Boards are helpless. So, we will have to revamp the Regulatory Boards and make the law more stringent. If it is made more effective, I think, we can go a long way in preventing power theft. So, I would request the hon. Minister to see that power theft does not take place in the transmission and distribution losses. We are losing a huge amount because of transmission and distribution losses. The transmission loss is the highest in India whereas in other countries it is very negligible.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA: It is not loss; it is theft but it is recorded as loss. What is the transmission loss in Delhi? I think, it is about 60 per cent.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: The question is how to prevent the theft. It is a loss to the State also. So, I would request the hon. Minister to see that these two evils in power transmission and distribution are prevented; and save the country from further losses.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY (NARASARAOPET): Sir, I have been a Power Minister in Andhra Pradesh. In 1982, when I looked into the 'theft' - according to my friend from West Bengal, losses are not there - it was 17 per cent. They used to call it transmission losses at that time. Now, it is 34 per cent.

My good friend Shri Suresh Prabhu is an academic-type of a Minister. I know him from the time he was the Minister of Environment and Forests. He studies issues in depth. I would like him to study why in this country power generation has become a costly affair. When the NTPC is producing power for Rs.2.29, you are spending Rs.3 crore to Rs.4 crore per megawatt. The day this Parliament passed the Bill handing over power generation to private people, they came from abroad and also from within India. They tried to produce power and they charged the farmer heavily. In spite of that they have not been able to produce power the way it used to be produced by the Electricity Boards previously. The Electricity Boards discontinued power generation relying on the private people and the private people have ditched this country in power generation. It

[Shri N. Janardhana Reddy]

is not only the rate but also the quantity of production. This is my opinion. That is why, I request him to study it, do a kind of research over this, and rectify the country's situation.

Sir, the hon. Minister, my friend, came to Andhra Pradesh. He was mentioning that power reforms have changed the whole thing. I know his compulsions in Hyderabad when he comes to the State. I do not like him also to criticise any Government, especially in Andhra Pradesh as he will be in problem. But let him study Andhra Pradesh as an example. Why has it gone down that way? Even now the Chairman of GENCO in the Electricity Board, wants to allow him to get the loan from other countries or from the REC and generate the power at the lower rate, instead of allowing that private company, to charge at the rate of Rs. 4/- or Rs. 5/- which is unreasonable. I do not know why the hon. Minister was guilty in accepting that farmers are stealing the power. It is a fact. It is not because of anything else. Some farmers have done it because we are not able to supply it legally. When you are not able to supply, they have the links and they steal the power. You have driven them to that end. But yet it is a theft. So, all these malpractices, maladministration, malplanning has led to this power situation in the country. That is my personal opinion.

Sir, I saw that a target of 50,000 megawatt is fixed in the Tenth Plan in the Planning Commission's Report. Perhaps you might have given the figures or they might have done it. From where are they going to get the money? But you can do it, provided you hand over to the States.

Sir, my good friend, Shri Naresh Puglia has done an in-depth study. He was telling about captive generation.

Sir, in Andhra Pradesh, I allowed captive power generation. Now, they are generating power. They are getting power from the NTPC for Rs. 1/- per unit or Rs. 2/- per unit, which you have given, taking the wheeling charges of 16 paise per unit. That power is being sold back to the Government at the rate of Rs. 2.50 per unit. So, all these anomalies are there.

Sir, I have only one request to the hon. Minister. He can appoint a Technical Committee or he can take responsibility and head the technicians to study the present situation. Why has this present situation arisen in the country? It is our own, man-made thing and it is not because of anything else. It is because of more political interference at the State level. This is my opinion.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA: If the plant load factor in our average electricity plants can be raised to the level of say, the BSES plants, the TATA Plants of the NTPC plants, this country will have not power problem.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in discussion on this issue through our friend Shri Naresh Puglia and allow me to put forth my views.

[English]

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM: Sir, all the Members present here are from non-Hindi speaking areas. So, I request the hon. Minister to speak in English. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, I am really thankful to you as well as the other Members for giving this opportunity and in the process also allowing me and giving me an opportunity to express my views on the subject.

