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Thursday, December 9, 2004
Agrahayana 18, 1926 (Saka)

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Third Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)



(Vol. V contains Nos. 1 to 10)

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LOK SABHA

Thursday, December 9, 2004/Agrahayana 18, 1926 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM POLAND

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, at the outset, I have to make an announcement.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the hon. Members of the House, I have a great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Jozef Oleksy, Marshal of Sejm (Lower House of the Polish Parliament) and the members of the Parliamentary Delegation from Poland who are on a visit to India as our honoured guests

I am pleased to mention that this important visit coincides with the celebrations of Golden Jubilee of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Poland.

They arrived in India today morning. They are now seated in the Special Box. We with them a happy and fruitful stay in our country. Through them we convey our greetings and best wishes to the President, the Sejm, the Government and the friendly people of Poland.

11.02 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. M. Shivanna, Q. No. 121.

[English]

Gas Based Power Plants

*121. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ONGC has plans to set up major power plants using natural gas at various places in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ONGC has also signed agreements with State Governments to set up Special Economic Zones, by establishing 1500 M.W. gas based power plants;

(d) if so, the details thereof including the objectives of ONGC going into the power business; and

(e) the risks involved for ONGC to invest huge sums of money in such a new business?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (e) In addition to concentrating on its areas of core competence, ONGC is exploring various options for diversification of its activities by forward and backward integration, including power generation. In this context, ONGC has signed MOUs with the governments of Gujarat and Karnataka for setting up Special Economic Zones at Dahej and Mangalore respectively, to facilitate development of the required infrastructure for ONGC's value addition projects. All these projects are at a conceptual stage. ONGC has not signed any agreement with the State Governments for establishing gas based power plants. However, in view of unutilized gas, ONGC is also looking at the option of conversion of natural gas from isolated gas pools to power in Tripura. This would, however, be dependent on the existence of the necessary infrastructure for evacuation of surplus power from the region, after meeting local needs.

From the national perspective of Energy Security, of which oil security is an essential component, ONGC remains committed to its core functions *viz.*, the exploration and production of oil and gas. Diversification into other areas can only be supplemented to, and not at the cost of, concentration on its areas of core competence.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, I would like to make a brief correction in the printed version of the answer. In the second last line the word 'supplemented' should read 'supplemental' ...*(Interruption)*

[Translation]

*SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Mr Speaker Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to ask this important question.

Sir, ONGC is one of Navarathnas and it is making very good profits all these years. Now the Centre is proposing to invest substantial amount to set up special economic zones by establishing gas based power plants. The State Electricity Boards are incurring huge losses. Therefore, ONGC is likely to incur losses by setting up power plants. If so, what is the reaction of the Centre in this regard. Sir, it is reliably learnt that the special economic zone which is being set up at Mongalore may be shifted to some other place in South India. If so, the details thereof.*

[English]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, ONGC has been constituted as a Corporation whose core competence lies in exploration and production of oil and gas. We cannot afford to let ONGC diversify into areas outside its core competence until and unless we are satisfied that the investment it is making in these areas of core competence is, if not maximum, at least optimal. Therefore, we have been trying to prevent ONGC from expanding into diversification activities beyond that which could be regarded as legitimate for an E&P company to do. These E&P activities take place in all types of geographical formations and in fact they take place not only on-shore but in the shallow water off-shore as well as in the deep water. Therefore, there is no geographical restriction on where ONGC will go. ONGC should go wherever it is possible that we may be able to discover hydrocarbon. Activities beyond that which could be regarded as legitimate for an E&P company to do. These E&P activities take place in all types of geographical formations and in fact they take place not only on-shore but in the shallow water off-shore as well as in the deep water. Therefore, there is no geographical restriction on where ONGC will go. ONGC should go wherever it is possible that we may be able to discover hydrocarbon.

Therefore, with respect to the first three or four areas which the hon. Member has mentioned, there is no difficulty in going to a hilly, remote or a desert area. But when it comes to going into Special Economic Zones, we have to see whether this is being done in terms of the interest of the Corporation and of the economy as a whole. There, I think there needs to be certain guidelines laid down. Basically, the guidelines we have laid down are that fifty per cent of the profit after tax must be concentrated in the E&P field. Out of the remaining fifty per cent, they will be paying their duties, taxes, levies, dividends or spending on the maintenance of the existing assets and thereafter if there is any amount left over, they could use it for a diversification purpose.

What has happened is that owing to the huge rise in international oil prices, the income of ONGC has undergone a great leap and many-many entities, including State Governments, are looking towards ONGC as if it is a *Kamdhenu* waiting to be milked for anybody's well. But the biggest and the most important requirement of this country is energy security because without energy security we cannot even have national security. Therefore, there is a need for us to concentrate on national resources to the optimal extent possible in this search for energy security. So, bearing that in mind, we will certainly allow ONGC to go forward, but at the same time, since we are a responsible Ministry at the Centre, working in concert with our sister Ministries, if there is a question that comes up that involves us partially or even significantly in moving forward along that track, we will do all we can to facilitate Special Economic Zones, to facilitate the realisation of development objectives around the country, but not in such a way that ONGC becomes a kind of portfolio investor in anything that it wishes merely because it has got more resources. Those resources must be used in a nationally coherent manner taking into account national priorities as well as the priorities for which this *Navratna* company has been established.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a very comprehensive answer. Do you have second supplementary to ask?

[Translation]

SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Sir, I have come to know that ONGC is adopting certain areas in the country for social service projects. If so, which are the areas the Centre propose to adopt in Karnataka for such social service projects, and if so, the details thereof.

[English]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, in keeping with the general policy of this Government that economic reforms must have a human phase, we have imposed upon all the oil sector companies an obligation to clearly spell out how they propose to take up their corporate social responsibilities. In doing this, a general rule of thumb is that 0.75 per cent of their profit, after tax, will

..... English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

..... English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

be kept aside for social welfare schemes. These social welfare schemes are determined and prioritised by the Corporation itself. But if the hon. Member or the Government of the State to which he belongs has any specific request to make in this regard, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas will be more than happy to recommend it to this *Navratna* company. We will advise them, request them, fall on our knees and beg them, but the decision as to what they do lay best in the *Navratna* and I think we should respect that.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Sir, Assam is the first State in Asia where oil was discovered hundred years back and the first refinery was established. Since then the associated gas along with petroleum products has been flared. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the ONGC has a perspective plan for effective utilisation of gas in Assam as a Special Economic Zone. The Assam Gas Cracker Project, which was conceived 20 years back ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: This Question is with regard to power project.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: I am also asking regarding the power project. Is there any other proposal, besides Assam Gas Cracker Project, for commissioning as gas-based power project in Assam? I would like to have a specific assurance from the Minister about stoppage of criminal flaring of associated gas, which is resulting in the loss of this valuable property of our country.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, although the hon. Member has wandered somewhat beyond the ambit of the original question, I would be happy to answer him.

One is that ONGC produces gas, it does not use the gas. Decisions regarding utilization of the gas will have to be taken on the one hand by the State Government and the State Electricity Board as also by entrepreneurs who are operating in the State of Assam. We would be happy to receive proposals from them as we have been doing and trying to ensure that the quantity of gas that is produced—not only by ONGC but, insofar as Assam is concerned, perhaps more importantly, by Oil India Limited – is actually fully utilized.

Sir, he asked about the Gas Cracker Project. There the reason why we have had great difficulty in bringing the matter to a financial closure is that the gas lenders would need to get adequate comfort that there will be economic returns on a scale which would justify the very large amount of finances involved. So, we have very recently, two to three months ago, convened a meeting of the lenders to try to ascertain as to what is the bottom line on the basis of which they will proceed towards financial closure. They have made some suggestions with regard to further fiscal concessions that the State Government would have to make. I have written to the hon. Chief Minister of Assam and I am awaiting his reply. With regard to the Central Government, the decision really rests more with the hon. Finance Minister than with myself. But I would like to assure the hon. Member that the Ministry of Petroleum's heart is with Assam. We are doing all we can to persuade the more heard-hearted amongst us to come forward in such a way as to facilitate an expeditious financial closure of this project.

MR. SPEAKER: You have got more than possibly you expected.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. CHANDER KUMAR: Sir, ONGC has exported some gas to the Jwalamukhi area of Kangra district in Himachal Pradesh. But it has not been utilised and it has been plugged. I would like to know whether the Government is planning to have a gas-based power plant, either in the Government sector or in the private sector, in that area or not.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, this question should be addressed to the Power Minister of Himachal Pradesh Government. As far as we are concerned, if there is a use to be found, we would much rather supply gas than flare it.

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the diesel and petrol depot in Satna District of Madhya Pradesh is lying closed for the last three months and petrol and diesel supplied there is being brought from a distance as far as 250 Kms. The consumers there have to pay 80 paisa per litre extra to get diesel and petrol. Sir, through you, I would like to know from the honourable Minister whether the closed diesel and petrol depot will be made operational again or not.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it does not have any relevance to this question. Still I can answer *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI GANESH SINGH: It is related to your department.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: But it must be related to the question. Still I am ready to answer it. We closed the depot there since the common men living in Satna had severe risk because of that depot and so we demanded that we should be allotted land at a place adjoining Satna which should not pose any threat of accident to people. We have not yet got such a land therefore we are supplying petrol and diesel from Jabalpur. I would like to ask the honourable member to find out any such piece of land and inform us. We will not have any objection. The depot that had been closed because it posed risk of life to people would be transferred to some other place.

SHRI GANESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the depot is already there ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You have already put a question not really relevant to the main Question. Now, please co-operate.

Now, Shri Babu Rao. Please put a question relating to the main Question.

DR. BABU RAO MEDIYAM: Sir, in the Krishna–Godavari basin of ONGC, there are many workers working on contract basis and on temporary basis both on the technical and non-technical sides. I want to know from the hon. Minister as to whether there is any proposal to regularise them or not.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put a separate Question.

Shri Brajesh Pathak, kindly ask supplementary only on the main Question. Just any question related to gas cannot be put.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of honourable Minister that Uttar Pradesh is the most densely populated state in India. Instead of launching new power projects, the power projects in U.P. are being closed. Whole region is reeling under power crisis. Industrialists, poor people, students and youth all are facing difficulties due to this crisis. Therefore, I would like to ask the honourable Minister whether the Government plans to start another power project similar to that at Orraiya.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: This question should be addressed to Uttar Pradesh Government. If they have any proposal, then they should give it to us and then we will see whether we have gas available to set up any such project.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will have to interrupt the members from putting supplementaries if they are not related to the main Question.

[Translation]

DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA: Mr. Speaker. Sir, I would like to know whether the Government propose to set-up any gas based power project in Punjab.

MR. SPEAKER: What and what type of project?

DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am talking about gas based power project in Punjab. Does the Government of India propose to establish any gas based power project in Punjab?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He has given the full answer to it.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to bring to the notice of honourable Minister that he referred to Gujarat in his answer and he knows that an agreement has been reached on Dahej. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that in Gujarat Coal has to be brought from far flung areas and it is brought by trains. Railways have increased their freight charges. Very poor quality of coal is being supplied to Gujarat. Therefore, it has become necessary for power plants to obtain gas. Therefore, I would like to ask by when do you hope to provide gas for power plants in Gujarat so that the power plants can be made operational and the farmers get electricity at affordable rates.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please be brief. We have already taken 18 minutes of the Question Hour.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, on the 23rd September, 2003, there was an MOU signed between the ONGC and the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation to develop the SEZ at Dahej in Gujarat. We have all the details over here as to what they are supposed to put up. But I must stress that, as a matter of policy, we will allow the ONGC to directly participate on matters that have a relationship to their core competence. With regard to gas, we will facilitate it, but I do not think that we should necessarily rely on this *Kamadhenu*.