Sir, I also thank Shri Naresh Puglia. Though the subject matter is pertaining to power sector theft, he virtually conducted an overall survey of the entire power industry. He really offered holistic solutions to power sector problems for which I am really thankful to him.

Sir, while I will address all the issues that arose during the discussion, let me first focus on the power theft, which is a very major issue. One estimate says that a loss that India suffers as a result of power theft is in excess of Rs. 20,000 crore. This is again a guess estimate.

In any case, the loss suffered by power sector theft is much in excess of this. How this figure has been ascertained? It is, as I said, a guess work because, unfortunately, we have a system today whereby once the power is generated, it has to be transmitted to long distance. So, it has to be transformed to a higher voltage. Then from there, it is transmitted. Then, it has to be again brought down by step-down transformer and then it is transmitted and then distributed. Sir, fortunately, you yourself have been a Power Minister in Bihar, so, you are aware of these issues, technically, and commercially also. Because of this, the entire process of sequence of events ultimately results into consumption of power. There is no system which really keeps an account of this. So, absence of energy accounting is one of the root causes of the power sector problems and that is also giving rise to power sector theft. When we do not have a system of accounting, we really do not know what is the extent of loss. Therefore, I said that the

guess estimate is Rs.20,000 crore, but the loss could be very very high. This is a major problem. If this Rs.20,000 crore loss continues over the next 15 years, the amount of money that we will be losing will be more than Rs. three to four lakh crore. That would be the amount of loss. And how much money we need for one lakh MW? As you yourself said, it is Rs. seven to eight lakh crore. So, when these Rs. three to four lakh crore can be saved, the money that will be required to finance the power sector projects is available within the system. But we are not able to do it because power theft is a major issue which really needs to be tackled.

How do we tackle this issue? I think we really need to take a multi-pronged strategy. We need to have administrative measures, we need to have legal measures, we need to have technical measures, we need to have social measures, we need to have political measures, as Shri Janardhana Reddy was saying, and we also need to have mindset change because these are the issues which will involve people's mindset change as well as attitudinal change on the part of the employees. So, all these seven-eight issues are really required to be dealt with, and I am very happy to say that the Government of India now has a programme to deal with each of these issues.

But I must tell you that this issue is, really speaking, a State issue. All the electricity business is in the hands of the States, particularly distribution. Theft is a problem which is associated with distribution and, therefore, it is an issue which needs to be tackled by the respective State Governments. But in view of the fact that the State Electricity Boards which control the distribution in the States, are in such a financial bankruptcy, the Central Government has come out with a programme which I shall explain to you.

First, we have launched a programme called Accelerated Power Reforms Development Programme which actually targets the power theft issue. How? We are dealing with it at the six-level intervention strategy. First, all the consumers in the country will be having meters. Where the power is consumed, meters will be there. As I have said, absence of records is a cause of the problem. Once we have proper meters, we will know where the power is consumed.

The second level of intervention is the distribution feeder. The distribution feeder is the last phase of power generation, transmission and distribution but the first point at which there is an interface between the utility and the consumer. So, at all distribution feeders, we shall try to put a software whereby power supplied from the distribution feeder to the consumer is properly accounted for.

Then, there are about 400 and odd power Circles in

India. Each of the Circles will be converted into a business unit and a profit centre so that we really know that in each of the Circles where actually the theft is indulging, who is stealing the power and what is the extent of loss that we are suffering per Circle. Rather than talking about power sector theft of Rs.20-25 thousand crore as a problem at the national level, we want to localise it. Rather than globalising it and not solving it, we want to localise it and actually attempt to solve it. This is the action we have taken. So, the third level is of distribution Circles.

The fourth level is the Electricity Boards where we have also tried to bring in changes, including the past dues which you mentioned. The Montek Singh Ahluwalia Committee Report is already under implementation. The Cabinet has approved it. So, that is the fourth layer.