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir,

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is not being recorded. Kindly co-operate. You are such a senior and a very helpful Member.

*...(Interruptions)**

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Sir, there was a proposal during the time of the previous Government to start a petrochemical project in Kasaragod district and the survey was over. Is there any suggestion before the Government now with regard to this plant?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Petrochemicals is the responsibility of Shri Ram Vilas Paswan.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a reference to special economic zone agreement. I would like to ask honourable Minister as to what is the status of Bihar therein.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in our Ministry no such proposal has been put before us. It may be possible that the proposal may be with some other Ministry.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: That is an enough answer.

[Translation]

Proposals for New Airports

+

*122. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has identified the cities where civil air services are required;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government has received proposals from several States for setting up of new airports as well as upgradation/expansion/modernisation of airports and airstrips in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken thereon, State-wise, airport-wise;

(d) whether the Planning Commission has accorded sanction to the aforesaid projects;

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith total amount to be spent thereon;

(f) whether the private sector is also included in these schemes;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) the time by which these projects are likely to be completed?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (h) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The identification of cities for provision of civil air services is a continuous process and is taken up on various emerging socio-economic factors from time to time. Greenfield airport is permitted where an existing airport is unable to meet projected traffic requirements or a new focal point of traffic emerges.

(b) and (c) A number of cities and towns have been proposed by the concerned State Governments for construction of new airports. For instance, Pakyong, Gangtok (Sikkim), Chiethu, Kohima (Nagaland), Mopa, Panaji (Goa), Chakan, Pune & Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra), Ludhiana (Punjab), Ajmer (Rajasthan), Devanahalli (Bangalore), Gulbarga, Bellary & Bijapur (Karnataka), Shamshabad, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), Kannur (Kerala) and Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh). Similarly some State Governments have also requested upgradation/expansion/modernization of airports such as Chennai in Tamil Nadu, Dehradun in Uttaranchal, Lucknow & Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, Surat in Gujarat, Jaisalmer

*Not recorded.

& Jaipur in Rajasthan, Mysore in Karnataka, Nagpur in Maharashtra, Raipur in Chhattisgarh and Cuddapah in Andhra Pradesh.

(d) and (e) Government of India has already given approval for setting up of new international airports at Devanahalli near Bangalore, Shamshabad near Hyderabad and Mopa in Goa. Other proposals for new airports are in preliminary stages of consideration and Planning Commission will be consulted at appropriate stages wherever necessary. Approximately Rs. 1260 crores are likely to be spent in construction of Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) and Rs. 1300 crore in Hyderabad International Airport Limited (HIAL). The cost of construction of Mopa airport is yet to be estimated.

(f) Private Sector participation is envisaged in construction of new greenfield airports.

(g) and (h) The projects regarding BIAL and HIAL are likely to be completed within 33 months and 36 months of the financial closure respectively. In case of Mopa airport the State Government has undertaken detailed techno–economic feasibility study and the likely completion schedule is not known at present.

[Translation]

SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question has been asked about air strips. But in answer there is no mention of air strips. Therefore I would like to ask a specific question from honourable Minister as to at what level is the proposal for approval of airstrips, runway for Parbhani area is pending.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, about the information asked for by the honourable member I would like to say only that the Parbhani airstrip is under the ambit of the State Government and we don't have any such proposal with Airport Authority in this regard.

SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL: Sir, my second question is that proposal for construction of airport in Navi Mumbai is pending with the Central Government. I would like to know the reasons therefor; and by when the action is expected to be completed. By when both these airports will become operational?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the hon Member wants information regarding Navi Mumbai and Pune, Jharkhand. I would like to inform tell him that the present airport in Pune is that of Air Force where we give all the services under Civilian Enclave. Pune is a very important city and a new airport should be established there. Action is being taken by our Ministry for the same. Action is being taken regarding all the new airports being constructed in the country including one at Pune, Jharkhand and Navi Mumbai under green field airport. It means that there will be private participation and participation of State Government as well and to some extent that of airport authority of Government of India. Action is being taken for both the airports and site identification work is nearly complete. Now the technical survey and study is being conducted. I believe that in near future approval will be obtained for both the airports and further action will be started *...(interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Ask a pointed supplementary question

[Translation]

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to point out to the honourable Minister through you, that there is Jaggannath Dham in Orissa, a place of lord Jaggannath. Maximum number of visitors come there and now the number of foreign visitors has also increased very much *...(interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Put your question,

...(interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: There is only one Airport in Orissa, which was declared as International Airport named after Late Shri Biju Patnaik during the N.D.A. regime, but no development activity has been undertaken there so far *...(interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Put your question.

[Translation]

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Whether Government have allocated any special funds for that Airport and if not, whether the Government have accorded its approval for its expansion as well as providing international status to it? *...(interruptions)*

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I think the Hon. Member is seeking information about the Bhubaneshwar Airport. We have chalked out plans in respect of nearly 25 non-metro-airports for their upgradation and modernisation. Bhubaneshwar is an important place. The information sought by the hon. Member will surely be provided ...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI B. MAHTAB: Please tell us about the international airport?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: As regards international airports also, other Airlines will start operating with the increase in demand of flights. I am sure Bhubaneswar will definitely figure among them...*(interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It seems this is a very popular Ministry. Only 36 hon. Members have expressed their intention to ask supplementary questions. I think we must have a special session for this. Let me try my best. I know I will annoy at least 30 Members.

SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI: At Hubli airport, which is in Karnataka, despite the investments made by the Government during the NDA regime, so far the Director-General. Civil Aviation, has not cleared the night landing facilities. What is the reason?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: For which Airport?

SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI: I am talking of Hubli in Karnataka.

The second thing is that the area, the total northern part of Karnataka is called Bombay-Karnataka. So far, there is no connectivity to Mumbai from Hubli. Is there any plan to provide connectivity for Mumbai?

The third thing is that there is no passenger amenity so far. People who come to receive the passengers have to wait outside the airport even when there is rain. Is there any proposal for these things?...*(interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please think of the other hon. Members who want to put questions.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Hubli is an important city of North-Karnataka as the hen. Member has said. It is receiving our due attention. It did not have flights until a few years ago. Now, the flights have started operating. The process of modernising and upgrading the airport is an ongoing process. We will take your concerns about night-landing facilities also into account. We will definitely respond to it.

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN: Thank you, Sir, for allowing me. Hon. Speaker, Sir, Kanyakumari is an international tourist centre. Moreover, it is also a pilgrimage centre where people all over the country and abroad are coming throughout the year. Enough area is also available to set up an aerodrome there. Considering the necessity, will the Government come forward to set up an aerodrome in Kanyakumari?

MR. SPEAKER: Mention the place, the hon. Minister will know about it.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: As of now, of course, we do not have any concrete proposal for setting up an airport there. But, we will conduct a study. I would like to respond to the Member directly about it.

SHRI MILIND DEORA: Sir, keeping in mind that some 40 per cent of the country's international passenger and cargo traffic is handled by the Mumbai International Airport, I am grateful to the hon. Minister for taking up the task of upgrading the airport on a war-footing. My two questions pertain to ...*(interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please put only one question.

SHRI MILIND DEORA: My question is in two parts. One part of the question pertains to the expansion of the runway. What is the status of that? What is the constraint involved in the expansion work? Today, there is an article in the *Asian Age* which spoke about the Ministry finalising bids by private operators for the upgradation and expansion of the airport by the middle of December. How true is this reporting? Can we expect work to begin any time soon?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: It is a fact that the Mumbai Airport has a lot of constraints, especially due to the large number of slums in the periphery of the airport. This is a historical problem. We are trying our best to solve this problem under the policy of the State's Slum Rehabilitation Scheme. We have made arrangements for approximately 2000 hutments to be moved. Moneys have been paid. They have been re-housed. But, somehow, there has been delay on account of some local support from the State Government in clearing the slums which have already been re-housed. That is affecting the short-term measures which the hon. Member is seeking to know.

As far as the other report of Mumbai is concerned, I can tell you that the joint venture proposal for Mumbai and Delhi Airports is under way. We are expecting the technical and financial bids to be available with us somewhere in the first half of next year ...*(interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow a Half-an-Hour Discussion. Whoever says 'Sir', his name will not be called.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Brahmanada Panda. Please mention the name of the city only.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Hon. Speaker, Sir, through your, I would like to know from the hon. Minister when the Biju Patnaik Airport is going to be completed and what is the allocation that has been made to expand the Biju Patnaik Airport.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I have responded to it earlier. I can assure the Member that the Bhubaneswar Airport is receiving our highest attention. I can also assure the Members across the House that about 25 Airports, besides the six major Airports of Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata Hyderabad and Bangalore in the six major cities, are going in for major expansion and modernisation in the next two years beginning 2005-06.

We are identifying these airports and out of these, Bhubaneswar is receiving the highest priority.

MR. SPEAKER: By this time, the number of Members who have raised their hands to ask supplementaries has increased to 50.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me a chance to speak ...*(Interruptions)*. Previously, the N.D.A. Government had announced the setting up of international airports at Jaipur and Udaipur in Rajasthan for which funds were also allocated. I, through you, would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the present Government propose to set up international airports at Jaipur and Udaipur? If so, the time by which these are likely to be set up?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to say again that we do not have airports of very good standard. When we compare them with airports of the world we really feel sorry for the condition of our airports ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: We are making a mockery of the whole thing. One hon. Member is putting the Supplementary. I am trying may best to go to all the sides and you are continuously interrupting. Who is benefited by this? Please do not do this.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Jaipur and Udaipur both the cities are important from the tourism point of view. I would, therefore, like to say with conviction that Jaipur and Udaipur both the cities should get airports of international standard. This is our endeavour. This work is likely to start next year.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No table thumping is necessary.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri C.K. Chandrappan.

...*(Interruptios)*

MR. SPEAKER: He is also a Member. He is raising his hand from the first Question. Can I allow 500 supplementaries?

...*(Interruption)*

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the main answer, the Minister has stated that there is a proposal regarding the upgradation of Kannur Airport in Kerala.

MR. SPEAKER: Your just mention the airport. He will understand.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Sir, I would like to know from the Minister whether there is any concrete proposal for making it a joint venture airport and if so I would like to know the details thereof.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I will not be able to give full details of what the hon. Member is wanting to know, but if he just gives me details. I will respond to him.