The fifth level is the State Government and the sixth level is the Central Government, which we all are talking about it. The problem lies in every village where you correctly said that there is a power theft, including farmers and others, those who are stealing it. I do not want to generalise it by saying that all farmers are stealing electricity. That will be a wrong statement. It would also not be a correct statement to say that farmers are not stealing electricity. But the point is, I never generalise it and say that all farmers are stealing electricity. In fact, as my hon. friend, Dr. Sengupta, the former Secretary, Government of India also mentioned, what is theft? Commercial transmission and distribution losses contain a huge portion which is theft. And why it is called as a theft?

It is because we do not have energy accounting. So, what we show as agricultural consumption, which involves a lot of money, is not properly accounted for and it is transferred to agricultural consumption. So, the poor farmers take the blame for theft whereas the farmers do not get the electricity. Therefore, the farmers cannot be blamed for that. That is not the point. The point is that unless we localise the action, the action really will not lead to results. So, the Government of India have decided to take this as an administrative action.

So, the first measure, as I said, is the administrative one in the form of Accelerated Power and Reform Development Programme. How much money will be needed for this? The estimate is, what we will need is more than Rs. 40,000 crore for the whole country. Fortunately, for the first time, in India's history, we appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Rao who is at present the acting Chairman of the CEA and a Member, Grid Operations. We set up this Committee which hon. Member Shri Janardhan

[Shri Suresh Prabhu]

Reddy wanted us to set up. That Committee has produced six manuals of a very high quality. Each of these manuals is in implementation stage and we are actually implementing it. So, these administrative measures are under implementation and this amount of Rs. 40,000 crore has been accepted even by the Planning Commission. As you have noticed, in this present Budget, my colleague, the hon. Minister of Finance, Shri Yashwant Sinha increased the allocation for distribution reform to Rs. 3,500 crore. One-and-a-half to two years back, there was no amount available. It became Rs. 1,000 crore and to Rs. 1,500 crore and now an amount of Rs. 3,500 crore has been provided in the Budget. I am sure, in the next course of few years this entire amount that is required for distribution reform will be available and we will take care of that.

The second measure that is required is legal. Thefts can be controlled if there is a deterrent available. There has to be a punishment. People must be really scared that 'if I indulge in power theft I will be arrested and I will be subjected to severe punishment'. To introduce that provision, the Electricity Bill, 2001 has been brought in which is currently being debated by the Standing Committee. This contains very stringent measures. Therefore, I would request you to use your good offices and request the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Energy to consider this Bill quickly and it can be brought before Parliament. So, legal measures are also being taken.

The third measure is the technical measure. You will recall that a problem, that we are facing today in power sector and particularly theft, was also a problem which was associated with the telecom sector. Telecommunication lines were also tampered, people were indulging in thefts. But that has gone because of technology. Technology does not allow the telephone lines to be tampered any more because it is just not possible. We need to introduce the same thing here and, therefore, technological solutions are really necessary. I personally went and talked to NASSCOM which is the apex organisation of the entire I.T. software companies and they have agreed to find a solution. A Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of the Managing Director of INFOSYS which is one of the finest technological companies of the country and a report from them is expected any day now. We are already in the process of implementation of that. So, the third one, as I said, is the technological one. We have taken administrative and legal actions. This is the technological thing.

The fourth measure is social. We really need to draw

a campaign that indulging in power theft is anti-social. We say that taking dowry is bad; we say that if you are beating your wife, you cannot say it publicly that you are beating your wife; you cannot say it even in Parliament though you are protected. It is because you are scared of the social stigma that is associated with such a thing. If you can create a social atmosphere wherein socially a person who is indulging in power theft will be condemned, I am sure it can stop. It has become a practice in Mumbai where a neighbour says: 'You have not paid your electricity Bill!' and it becomes a matter of shame; whereas in Delhi your neighbour will say 'Are you paying electricity Bill?' It also becomes a reality. This is the social stigma that should be associated with this and, therefore, this also is a sort of agitation that we really need to call.