SHRI SACHIN PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know, through you, from the hon. Minister whether he is thinking of providing a feeder airport to the New Delhi

International Airport as most of the tourists who land in Delhi look to go to Agra to see the Taj Mahal. Is there a proposal in the Ministry to provide some sort of assistance or a feeder airport to reduce the congestion at the Delhi Airport? There was a proposal to provide an airport in West Uttar Pradesh, in Gautam Buddh Nagar. Is the Ministry considering that proposal?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, the hon. Member is right that the airports of Mumbai and Delhi have already reached a very high level of saturation primarily due to single runway operations and with the increasing volume of traffic, I am sure most of us experience that during peak hours it takes either half-an-hour or 45 minutes to take off or to land at Mumbai and Delhi. Therefore, the proposal for the New Delhi Airport is to have a second runway. Fortunately, the land is available in New Delhi and that proposal is very active in our Ministry. We will take this up in the next programme of expansion and modernisation and that will itself release a lot of potential of the Delhi Airport.

However, with regard to making another airport at Delhi, I would like to say that as of now there is no immediate proposal. But most of the major cities in the world have more than one airport. So, I am sure, in the years to come, New Delhi, Mumbai and other major cities may also have this facility.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister is not giving the factual position ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It will not be recorded, Shri Mohan Singh.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not answer unless the question is permitted.

[Translation]

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member is an able Minister of the Government. I am listening to his reply. There are two parts of his question ...*(Interruptions)*. One pertains to the modernisation of the airports and the other one is regarding the international airports are proposed to be started and where are the details thereof as the hon. Minister has not made it clear in his reply.

Secondly, as regards the expansion and upgradation of the airports, whether there is a proposal for starting and upgrading any international airport in Uttar Pradesh?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to clarify a little bit that it is not a big thing to designate an airport as an international airport. First, it is more important that an airport should be constructed of international standard. Wherever there is traffic and demand, it is not a big thing to convert that airport into international airport. I would like to say that the number of the existing international airports is not small and it is a ongoing process. Recently, Singapore Airlines has introduced a flight upto Amritsar. Apart from it several other Airlines have also introduced Amritsar flights. In days to come International flights will start operating is such other cities allow also. Just now a flight from Guwahati to Bangkok is going to start. All is an ongoing process. The major challenge before us is that we have to make our airports of world standard and it is more important.

[English]

SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL: Sir, Amritsar International Airport has been set up since a long time. The Singapore Airlines has got the permission to operate from there. But I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether permission has been given to other airlines also to operate from Amritsar International Airport.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, Amritsar is a very important city from the point of view of trade, commerce, religion and other aspects. Therefore, we would definitely accord highest priority to it. In fact, for the information of hon. Member, Amritsar Airport is already an international airport. It has to be made like an international airport. That is the real challenge. We are working towards that. I can assure you that in the years to come, you will find Amritsar having a world class airport.

As far as flights are concerned, yes, there is a proposal from Singapore Airlines. Other airlines are already flying to Amritsar and our carriers also are flying. But in the years to come, once we have a good international airport, automatically there would be more demand from more international airlines to come there.

SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL: Sir, there has been a lot of demand.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: There is no infrastructure, unfortunately. That is a fact.

SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL: Sir, Singapore Airlines has been allowed to operate. Can other airlines be also allowed to operate from Amritsar?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you answering? I have not allowed second supplementary.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Mr Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to ask a specific question from the Minister regarding air-strips. There is an air-strip at Jharsuguda in Orrisa of the time of Second World War. Private investors have agreed to invest some money thereon. The State Government have sent a proposal to the Government in this regard. I would like to know whether he is going to acceed to it?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: We have nearly 80 operational airports in our country. Many airports are non-operatioal. The airport at Jharsuguda about which you are talking might be an airport of the State Government of Orrisa. We are definitely prepared to extend our cooperation if they intend to have that upgraded and started with the help of the private investors.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question I wanted to ask, has been put by Shri Sachin pilot. I would like to repeat that question whether any proposal for setting up an airport of international standard at Greater NOIDA is under consideration of the Government? Whether the Government of India are ready to take a favourable decision thereon?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I have already informed that a proposal for setting up another airport near the big cities is an ongoing process. Right now, we do not have any concrete proposal before us but if any proposal is received in future, we shall definitely act upon that.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shir Tapir Gao.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HEMLAL MURMU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, *...(Interruptions)* you have called me.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Do not dictate the Chair.

[Translation]

SHRI HEMLAL MURMU: Sir, you had called me *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do not take down anything that he says.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: You have the habit of disobeying the Chair. I have decided not to call you now. I have called him. Please sit down.

SHRI TAPIR GAO: Hon. Speaker, Sir, in the field of civil aviation, Arunachal Pradesh remains the 'kala pani' of civil aviation. Nowadays, Andaman and Nicobar Islands are no more a 'kala pani'. In the field of civil aviation, Arunachal Pradesh is the only State where there is no connectivity through air service.

[Translation]

Through you, I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to whether he would go himself for the inauguration of the airport in Arunachal Pradesh so that I could also accompany him *...(Interruptios)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please, no cross talks and no whisperings.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: This is true that there is no active airport in Arunachal Pradesh but keeping in view the special situation of Arunachal Pradesh, as helicopter services are being provided by Pawan Hans, we held a meeting yesterday itself with the north-east forum as desired by the Hon'ble Members. This issue was included in the agenda for consideration and some efforts would certainly be made in future in this regard.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Hemlal Murmu, you should learn not to interrupt the Chair.

[Translation]

SHRI HEMLAL MURMU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to have your protection. I want to know whether the

*Not recorded.

government have received any proposal to set up airports at Dumka, Devgadh, Dhanbad and Bokaro in Jharkhand and to link them with air routes? If so, the effective steps taken so far by the Government in this regard?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, say 'yes' or 'no'.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: At this moment, we have no proposal but definitely we would try in this direction keeping in view your feelings *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Sir, kindly give me also an opportunity to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: Your party has been given time.

[English]

MS. MEHBOOBA MUFTI: Jammu and Kashmir is a tourist State which besides earning good revenue also generates quick employment. Fortunately or unfortunately, Jammu and Kashmir has been in news for the last 15 years because of which it has become a very known place, and everybody would like to visit it. With the change in the situation, in terms of number, our tourism has touched a new hight now. Also, in spite of negative tourist adversaries outside the country we are also getting foreign tourists.

[Translation]

After the attack of the 11th September, the tourists of the Gulf and Arbian countries

[English]

they are the people with money

[Translation]

who used to visit American and European countries earlier, now due to

[English]

the hassles on security reasons

[Translation]

account of the security reasons, are not visiting there

[English]

We would like to persuade those tourists to visit J&K. These people usually insist on granting landing rights to their private planes. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister—if we work on these projects, go and persuade these people to visit J&K—whether they be granted the landing rights so that tourism can pick up, and we can show the world a different picture of Kashmir, which is being projected otherwise.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I can assure the hon. Member that J&K receives the highest priority in our scheme of things. In fact, amongst 25 non-metro airports, which I was mentioning earlier, which are being upgraded to international standards, the first airport where the work has physically started is the Srinagar airport. The Srinagar airport will rank amongst one of the finest airports in the country, and that is specially with an eye to give a boost to tourism in the State of J&K.

As regards other issues of allowing other smaller planes or chartered planes to land, of course within the policy framework, there is no issue *...(Interruptions)*. We will allow whoever applies within the policy framework.

[Translation]

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, please give me also permission to ask a supplementary question on this.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You came to the well and you are being punished for it.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Raghunath Jha. Please speak slowly and ask questions pointedly.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: For the expansion of the Lok Nayak Jaiprakash Narain Airport, Patna, the

Government had asked for land from the state government. The state government has made available land many years ago and has also provided other facilities. Despite that, the expansion work has not been carried out so far. What is the justification behind it?

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: I am not getting an opportunity to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: You people do not even understand jokes.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have already called many hon. Members who came to the well.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: On my own I have suggested that I shall allow an Half-an-Hour discussion on this. There I will call your name first. You please give a notice and I will call you.

[Translation]

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: What the ho'ble member has said about the expansion of the Patna Airport.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I earnestly appeal to you all that please do not disturb each other. An hon. Member has put a question and the Minister is replying. You have no patience even to hear that. What is this? So many young boys and girls are sitting here. They are watching us. Please let us behave.

[Translation]

Questions of all are important. You have got no monopoly.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: The expansion of that airport is essential keeping in view the traffic and for landing of bigger aeroplanes there. For it, we are making all out efforts. But no action has been taken so far in this regard. The state government has promised to make land available. Necessary action is being taken and as soon as it is completed, we would take action there upon.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: I challenge his response. The state government has provided land in Patna at a well known place of Dhobi Ghat *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If you are not satisfied, there are other ways.

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: There are other ways. If the Minister has misled the House, there is a method, and you follow that method.

Now, Shri A.K.S. Vijayan.

SHRI A.K.S. VIJAYAN: Sir, is there any proposal to upgrade the Chennai airport to the international standard? If so, the hon. Minister can state the present status.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, Chennai, of course, is one of our most important cities and there is no question of ignoring it. Whatever attention Chennai requires, we will give. Upgradation and modernisation are an on-going process.

Chennai will always receive the highest priority and attention.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Harin Pathak. This is the last supplementary.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: I am making a note of all the hon. Members who are rising unnecessarily. You will see the consequence soon.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the hon'ble Minister has submitted in his reply that renovation

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*Not recorded.

and modernization is a continuing process. The modernization and renovation process of Sardar Vallabh Bhai international airport at Ahmedabad has been approved by all the previous governments. I regret to say that the renovation work has been suddenly stopped after the new government has taken over. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister about the timeframe by which this project, approved by all the governments, will be completed?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I agree with the feeling of the hon'ble Member which he has expressed about the Ahmedabad airport. A new terminal for the Ahmedabad international airport should be constructed and it should be modernized ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Then I will ask the Minister not to reply. If you do not have the patience, if we cannot behave sensibly and if nobody is interested in hearing the replies, then he need not reply.

Mr. Minister, please conclude your reply.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I was not satisfied with the work that was sanctioned for the Ahmedabad airport. The airport was not going to be of that standard of which it should be. That's why we have taken up to the design work again. It design has been chalked out by an international consortium and with next few months we are going to start the whole process of renovating the Ahmedabad airport. In this regard it is my submission that Ahmedabad is included among the modern airports that we are going to construct. After making the design of the Ahmedabad airport as a benchmark we want to have a replica of it in all other airports. Therefore, please bear with us the delay of a few months.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: There is nobody to raise question about Kolkata.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I have one additional information.

[Translation]

I want to give information about the Patna airport.

MR. SPEAKER: Please give information about the Patna and Kolkata airport.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: The state Government has provided some land for increasing the threshold of runway.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Just sit down please.

Can we not behave in a sensible manner? If another Member speaks at the same time, how can we hear him? You do not have the patience to hear the answer from the hon. Minister.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is becoming a disease with you. No cross-talks.

Now, you complete your answer.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Some of the members were getting agitated that land had been provided for the Patna airport, but action is still being taken to acquire a major land required for that airport.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: There are two persons who cannot put question. They are the Speaker and the leader of the opposition. About Kolkata you are not saying anything. It is all right.

[Translation]

New Rail Lines

*123. SHRI SITA RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the new railway lines which have been surveyed but not laid till now, State-wise;

(b) the steps taken to lay the new railway lines; and

(c) the time by which this work is likely to be completed?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) to (c) The details of new line surveys completed in the past few years since 1997-98 but where projects have not been taken up so far, are given in the enclosed Annexure. It has not been feasible to take up construction of all the surveyed lines due to unremunerative nature, heavy throwforward of ongoing projects and constraints of resources.

Annexure

(a) to (c) Survey of new lines completed in the last few years since 1997–98 but projects not taken up so far

(Rupees in Crore)

Sl.No.	Name of Survey	State	Kms	Cost as per survey report
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Port Blair-Diglipur	Andaman (UT)	239	867
2.	Zaheerabad-Secunderabad	Andhra Pradesh	120	166
3.	Patancheru-Adilabad	Andhra Pradesh	317	526
4.	Pattancheru-Jogipet	Andhra Pradesh	45	108
5.	Pandurangpuram-Bhadrachalam	Andhra Pradesh	12	32
6.	Chandrampalem-Sarpavaram	Andhra Pradesh	12	20
7.	Ongole-Donakonda	Andhra Pradesh	87	135
8.	Gadag-Wadi via Yelburaga	Andhra Pradesh	252	458
9.	Karchiguda to Chityal	Andhra Pradesh	87	156
10.	Armoor to Adilabad	Andhra Pradesh	136	273
11.	Cuddapah to Nellore via Badvel, Atmakur and Butchireddipalem	Andhra Pradesh	181	355
12.	Patancheru to Akkanapet	Andhra Pradesh	102	183
13.	Kurnool-Kamalapuram	Andhra Pradesh	180	153
14.	Motumari-Jaggayapeta BG line to Miryalguda	Andhra Pradesh	57	103
15.	Bhadrachellam Rd (Kothagudem) and Vishakapatnam	Andhra Pradesh	277	1025
16.	Kovvur to Bhadrachalam	Andhra Pradesh	151	244
17.	Nadikudi to Srikalahasti via Karempudi, Vinukonda, Kanigiri, Podili and Darsi	Andhra Pradesh	308	539

1	2	3	4	5
18.	Yerraguntala to Dharmavaram via Pulivendla	Andhra Pradesh	120	224
19.	Kantakapalli-Kottavalasa-Anakapalle bye pass line	Andhra Pradesh	33	123
20.	Mantralayam Road-Kurnool via Yemmanagar	Andhra Pradesh	111	241
21.	Falaknuma-Umadanagar-Airport	Andhra Pradesh	20	56
22.	Ponduru-Rajam	Andhra Pradesh	19	53
23.	Jaggayyapet-Miryalgudda	Andhra Pradesh	66	135
24.	Donakonda-Vodarevu	Andhra Pradesh	113	229
25.	Dharwad-Belgaum via Bailhongal and Kitur	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka	97	229
26.	Cuddapah to Madanapalli via Bangalore, Lakkireddipalli, Rayachoti and Vayalpadu	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka	172	420
27.	Cuddapah to Bangarapet via Madanapalle	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka	255	579
28.	Chittor-Bangarapet	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka	140	356
29.	Lekhapani-Kharsang, Tirap-Lekhapani	Assam	31	85
30.	Barpeta Rd-Tihu.	Assam	58	127
31.	Sarthabari-Changasari	Assam	60	153
32.	Makum-Shikohaghat	Assam	6	15
33.	Dangri-Dhola	Assam	6	15
34.	Karimganj-Maishashan	Assam	10	16
35.	Murkongselek-Passighat	Assam, Arunachal Pradesh	30	68
36.	Digaru-Byrnihat	Assam, Meghalaya	20	93
37.	Azra-Byrnihat	Assam, Meghalaya	30	223
38.	Dimapur-Kohima	Assam, Nagaland, Manipur	88	912
39.	Banka-Nawadah	Bihar	148	393
40.	Koparia-Bihariganj via Alamnagar	Bihar	56	98
41.	Badlaghat-Alamnagar-Bhawanipur-Purnea-Dalkhola	Bihar	150	402
42.	Sitamarhi-Jayanagar	Bihar	117	264
43.	Supaul-Araria	Bihar	92	218
44.	Pratapganj-Bhimnagar-Bathanaha	Bihar	57	126

1	2	3	4	5
45.	Madhepura to Pratapganj via Singheswasthan and Triveniganj	Bihar	60	126
46.	Bihariganj-Chattarpur Rd. via Murliganj	Bihar	85	199
47.	Kursela-Rupali-Saharsa	Bihar	91	179
48.	Hajipur-Samastipur via Nathuwa	Bihar	63	91
49.	Hasanpur-Barauni	Bihar	43	105
50.	Deoria Sadar-Padrauna	Bihar	63	116
51.	Darbhanga-Saharsa-Kukeshwarasthan	Bihar	94	166
52.	Laheria Sarai-Kusheshwarasthan	Bihar	55	119
53.	Muktapur-Kusheshwarasthan	Bihar	54	117
54.	Salauna-Alauli via Bakhri	Bihar	20	30
55.	Koparia-Bihariganj	Bihar	64	160
56.	Janakpur Road-Madhubani via Benipatti	Bihar	50	126
57.	Motihari-Sitamarhi	Bihar	77	137
58.	Hajipur-Motipur	Bihar	67	106
59.	Simri Bakhtiarpur-Bihariganj	Bihar	54	98
60.	Arariya-Galgalia	Bihar	100	190
61.	Muzzaffarpur-Darbhanaga	Bihar	66	118
62.	Hathua-Deoria via Line Bazar, Salarkhurd, Phulwaria	Bihar	85	200
63.	Gaya-Chatra	Bihar, Jharkhand	82	284
64.	Katihar-Tejnarainpur via Manihari with extention upto Baluka Road	Bihar, West Bengal	57	142
65.	Chunar-Sasaram	Bihar/Uttar Pradesh	124	211
66.	Bijwasan-Bahadurgarh	Delhi, Haryana	36	112
67.	Maripet-Tuglakabad	Delhi, Uttar Pradesh	36	288
68.	Kodinar to Pipavav	Gujarat	99	120
69.	Dahod-Banswara	Gujarat	120	321
70.	Porbander to Porbander port	Gujarat	5	13
71.	Dahanu Road-Nasik Road	Gujarat, Maharashtra	168	821
72.	Modasa-Shamlaji	Gujarat, Rajasthan	23	43

1	2	3	4	5
73.	Sirsa-Hissar	Haryana	93	166
74.	Jakhal-Fatehabad	Haryana	80	210
75.	Rewari-Bahadurgarh via Jhajjar	Haryana	77	167
76.	Rohtak to Hissar via Meham and Hansi	Haryana	68	158
77.	Kaithal-Yamuna Nagar via Karnal	Haryana	128	296
78.	Abohar-Tohana via Bhuna & Fatehabad	Haryana, Punjab	207	475
79.	Rewari-Bhiwadi	Haryana, Rajasthan	27	105
80.	Patiala-Narwana	Haryana, Panjab	93	134
81.	Panipat-Muzzafarnagar	Haryana, Uttar Pradesh	93	256
82.	Panipat-Meerut	Haryana, Uttar Pradesh	104	275
83.	Una-Jaijon Doaba	Himachal Pardesh, Punjab	40	270
84.	Baramulla to Kupwara	Jammu & Kashmir	39	359
85.	Udhampur/Katra to Bhairawah, Doda to Kishtwar	Jammu & Kashmir	224	3860
86.	Jammu-Poonch	Jammu & Kashmir	223	4574
87.	Gaya-Daltanganj	Bihar, Jharkhand	135	359
88.	Dehri on Sone-Jadunathpur (Akbarpur)	Jharkhand	39	50
89.	Fatuah-Danapur via Punpun	Jharkhand	46	88
90.	Lohardaga to Korba	Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh	326	622
91.	Bagalkot-Kudachi	Karnataka	111	242
92.	Bijapur-Athani-Shedbal	Karnataka	112	214
93.	Nipani-Raibag via Chikodi	Karnataka	97	107
94.	Almatti to Yadgir	Karnataka	154	303
95.	Gulbarga-Hospet	Karnataka	262	511
96.	Dudda-Tiptur	Karnataka	37	69
97.	Bangalore City-Belur-Mudidere-Sringeri	Karnataka	99	281
98.	Medikeri-Channarayapatna via Holenarsipur	Karnataka	117	212
99.	Kushalnagar-Channarayapatna via Kananur	Karnataka	80	108
100.	Davangere-Bhadravati via Channagiri	Karnataka	90	141
101.	Pandavapura to Shravanabelagola	Karnataka	60	88
102.	Talguppa-Honavar	Karnataka	82	412

1	2	3	4	5
103.	Tumkur to Davangere	Karnataka	210	300
104.	Bisanatam to Marikuppam	Karnataka	12	32
105.	Mysore-Mangalore via Medikeri	Karataka	272	1138
106.	Gadag and Harihar via-Harpanahalli	Karnataka	94	128
107.	Hyderabad-Raichur	Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh	190	456
108.	Thakazhi-Tiruvalla-Pathanamthitta	Kerala	50	131
109.	Kayankulam-Thiruvananthapuram via Adoor and Kottarakkara	Kerala	103	268
110.	Nilambur Road and Feroke via Manjeri and Mavur	Kerala	69	159
111.	Guruvayar-Idapalli	Kerala	77	185
112.	Edappalli to Tirur	Kerala	77	185
113.	Punalur to Thiruvananthapuram	Kerala	72	197
114.	Vaikam-Vaikam Road	Kerala	10	23
115.	Nilambur Road -Nanjangud	Kerala, Karnataka	236	1112
116.	Tellicherry-Mysore via Coorg	Kerala, Karnataka	298	864
117.	Nanjangod and Badagara via Vyitri-Poozhi-Hithod.	Kerala, Karnataka	230	835
118.	Sabarimala to Dindigul	Kerala, Tamil Nadu	201	750
119.	Pune-Nasik	Maharashtra	265	1044
120.	Wardha-Pusad-Nanded	Maharashtra	260	460
121.	Kalyan to Ahmednagar via Murbad	Maharashtra	240	772
122.	Dhule-Nardana-Shirpur	Maharashtra	62	111
123.	Kopargaon to Shirdi.	Maharashtra	17	34
124.	Manmad-Dhule via Malegaon	Maharashtra	98	144
125.	Kolhapur to Ratnagiri on Konakan Rly via Talwade	Maharashtra	211	1273
126.	Ghatnandur-Ambajogai	Maharashtra	21	24
127.	Beed-Jalna	Maharashtra	111	192
128.	Wadsa-Armori-Gadchiroli	Maharashtra	50	77
129.	Jalna-Khamagaon	Maharashtra	155	369
130.	Latur Road-Mudkhed	Maharashtra	138	359