The fifth one is political measure. When we talk about power sector, it is not only about thefts but about power sector generally, all of us must unite. Therefore, I welcome the initiative of the Congress Party. I welcome the initiative of Left Parties. I welcome the initiative of almost all the political parties which are represented here including the Rashtriya Janata Dal in Bihar. All the Parties have agreed to indulge into power sector changes and reform and they are already saying that they will introduce them.

I welcome the Resolution which was passed in the Congress Chief Ministers' meet in Guwahati in which all the Congress Chief Ministers have decided to pursue this one. I really welcome it. The Left Front which is ruling in West Bengal is also supporting this. Therefore, political action also is necessary which is now evident; and we really need to hasten and process in doing it.

The next is awareness. Unless you create this feeling, as I said the social stigma, it will be difficult. People must realise that indulging in power sector theft is actually; pre-empting a brighter future for them because eventually the entire country will be drowned in darkness.

If you want to prevent that, awareness has to be created. Sir, I am happy to share with the hon. House that 2,065 road shows were organised by my Ministry in which we went from district to district and we really created awareness. This is an unprecedented action taken by any Government organisation or for that matter, anybody in India, which the Government of India, my Ministry has done in the course of last three months. I would like to increase it but the State Governments must also increase it. It is to bring about an attitudinal change in the minds of the employees.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA: It is not possible without the connivance of the employees.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Yes, it is not possible without the connivance of the officials. In fact, he has stolen words out of my mouth. I was going to say that it is not possible without that. Therefore, attitudinal change is necessary. For the first time, we have prepared a training policy for the entire power sector.

Sir, I am very happy to inform the House that the National Power Training Institute, which used to train about hundreds of people, has this year trained more than 14,000 people in that short period of time because I have told them that training is a very important issue and we must train all the employees in the power sector over a period of time. My target is that in the course of next ten years, through the franchise, we will train each and every employee of the power sector. We will also train the opinion-makers because the State Power Training Institute has also trained the opinion-makers. Sir, training is an important issue which really needs to be taken care of in the multi-pronged strategy which we are working on.

Sir, I would like to share with the House that I have already circulated to you six-point intervention strategy prepared by CEA, but particularly regarding the distribution reform which is targeting power thefts, I would like to share it with the hon. House that if you direct me, I will circulate it to all the hon. Members so that they will also know what action the Government of India is taking.

Shri N. Janardhana Reddy, one of the most respected Members of the House, the former Power Minister and the former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has also said that we really need to look into that issue. I can assure you that all these issues are not only being investigated but also acted upon. On each of the issue not only Committees have been set, but the Committees' Reports have been received and are under implementation.

Sir, I am very happy that the person presently sitting in the Chair, hon. Chairman, Sir, you have been taking so much of interest in it in your capacity as an hon. Member of the House and as an hon. Member of the Consultative Committee on Energy and we have also benefited immensely from your expertise, knowledge and advice. Sir, you have

also been watching what we are trying to do, but I would like to share it with everybody.

Sir, if you permit, I would like to refer to two or three points, though not pertaining to theft, which have been raised by hon. Member from my State, who happens to be a good friend of mine and a very respected man. Sir, he has talked about captive power plants. The new Electricity Bill is freeing generation totally. So, we have proposed to the Parliament that generation of power should be free from licensing. There should not be any licence. Sir, he mentioned about transmission and distribution loss and how much of it is really there. Transmission and distribution losses, really speaking, are like theft and dacoity losses because most of the losses that are associated are not technical. We call them commercial losses and 'commercial losses' is a good camouflaging name for thefts in the power sector. Therefore, we really need to look at transmission and distribution losses as a part of the same process. This programme, that we have launched, is also aimed at rectifying it.

Sir, the hon. Member has said that we really need to look at pit-head power stations. I agree with him. This is the policy of the Government also. Now, we want to set up power stations where the coal is available and that is what we are doing. We are also looking at many of these issues.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA: We wish you complete success. This is for a noble cause.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Thank you, Sir, I take the best wishes as energy to complete the task which has now been highlighted by you.

Sir, I thank you for giving me time to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The house now stands adjourn to meet tomorrow at 11 a.m.

19.54 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, May 16, 2002/Vaisakha 26, 1924 (Saka).*

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