1	2	3	4	5
131.	Rotegaon-Puntamba	Maharashtra	27	47
132.	Goregaon-Borivali	Maharashtra	7	128
133.	Kurla-Mahul	Maharashtra	6	35
134.	Dhule-Nardana-Shirpur	Maharashtra	62	165
135.	Manmad to Indore via Malegaon & Dhule	Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh	350	1001
136.	Indore and Budhni	Madhya Pradesh	223	576
137.	Jabalpur to Panna via Damoh	Madhya Pradesh	245	444
138.	Katangi to Tirodi	Madhya Pradesh	15	35
139.	Bilaspur to Jabalpur.	Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh	372	1284
140.	Pendra Rd-Korba/Gevra Rd	Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh	122	344
141.	Ramtek-Gotegaon via Khawasa, Seoni and Dhuma	Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra	275	528
142.	Ujjain-Ramganjmandi via Agar, Susner	Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan	190	273
143.	Rajnandgaon-Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh	427	1135
144.	Khandwa to Nardana via Khargone. Sendhwa	Madhya Pardesh, Maharashtra	225	520
145.	Agartala to Sabroom	Tripura	110	370
146.	Puri-Konark	Orissa	35	89
147.	Jeypore-Kottametta	Orissa	148	618
148.	Phulbani to Barhampur	Orissa	170	505
149.	Nawapara to Baragarh Road via Padamapur	Orissa	136	346
150.	Jeypore to Navarangpur	Orissa	38	197
151.	Ambikapur-Barwadih (Barwadih-Chirmiri)	Orissa	182	407
152.	Jaypore-Malkangiri	Orissa	130	562
153.	Raipur-Jharsuguda via Khartapalan, Baloda	Orissa, Chattisgarh	310	1060
154.	Sanehwal-Ladhowal	Punjab	31	118
155.	Badowal-Sahehwal	Punjab	29	92
156.	Kapurthala-Beas	Punjab	19	20

1	2	3	4	5
157.	Ferozpur Cantt.-Taran Taran	Punjab	47	122
158.	Sarna-Madhopur	Punjab	12	47
159.	Hoshiarpur-Una	Punjab, Himachal Pradesh	40	143
160.	Chandigarh to Dehradun via Jagadhari	Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh	217	604
161.	Jalore-Falna	Rajasthan	72	160
162.	Churu-Taranagar	Rajasthan	48	76
163.	Hanumagarh-Ratangarh	Rajasthan	198	287
164.	Merta City-Beawar	Rajastha	86	170
165.	Bilara-Bar	Rajasthan	49	47
166.	Nagore-Phalodi	Rajasthan	147	163
167.	Ajmer-Merta Rd	Rajasthan	65	209
168.	Jaipur-Tonk	Rajasthan	97	67
169.	Nokha-Sikar via Bedasar and Sujangarh	Rajasthan	180	431
170.	Phalodi-Balotra via Shergarh, Shaitrawa & Dechhu	Rajasthan	165	291
171.	Dungarpur to Ratlam via Banswara	Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh	176	921
172.	Taramani (Chennai)-Mahabalipuram	Tamil Nadu	44	98
173.	Palwal to Alwar	Rajasthan, Haryana	111	145
174.	Baran-Shivapuri	Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh	150	309
175.	Biyavra-Sirong-Bina	Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh	147	245
176.	Jolarpettai to Hosur via Krishnagiri	Tamil Nadu	104	226
177.	Tindivanam to Cuddalore via Pondicherry.	Tamil Nadu	71	134
178.	Katpadi-Chennai via Guindy-Poonamallee	Tamil Nadu	212	47
179.	Arakkonam to Tinadivanam via Walajapet. Ranipet and Arcot	Tamil Nadu	96	121
180.	Avadi-Sriperumpudur	Tamil Nadu	25	60
181.	Manamadurai to Tuticorin	Tamil Nadu	126	165
182.	Thanjavur-Pottukkotai	Tamil Nadu	47	101
183.	Kumbakonam to Namakal	Tamil Nadu	178	413
184.	Madurai-Tuticorin via Parambupatti, Aruppukkotai Vilathkulam	Tamil Nadu	143	314

1	2	3	4	5
185.	Attipattu-Tiruvallur via Periyapalayam & Attipatu-Puttur via Periyapalayam	Tamil Nadu	144	435
186.	Mettur and Chamarajnagar	Tamil Nadu, Karnataka	182	496
187.	Hamirpur-Hamirpur Road	Uttar Pradesh	6	15
188.	Idgah-Fatehpur bye pass line	Uttar Pradesh	6	13
189.	Byepass line bet. Agra city and Bilochpura	Uttar Pradesh	2	11
190.	Bad-Bhainsa	Uttar Pradesh	5	9
191.	Anandnagar (Phrenda)-Ghughali	Uttar Pradesh	50	107
192.	Khalilabad-Naugarh via Bansi	Uttar Pradesh	71	115
193.	Sitapur-Bahraich via Laharpur	Uttar Pradesh	110	336
194.	Panki to Mandhana	Uttar Pradesh	12	87
195.	Daurala-Hastinapur	Uttar Pradesh	31	93
196.	Laksar-Baksar	Uttar Pradesh	130	430
197.	Chola-Bulandhshahar	Uttar Pradesh	16	42
198.	Golagokaran nath-Shahjanpur via Mohammadi	Uttar Pradesh	67	138
199.	Sambhal-Rajghat	Uttar Pradesh	49	93
200.	Anandnagar-Kaptanganj	Uttar Pradesh	60	145
201.	Shahganj-Amethi via Sultanpur	Uttar Pradesh	110	222
202.	Aligarh-Jhinjhak via Sikandraro and Mainpuri	Uttar Pradesh	268	613
203.	Paniahwa-Tamkuhi Rd	Uttar Pradesh	60	264
204.	Berhan-Etah via Shahjahanpur	Uttar Pradesh	150	457
205.	Bhind-Orai-Mahoba	Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh	216	422
206.	Sambhal-Gajraula	Uttar Pradesh	43	105
207.	Muzaffarnagar-Haridwar (Deoband to Jawalapur)	Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal	58	168
208.	Dehradun-Saharanpur	Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal	69	375
209.	Tanakpur-Purnagiri	Uttaranchal	12	61
210.	Rishikesh-Dehradun	Uttaranchal	20	82
211.	Rishikesh-Karanparyag	Uttaranchal	125	1372
212.	Haridwar-Kotdwar-Ramnagar	Uttaranchal	142	404

1	2	3	4	5
213.	Murshidabad-Kandi via Khagraghat and Behrampur	West Bengal	31	251
214.	Dehri-on-sone-Banjari	West Bengal	36	63
215.	Berhampur-Kandi	West Bengal	30	409
216.	Budge Budge-Falta	West Bengal	25	53
217.	Tarkeshwar-Bardman via Rajnagar	West Bengal	61	131
218.	Dankuni to Sheakhala	West Bengal	17	39
219.	Bakreshwar-Siuri	West Bengal	16	34
220.	Dankuni-Champadanga	West Bengal	42	88
221.	Jhargram-Purulia	West Bengal	130	242
222.	Bandel-Naihati	West Bengal	9	30
223.	Restoration of Magra-Tarakeshwar	West Bengal	52	223
224.	Budge budge-Uluberia	West Bengal	25	910
225.	Joynagar-Raidighi via Udairampur	West Bengal	20	65
226.	Sivok-Giellikhola	West Bengal	25	105
227.	Kharagpur-Dankuni	West Bengal	15	32
228.	Sivok-Singtam	West Bengal, Sikkim	60	1099
	Total		23526	70567

[Translation]

SHRI SITA RAM SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Motihari, Sitamarhi via Shivhar rail line in Bihar is included among the rail lines of which survey has been conducted. In his reply, the hon'ble Minister has used the term "Unremunerative and constraints of results". At this, I want to submit that this railway line connects three districts of Bihar so it is a link between India and Nepal. Sir, there is no transport facility in this area. This area is flood-prone and border area, the question is of a cost of Rs. 137 crores. Whether the government will start and complete the project within the time-frame?

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: We have about 228 surveys complete which cost about Rs. 70,000 crore. All these 228 surveys, including what the hon. Member has mentioned, are very unremunerative in nature and the throw-forward for our 228 projects in hand itself entails about Rs. 46,000 crore. There is a question of constraint of resources. If it is taken up for strategic reasons. We will consider it on a special footing at a later date.

[Translation]

SHRI SITA RAM SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the work of laying the railway lines are laid keeping in view the public interest. Whether it is essential to run the trains on only an remunerative routes? Trains should be run keeping in view the interest of public. The hon'ble Minister for railways had said that lack of money will not be allowed to come in the way of this work. As this is the most important railway line, this fact should be kept in mind. Motihari, Sitamarhi and Shivhar are the bordering area of India and Nepal. I would like to urge upon the hon'ble Minister to initiate work on this railway-line on a priority basis.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, as I mentioned, we are trying to take the initiative to mobilise resources. When the position improves, we will think of considering such cases, even though they are unremunerative taking into account the nature of the cases.

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: There was a proposal for a new railway line from Nanjangud to Wynad to Nilambur. This is connecting three States. The study is already over. But it is kept in abeyance on feasibility question. Now, it has to be considered.

SHRI R. VELU: We will examine it on the merit of the case.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Sir, actually, this question is not directly involved, but I would like to ask it with your kind permission.

Pilibhit Station was surveyed to change it from metre gauge to broad gauge. However, it was rejected. The hon. Minister then agreed to re-survey it. This is an area which has the highest amount of sugarcane production, wheat production and rice production in the country. So, on what basis was this survey rejected, on what basis are surveys conducted, who conducts them and what parameters do you look for?

SHRI R. VELU: We have got four parameters on which the new line projects are taken up:

1. If the project is connecting to industrial development where it can tap the natural and mineral resources;
2. If it is to provide missing links for completing alternative routes to relieve congestion on existing saturated routes;
3. Lines required for strategic reasons; and
4. Inaccessible areas.

These are the four parameters enunciated by the National Transport Policy Committee of 1980.

Now, the point raised by the hon. Member is that though this area has the highest production of agricultural commodities like wheat, sugar, rice etc., we have got a formula where the line has to give 14 per cent RoR (rate of return). We calculate over the years if it is going to yield that return or not. Even if it is not going to yield that return, we are doing. But, however, if it is going to be of a strategic importance and it is going to be for economic development, etc., then we will consider it when our position of resource mobility improves.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Rise in Crude Prices

*124. SHRI SURESH KURUP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether rise in prices of crude oil has turned out to be highly profitable for the upstream players and bad for marketing companies;

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

(c) the average profit made per barrel by upstream companies despite subsidy payouts; and

(d) the gross refining margin of refiners during the second quota of financial year 2005 as compared to last year?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) A comparison of profit after tax (PAT) of upstream and downstream oil PSUs for the period April–September 2004 with the corresponding period of the previous year is at statement-I enclosed.

(c) It is not feasible to work out profit made per barrel since profit is combined profit from sale of crude oil, natural gas and value added products.

(d) A comparison of gross refining margins of PSU refineries during July–September 2004, with the corresponding period of the previous year, is at statement-II enclosed.

Statement I

S. No.	Name of the Company	Profit after Tax (Apr-Sept'04)	Profit after Tax (Apr-Sept'03)
Upstream Oil Cos			
1.	ONGC Ltd.	5,692.07	4,959.54
2.	GAIL	795.09	852.21
3.	Oil India Ltd.	442.08	355.47
Oil Marketing Companies			
4.	IOCL	2,711.07	2,751.44
5.	HPCL	541.61	601.18
6.	BPCL	468.70	796.04
7.	IBP Co. Ltd.	-69.54	81.87

OMC, PAT for April-September 2004 includes subsidy given by upstream companies, which is not included in the PAT for April-September 2003.

Statement II

Gross Refinery Margin Refinery-wise July-Sept'04 vis-a-vis July-Sept'03

	GRM (Rs./MT of Th'put) July-Sept'04	GRM (Rs./MT of Th'put) July-Sept'03
Barauni	2128.82	1165.01
Gujarat	2474.27	1510.01
Haldia	1684.90	916.46
Mathura	5907.95	1464.36
Panipat	2661.87	738.26
Guwahati	4061.34	4925.00
Digboi	4043.13	7564.88
CPCL	2017.15	1149.70
BRPL	3250.08	1429.51
BPCL-Refinery	1737.15	1002.21
KRL, Cochin	1890.09	841.77
NRL	5952.72	2377.54
HPCL-Visakh	2105.82	1247.25
HPCL-Mumbai	1547.55	987.18
Average	2258.28	1284.49

Hydro-Carbon in Assam

*125 SHRIMATI MINATI SEN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether ONGC has found out oil and Hydro-Carbon in three areas of Assam;

(b) if so, whether ONGC has handed over those three Oil Wells to an organisation of Canada, which implies privatisation of those oil wells;

(c) whether in Parbatpur and Karun Pura of Bokaro a huge quantity of coal based Methane Gas is available in 33 wells;

(d) whether ONGC have shifted the responsibility of digging and production in those 33 wells of Methane Gas to a Private Organisation; and

(e) the detailed reasons for outsourcing the Oil and Methane Gas digging by ONGC?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has established hydrocarbons in all three sectors, *viz.,* Upper Assam, Dhansiri Valley and Cachar in the State of Assam.

(b) Government of India and the consortium comprising M/s Assam Company Ltd. & M/s Joshi Technology Limited signed a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) on 23rd February, 2001 for Amguri field in Assam under the second round of offers for the development of small sized discovered fields. Consequent upon approval of the proposal by the Government in 2004 for change of operator and assignment of Participating Interest in the Amguri field, the revised Participating Interest in the field is M/s Canoro Resources Limited (60%) along with Operatorship, and M/s Assam Company Limited (40%). The field was handed over to M/s Canoro Resources Limited by ONGC on the 29th October, 2004 in accordance with the terms and conditions of the PSC.

(c) ONGC is pursuing its exploration and assessment activities for Coal Bed Methane (CBM) in Parbatpur Block of Jharia coal field, Bokaro coal field and North Karanpura coal field. In Parbatpur block, 4 Research & Development (R&D) wells have been drilled and leads have been obtained wherein sustained production of about 6,000 cubic metres per day has been established on testing in an R&D well. However, the commercial viability of CBM gas from Parbatpur remains to be established. In Karanpura and Bokaro blocks, drilling of bore holes for preliminary assessment of the CBM potential is in progress.

(d) and (e) Currently, ONGC is carrying out CBM exploration on its own and availing of the necessary consultancy services. CBM exploration in the country is at an initial stage and requires induction of expertise and state-of-the-art technology from countries where CBM exploration and production is at a more advanced stage. ONGC has plans to invite global tenders from high technology service providers in the area of drilling.

Dismantling of APM Process

*127. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has reversed the dismantling process of APM and has assured that prices of diesel, LPG and Kerosene would now be decided by the Government instead of oil marketing companies;

(b) if so, whether the powers of OMCs to fix prices of petroleum products have been withdrawn;

(c) if so, to what extent the monopoly of the OMCs has been broken;

(d) whether the Government propose to fix/revise the prices of petroleum products in consultation with political parties; and

(e) if so, the further reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) Since the announcement of the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) in the petroleum sector effective 1.4.2002, moves have been made towards decontrolling the pricing of all petroleum products. Post APM, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have been determining the selling prices of petroleum products, except petrol, diesel, PDS kerosene and domestic LPG for which prior consultations with the Government of India have been held. In the case of PDS kerosene and domestic LPG, Government provides a flat rate of subsidy and, in addition, the oil PSUs have been partly sharing the burden of subsidizing these products.

The prices in the international market have sharply risen in the recent months. Considering India's high dependence on oil imports, the increase in international price view to modulating the impact of high international prices on the domestic consumer prices of petrol and diesel, a price band mechanism was put in operation as per which the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) can effect price revisions based on the previous fortnight's average international prices, provided that the exchange rate adjusted C&F (cost & freight) product price was within the band of ± 10% around the mean of (a) last three months' rolling average prices; and (b) last one year's rolling average prices. In case the C&F prices breach the ceiling due to high volatility, OMCs would keep the prices in the band and approach the Government. The ceiling was breached in August 2004 and since then Government have been keeping prices under close review.

In addition, steps have been taken to contain the impact of such increases in the domestic consumer prices of four products, *viz.,* PDS kerosene, domestic LPG, diesel and petrol. The Government reduced excise duties on petrol, diesel and domestic LPG by 4%, 3% and 8%, respectively effective 16-6-2004. Later, effective 19-8-2004, the excise duties on petrol, diesel and PDS kerosene were reduced by 3%, 3% and 4% respectively. Also, effective 19-8-2004, customs duties on petrol, diesel, PDS kerosene and domestic LPG were reduced by 5% each.

Government are constantly monitoring and keeping under careful review the prices of all sensitive petroleum products.

[Translation]

Lack of Passenger Amenities/Facilities at Stations

*128. SHRI KAMLA PRASAD RAWAT:
SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that basic facilities are lacking at large number of railway stations in the country;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the criteria/procedure adopted for providing and monitoring passengers facilities/amenities at railway stations;

(d) the number of complaints/requests received in this regard during the last one year, till date, and action taken thereon zone-wise;

(e) whether the Government has fixed responsibility in case of negligence on the part of railway officials in providing the basic minimum facilities at railway stations;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken by the Government to improve the sanitary conditions and to provide basic amenities at every railway station including provision of funds made and funds spent/to be spent in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) and (b) Basic facilities like drinking water, platform, ticket windows, sitting arrangements etc. are available at all stations. However, Railways are continuously upgrading the facilities depending upon the traffic needs and availability of funds.

(c) Stations have been categorised into six categories (A to F) based on their annaul passenger earnings as given below:-

Categories of Stations for Provision of Passenger Amenities

S.No.	Category	Criteria
1.	A	Non-Suburban stations with an annual passenger earnings of Rs. 6 crore and above
2.	B	1. Non suburban stations with an annual passenger earnings between Rs. 3 crore to Rs. 6 crore 2. Stations of tourist importance, or an important junction station (to be decided by General Manager)
3.	C	All suburban stations
4.	D	Non suburban stations with passenger earnings between Rs. 1 and Rs. 3 crore
5.	E	Non suburban stations with passenger earnings less than Rs. 1 crore
6.	F	Halts

Norms as per statement have been laid down for provision of minimum essential amenities at each category of stations. Scale of amenities varies with category of station. Additional General Managers at Zonal Railway level and Additional Divisional Railway Managers at Divisional level have been nominated as nodal officers for monitoring passenger facilities/amenities at railway stations.

(d) The total number of complaints/grievances received during the year 2003-2004 and upto August 2004 are 30213. These complaints are on various subjects such as improper behavior of staff, reservation issues, working of enquiry offices, non-availability of water, cleanliness of station, maintenance of coaches etc. Zone-wise details are as under:

Railway	No. of complaints
Central	4119
Eastern	1990
Northern	4725
North Eastern	994
Northeast Frontier	673
Southern	2542
South Central	1822
South Eastern	1209
Western	2981
East Central	1688
East Coast	1043
North Central	1467
North Western	1372
South Western	979
South East Central	1366
West Central	1243
Total	30213

(e) and (f) Responsibility for negligence on the part of 2526 number of staff has been fixed. Action has been taken against the staff under Discipline and Appeal Rules. Position regarding the availability of basic amenities and also their functioning is continuously monitored at various levels in the Divisions and also in the Zonal Headquarters. Wherever deficiencies are found, the same are being attended to promptly and staff where they are found to be negligent, are suitably taken up/counseled.

(g) (i) Some of the steps taken for improving the sanitary conditions at the Stations are as under:

- Mechanised cleaning of stations.
- Pay & Use toilet facilities.
- Improvement of toilets by providing glazed tiles etc.
- Introduction of bio degradable toilets in trains.

- Improvement in the supply of water
- Provision of more dustbins
- Provision of washable aprons.

(ii) For monitoring cleanliness at railway stations, regular cleanliness drives are conducted. For providing basic amenities, all zonal railways have been directed to provide basic amenities at all stations expeditiously.

(iii) Provision of funds & expenditure: Higher funds are being allocated every year on provision of passenger amenities over Railway station. The details of the Budget Allotment and Actual Expenditure under Plan Head "Passenger Amenities" in the last four years are given below.

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Budget Allotment	Actual Expenditure
2000-01	190	136.50
2001-02	190	168.92
2002-03	200	175.11
2003-04	205	178.12

Rs. 215 cr. have been allotted in the current year *i.e.* 2004-05.

Statement

Norms for Quantum of Minimum Essential Amenities at various Categories of Stations

S.No.	Amenities	Station Category					
		A	B	C	D	E	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Booking Facilities $ (No. of counters)	15	10	7	4	2	1
2.	Drinking water** (No. of taps)	12 taps on each PF	12 taps on each PF	6 taps on each PF	6 taps on each PF	1 tap/HP on each PF	1 HP at station
3.	Waiting hall/Shed@	100 sqm	50 sqm	0	30 sqm	15 sqm	10 sqm booking office-cum-waiting hall
4.	Sitting arrangement (No. of seats/PF)	100	75	10	50	10	-
5.	Platform shelter Shady trees (on each PF)	400 sqm -	200 sqm -	200 sqm -	50 sqm -	- Shady trees	- Shady trees
6.	Urinals#	10	6	4	4	1	-
7.	Latrines#	10	6	2	4	1	-
8.	Platforms Level -High -Medium -Rail	To be decided by the Zonal Railways					

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9.	Lighting*	50 Lux	30 Lux	50 Lux	30 Lux	20 Lux	20 Lux
10.	Fans*(Nos)	8	4	4	2	-	-
11.	Foot over bridge	To be decided by the Zonal Railways					
12.	Time Table Display	To be decided by the Zonal Railways					
13.	Clock	To be decided by the Zonal Railways					

** Stations falling in water scarcity zones or at station, where water source dries up in summer, drinking water facility should be ensured at every platform by means of syntax tanks/CANS/*Matkas/Piaus* etc. to be decided by GM of the Railways. At less important stations, particularly falling under category E & F, one water supply source at location convenient to passenger may be provided as per Minimum Essential Amenities. Drinking water facility would include all necessary units whether donated by private parties or provided by the Railways themselves.

@ If the variation is marginally on the lower side (upto–5 sqm), then it can be taken to be adequately provided.

1. Number of latrines/urinals includes provision in waiting room/halls. 1/3rd of the toilet may be reserved for ladies. In case of 2 toilets existing, one each should be earmarked for ladies & gents.

2. Number of latrines/urinals can be reduced in water scarcity areas by the Railway with the approval of GM.

$ At A, B, C & D category of stations, the booking counters to operate round the clock except at stations where there is no night working.

Note: (I) At stations where only one ASM is posted, only one booking window will be provided. In respect of 'E' category stations, where the earnings is less than Rs. 20 lakh per annum, the quantum of amenities to be provided at such stations could be decided by General Managers based on actual requirements.

(II) Scale of all the amenities prescribed above are the bare minimum to be provided at the appropriate class of stations. Amenities over and above the prescribed minimum scales will continue to be provided as per norms for provision of amenities at "Recommended Level".

* Details in circular No. 86/Elec.I/138/1 dated 2.12.1988 and 95/Elec. (G)/138/5 dated 19.3.1996.

[English].

Disinvestment of IA/AI

*129. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to divest its holdings in Indian Airlines and Air-India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any time-frame is being made for divestment plan;

(d) if so, whether the rules regarding foreign direct investment are being changed in this regard? and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) and (e) The Government has issued a Gazette notification dated 10.11.2004 indicating Foreign Direct Investment limits in Air Transport Services (Domestic Airlines). The revised limits are 49% through automatic route; and 100% by NRIs also through automatic route. No direct or indirect participation by foreign airlines is, however allowed.

Strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions

*130. SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU:
SHRI K.S. RAO

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is taking any steps to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institution in order to bring economic reforms in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some States have been demanding constitutional Amendment in respect of the Panchayati Raj System;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government propose to restructure various centrally sponsored schemes to give more role to Panchayats;

(f) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of schemes currently in operation;

(g) whether the Government propose to launch some new schemes for giving boost to Panchayati Raj Institutions; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) A Conference of Chief Ministers and State Ministers in-charge of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj on "Poverty Alleviation and Rural Prosperity through Panchayati Raj" was organised at New Delhi on 29-30 June, 2004, jointly by the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

Issues relating to effective implementation of Parts IX and IX A of the Constitution on Panchayati Raj were tabled as agenda for discussion by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. These issues included effective devolution of functions, finances, functionaries, planning, Gram Sabhas, women, reservation for SCs/STs, special problems of SCs/STs, elections, audit, parallel bodies, capacity building and training, and State of the Panchayats Report and jurisprudence. The Conference decided to hold seven Round Table Conferences to formulate a draft action plan towards achieving the objective of strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions to enable them to become true institutions of self-government for the planning and implementation of programmes of economic development and social justice as envisioned in the Constitution.

Six Round Table Conferences have already been held in which 16 of the 18 identified dimensions of Panchayati Raj have been discussed. The remaining two dimensions will be discussed in the seventh Round Table Conference scheduled to be held at Jaipur on 17-19 December, 2004. Ministers in-charge of Panchayats and their representatives have agreed to recommend to their respective Governments the conclusions reached during the six Round Table Conferences on the subjects under consideration for further necessary action. Similarly, the conclusion reached during the seventh Round Table Conference are also proposed to be recommended by the Minister in-charge of Panchayats to their respective Government for adoption.

(c) and (d) During the Chief Ministers Conference held on 29-30 June, 2004, some representatives of the States/UTs demanded Constitution Amendments to the Panchayati Raj system. Having considered all aspects of the proposals, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has decided to Prioritize, facilitate and secure implementation of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 in letter as well as spirit, by encouraging States/UTs to adopt carefully drawn up plans of action to implement the existing provisions of the Constitution.

(e) to (h) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has gone through the list of approximately 300 schemes listed in Volume-II of the Expenditure Budget 2004-05 which, in the explanatory notes, itemizes, *inter alia*, the various Centrally Sponsored Schemes. The overwhelming majority of these schemes is related to the 29 subjects listed in the XI Schedule. In most Centrally Sponsored Schemes, there is considerable scope for increasing the involvement of Panchayats in line with the letter and spirit of Parts IX and IX-A of the Constitution. As such, it is not until the provisions of Article 243G pervade the conceptualization of Centrally Sponsored Schemes that Panchayats will actually be empowered to function as "institutions of self-government" in respect of such schemes. These are among the issues that are being pursued through evolution of consensus in the series of seven Round Tables of Panchayati Raj Institutions being organized by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, six of which have already been held as stated above.

Pension to Handicapped, Widows and Old age People

*131. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government to increase the amount being disbursed as pension to the handicapped, widows and people of old age; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Pensions are released to the handicapped, windows and older persons by the State Governments who may take decisions about raising the quantum of these depending upon the availability of resources.

Talks on Siachen

*132. SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:
SHRI MOHAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Governments of India and Pakistan have under consideration a proposal to withdraw troops from Siachen Glacier;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal and the terms and conditions of such withdrawal;

(c) whether the security aspect of the area has been fully considered in all its ramifications;

(d) if so, the safeguards taken/to be taken to avoid untoward incident in future; and

(e) the annual expenditure incurred on the maintenance and security arrangements etc. of Indian Military posts in Siachen Glacier?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Defence Secretaries of India and Pakistan held talks in New Delhi on 5-6 August, 2004 on Siachen, within the framework of the Composite Dialogue. During the meeting, modalities for disengagement and redeployment of troops were discussed. The two sides agreed to continue with their discussions.

(c) and (d) The Government of India are fully aware of the security implications and all safeguards have been taken to ensure that security of the region is not compromised in any manner.

(e) It would not be in the interest of national security to give these details.

[Translation]

Procurement of 'Kulhars' for use in Railways

*133. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made the use of 'Kulhar' compulsory at the Railway Stations/trains;

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

(c) the number of 'Kulhars' procured/to be procured and the amount spent/to be spent on the same during the current year, zone-wise;

(d) the number of 'Kulhars' daily used/needed by the Railways and its availability, zone-wise;

(e) the criteria/procedure for supply/procurement of 'Kulhars' in Railways;

(f) whether potters will not be able to sell the 'Kulhars' directly to the Railways;

(g) if so, the reasons therefor;

(h) whether the middlemen are likely to get the advantage/benefits of the procedure; and

(i) if not, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to provide remunerative price of 'Kulhars' to the potters?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Zonal Railways, Konkan Railway Corporation Limited and Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) have been instructed that to prevent environment pollution, no plastic cups are to be used in railway premises and these should be replaced with Kulhars.

(b) Khadi/handloom products have also been introduced on Indian Railways, manufacturing process of which is eco-friendly. Introduction of Kulhars and Khadi/ handloom products will also provide job avenues for weaker sections of society by widening the market for their products. This in long run is aimed at improving the environment in Railway stations, ensure better standards of cleanliness and sanitation and take care of the weaker sections of society, giving them additional source of earning and livelihood. In view of using bio-degradable and eco-friendly material for serving tea, lassi etc. it has been decided to introduce the use of Kulhars, replacing the plastic cups on Indian Railways at stations and other places w.e.f. 25.5.2004.

(c) and (d) The details of the procurement and use of Kulhars and the amount spent thereon on the Zonal

Railways and IRCTC is given in statement enclosed. As per the trends indicated by the figures shown in the statement, the projections for the current year is given Zone-wise in the statement enclosed.

(e) 'Kulhars' are bought from Khadi Village Industries Commission (KVIC) through Single Tender after ascertaining reasonableness of price from other agencies like Tribal Cooperatives, Small Scale Industries, Women Development Cooperation. In absence of KVIC or on inability of KVIC to supply the requirement, kulhars at different places are bought from Tribal Cooperatives, Small Scale Industries, Women Development Cooperation, Local Potters etc. The method of survey and quotation is applied for purchase in these cases.

(f) Yes, Sir. Potters will be able to sell the 'Kulhars' directly to Railways.

(g) Does not aries.

(h) Middlemen are not likely to benefit from the procedure as either KVIC, Tribal Cooperative etc. take care of remuneration to potters or else the potters are directly getting the reasonable/remunerative price from Railways.

(i) Railways are adopting the procedure of Single Tender for buying from KVIC or are directly purchasing from willing Cooperatives, Potters etc. wherein price acceptable to the supplying Potters/Cooperatives is given by Railways.

Statement

Procurement and use of Kulhars and the amount spent thereon on the Zonal Railways:

Approximate Figures (June to November, 2004)

Railway/ Zone	No. of Kulhar procured	Expenditure made on Kulhar (Rs.)	No. of Kulhar daily used/required	Availability of Stock with Railways	Source of Procurement
1	2	3	4	5	6
Central	146415	100329	750	Available	KVIC* Local Corp. Potters Tribal Cooperatives, small scale industries, women development Corporations etc.
Eastern	95000	42750	3100	Available	Potters
Northern	327735	147480	10925	Available	KVIC & Associate Organisation/society Potters
North Eastern	67000	20100	27000	Available	Local Potters
Northeast Frontier	65400	36135	2150	Available	Local Potters
Southern	73630	41691	240	Available	Local Potters
South Central	543260	355593	10818	Available	KVIC & Local Potters
South Eastern	1493100	522585	51728	Available	KVIC & Local Potters
Western	410000	295000	2234	Available	KVIC & Local Potters

1	2	3	4	5	6
East Central	711858	207395.50	4400	Available	Local Potters
East Coast	89200	43500	2966	Available	KVIC & Local Corp. Potters Tribal Cooperatives, small scale industries, women development Corporations etc.
West Central	6840000	4104000	38000	Available	Local Potters
South Western	300000	191000	1666	Available	KVIC & Local Potters
North Western	33700	20456	374	Available	Local Corp. Potters
North Central	1025703	317552	7573	Available	Local Corp. Potters
South East Central	114000	41700	5092	Available	KVIC & Local Potters
IRCTC	825221	352544	10500	Available	KVIC, Local potters & Association of Potters
Total	1,31,61,222	68,33,810.5	1,79,516		

*Khadi Village Industries Commission.

[English]

Scrapping of Mandatory Commercial Agreements

*134. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the press News-Item captioned "Code share agreements set to be scrapped" as reported in the 'Times of India' dated October 23, 2004;

(b) if so, whether the Government is planning to phase out mandatory commercial agreements that international airlines have to ink before mounting flights to India;

(c) if so, whether by this step Indian Airlines or Air India would be affected/benefited; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) yes, Sir,

(b) to (d) The matter is under Governments consideration.

Unviable Operation of Flights of IA/AI

*135. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY:
SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India and Indian Airlines have been operating a number of flights which earn less in comparison to the expenditure being incurred on their operations;

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

(c) the details of losses incurred during the last three years, route-wise;

(d) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to make up for the losses; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Details of services operated by Indian Airlines including Alliance Air which do not meet cash cost *i.e.* Direct Cost of operation during the last three years are as under:

Year	Total Services Operated by IA & Alliance Air	No. of services not meeting cash (Direct) cost of operation
2001-02	156	55
2002-03	148	53
2003-04	172	59

As regards Air India, most routes generated cash surplus, which contributed to meet the overheads, *i.e.* direct and indirect fixed costs.

Airlines operations encompass interlinking various domestic and international airports through direct and indirect connections. Because of Airlines operations being global in nature, no separate airport-wise accounts of revenue, expenditure and profitability are maintained by the airline.

The main reasons for losses are: (i) Increases in price of ATF, (ii) Increase in Landing & Navigational Charges, (iii) Increase in rate of exchange & levy of Customs duty on import of leased aircraft, (iv) Increase in Insurance Premium Rates, (v) Additional Security expenditure due to introduction of Sky Marshalling of flights and security at the ladder point etc. (vi) Loss of revenue due to drop in traffic carriage, and (vii) Deployment of higher capacity by Indian Airlines on Category-II and Category-III routes than mandatorily required.

(d) and (e) Both the Airlines have been continuously taking various steps to promote its business and to bring about qualitative and quantitative improvement in its customer related services in order to improve its overall performance. Some of the measures taken in this direction are (i) Fleet Augmentation/Renewal, (ii) Cost Control and Economy measures, (iii) Marketing Initiatives, (iv) Promotional Schemes, (v) In-flight Initiatives, (vi) Service upgrades on ground, (vii) Improvements in Cabin Ambience

[Translation]

Development of SCs

*136. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:
SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the people belonging to SCs are living below the poverty line;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to strictly enforce the laws for development of SCs and bringing them at par with the people of other castes; and

(d) the extent of success achieved by the Government in its efforts?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) As per estimates of poverty made by the Planning Commission for the year 1999–2000, 36.25% of rural and 38.47% of urban Scheduled Caste population was living below poverty line:

(c) and (d) Government has taken several steps for the development of Scheduled Castes so as to bring them at par with other communities. Important measures include the following:

(i) In order to give a greater thrust to the development of Scheduled Castes, the State Governments and Central Ministries have been asked to implement special plan namely Special Component Plan (SCP) for Scheduled Castes under which plan funds of the States/Central ministries in proportion to the population of Scheduled Castes are to be earmarked for spending exclusively on the welfare and development of Scheduled Castes;

(ii) Special Central Assistance is being provided to States and UTs as an additive to their SCP;

(iii) The National Scheduled Caste Finance and Development Corporation is providing loan at a concessional rate of interest to the Scheduled Castes;

(iv) Under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, 49% Share Capital is released to State level Scheduled Caste Development Corporations (SCDCs) which are providing loans at concessional rate of interest and margin money to Scheduled Caste families for undertaking various economic activities;

(v) Besides, the Government is also implementing special schemes like Post Matric Scholarship, Pre-matric Scholarship for the children of those engaged in unclean occupations, Hostels for Scheduled Caste boys and girls, upgradation of merit of Scheduled Caste Students and Dr. Ambedkar National Scholarship Scheme for the educational development of Scheduled Castes;

(vi) In order to supplement the efforts of the Government, the Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are being assisted for undertaking different programmes/activities for the welfare and development of Scheduled Castes.

(vii) Reservation is provided for Scheduled Castes in Government services, public sector undertakings and in educational institutions;

(viii) The National Commission for Scheduled Castes has been set up under Article 338 of the Constitution. The functions of the Commission include investigation, monitoring and evaluation of various safeguards provided for Scheduled Castes, inquiry into specific complaints with respect to deprivation of rights and safeguards of Scheduled Castes and participation in the planning process;

(ix) In furtherance of Article 17 of the Constitution abolishing untouchability and forbidding its practice in any form, the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 has been enacted to enforce the Constitutional provision. Further, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 has also been enacted to prevent the commission of offences of atrocities against the members of the Scheduled Castes, to provide for Special Courts for trial of such offences and for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of such offences.

(x) Government has enacted 'The Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993', as a measure to eradicate manual scavenging and a National Action Plan has been formulated to end this practice by 2007.

Through the governmental efforts, the number of SC families enabled to cross the poverty line has been increased. There has been increase in representation in services and literacy rates.

Gas Pipe Line from Iran

*137. SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:
DR. M. JAGANNATH:

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

(a) whether Ministry of External Affairs has directed the Ministry of Petroleum to start talks with Pakistan on the proposed Iran-India natural gas pipeline;

(b) whether action plan to lay a gas pipeline from Iran to India has been fully prepared;

(c) if so, whether the Government had already conveyed to Pakistan about this proposal;

(d) if so, whether all the problems faced in implementing this project have been cleared;

(e) whether Japan has shown its willingness to fund Iran-India gas pipeline through Pakistan;

(f) if so, the time by which a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken;

(g) whether all the concerned countries *viz* Iran-Pakistan-India, have agreed to implement this project immediately; and

(h) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) To meet the large deficit between demand and supply of natural gas in the country, as projected in Hydrocarbon Vision-2025, and for enhancing the energy security of the country in keeping with the provisions of the Energy Security section of the National Common Minimum Programme, a trans-national onland pipeline from Iran to India transiting through Pakistan is one of the viable option. The matter was recently discussed at the highest level between the two countries and it was decided to pursue the Iran-India natural gas pipeline via Pakistan in the context of overall bilateral trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. The discussions in this regard are continuing.

This project would basically be a commercial project supported by appropriate guarantees for security of supplies. A meeting of the Petroleum/Gas Ministers of the two countries is envisaged in this regard. The Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural gas held a conversation without commitment in Tehran with his Iranian counterpart on 5-6th December 2004. The issue was also touched upon during the Minister's call on the Prime Minister of Pakistan on 24.11.2004.

(e) to (h) As the proposal is at a preliminary stage, these details have not been worked out.

Army Welfare Fund

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

(a) the amount donated by the people of the country for the 'Army Welfare Fund';

(b) the details of the financial assistance provided to the dependents of the Kargil martyrs out of the donated amount;

(c) whether any other scheme has been formulated under the 'Army Welfare Fund' so that financial assistance could be provided to the dependents of martyrs in future; and

(d) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) An amount of Rs. 261.23 crores was received in the Army Central Welfare Fund through public donations during the Kargil Operation.

(b) The following financial assistance was provided to the dependents of Kargil martyrs from the Army Central Welfare Fund and the National Defence Fund in addition to their normal entitlement:

(i) Assistance for dwelling unit–Rs. 5 lakhs.

(ii) Assistance to the parents–Rs. 2 lakhs.

(iii) Children's education assistance–Rs. 2 lakhs (maximum upto two children)

(iv) Immediate relief–Rs. 30,000.

In addition, an ex-gratia of Rs. 10 lakhs was paid by the Government to the next of kin of Kargil martyrs.

(c) and (d) Following schemes are available under Army Central Welfare Fund for providing financial assistance to the dependents of battle casualties in future:

(i) Rs. one lakh each to all medically boarded out disabled battle casualties;

(ii) Rs. 30,000 grant to each of all fatal casualties;

(iii) Rs. 10,000 to 30,000 each to all disabled soldiers retained in service depending upon percentage of disability;

(iv) Upto a maximum of Rs. 50,000 for mobility equipment/artificial limbs for disabled battle casualties;

(v) Upto a maximum of Rs. 30,000 for daughter's marriage;

(vi) Upto a maximum of Rs. 25,000 for modification of bathrooms for handicapped soldiers;

(vii) Distress grants to old war widows, their dependents and war veterans living in penury;

(viii) Demise grant to widows/next of kin of deceased soldiers who die after retirement/invalided out of service.

[English]

Recommendations of Naresh Chandra Committee

*139. SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA:
SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Naresh Chandra Committee has submitted its report to the Government;

(b) if so, the main recommendations of the report;

(c) whether the Government has accepted all the recommendations of the report; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The Government had constituted a Committee, in July, 2003, under the chairmanship of Shri Naresh Chandra, former Cabinet Secretary to prepare a roadmap for the civil aviation sector. The Committee has submitted its report

in two parts. The first part was submitted on 08.12.2003, whereas the second part of the report has been submitted very recently *i.e.* on 02.11.2004.

(b) The main recommendations of the Naresh Chandra Committee are as per statement enclosed.

(c) and (d) These recommendations are under consideration of the Government.

Statement

Main Recommendations of the Naresh Chandra Committee

Report, Part-I

- Lowering systems costs by introducing liberal fiscal regime-rationalisation of taxes on ATF and AVGAS.
- Allow airlines to source ATF from supplier of their choice and improving coordination with other ministries.
- provide common hydrant infrastructure at airports for supply of ATF.
- Reduce airport charges to international level.
- Liberalise international air transport segment.
- Join regional/multilateral groups for better international connectivity.
- Allow domestic private airlines to operate international services.
- Liberalise international air charters.
- Restructuring of Indian Airlines/Air India/Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. by disinvestments etc.
- Lower entry barriers for domestic airlines.
- Raise FDI limits in domestic airlines from 40 to 49% and permit foreign airlines to hold equity.
- Encourage regional air services.
- Establishment of Essential Air Services Fund (EASF) to maintain essential but uneconomical air services/airports.
- Maintain essential air services by minimum subsidy bidding and abolish route dispersal guidelines.
- Encourage helicopter operations and announce specific policy and procedures for helicopter operations.
- Encourage general aviation by suitable incentives.
- Unbundled Airports Authority of India (AAI).
- Expedite privatisation of Mumbai and Delhi airports and privatise other airports as well.
- Ensure choice in ground handling services.
- Upgrade computer systems and provide more space at international airports for immigration and other services.
- Separate ATC services from AAI and vest them with a government owned ATC Corporation under the purview of DGCA.
- Establish a separate economic regulator for aviation sector *i.e.* Aviation Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA).
- Set up mechanism for effective coordination among various agencies.
- BCAS should remain the nodal agency for aviation security.

Report, Part-II

- Take suitable measures for strengthening the infrastructure for training of Pilots, Engineers and other technical personnel, including commercialisation of IGRUA.
- Legislation of Civil Aviation Security Act.
- Improve Immigration and Customs procedures.
- Restructure of DGCA and split up accident investigation from DGCA to a separate authority.
- Amend the Aircraft Act 1934, Aircraft Rules 1937 and the Regulations for effective regulation of all aspects of aviation.
- Enhancement of Air Space Capacity.
- Airport capacity enhancement.
- Enhancement of Communication, Navigation & Surveillance Capability.
- Development of Helipads and Heliports.

Take measures to promote export of indigenous Aeronautical Products.

[Translation]

Manning of Unmanned Gates on Pune-Miraj Section

1380. SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of unmanned gates on Pune-Maraj section of central railway;

(b) whether the Government is aware that due to closure of gates at village Kharade, village Konegaon, village Virawade during night hours is hindering traffic of sugarcane thus affecting crushing of sugarcane on Pune-Maraj section of central railway;

(c) if so, whether the Government is planning to man this gates during night hours; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There are 43 unmanned level crossings on Pune-Maraj Section.

(b) No, Sir. There is no information that closure of these gates during night hours is affecting crushing of sugarcane of section.

(c) and (d) It is planned to man one of these gates *i.e.* level crossing gate No. 90 near village Kharade during night time on trial basis from 1.12.2004 to 7.12.2004 to assess traffic census during night to decide further whether to keep the gate manned for 24 hours or not. For the villages Konegaon & Virawade there exists adjacent manned level crossing gates within half a Km which are kept manned 24 hours and can be used at night.

Sky Bus Projects in Delhi and Mumbai

1381. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal of Sky Bus Project in Mumbai and Delhi has been submitted to the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Konkan Railway is coordinating with all the concerned for giving a shape to this project;

(d) if so, the financial outlay and details of the Government and private share in the project;

(e) whether the project will be beneficial to reduce traffic congestion in these two cities;

(f) whether sky bus project is cheaper than other means of transport system; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) For Mumbai, Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL) had proposed to the Government of Maharashtra for implementation of Sky Bus Metro along 9 routes aggregating to a length of 84.2 kms at the approximate cost of Rs. 4587 crores. For Delhi, Konkan Railway Corporation Limited had proposed to the Government of Delhi for implementation of Sky Bus Metro along 9 routes aggregating to a length of 124.9 kms at an estimated cost of Rs. 6620.9 crores.

(c) Konkan Railway Corporation Limited is waiting for response from the concerned State Governments and Ministry of Urban Development.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation has constituted a Committee in December 2003 under the Chairmanship of Shri E.V. Indiresan to examine the feasibility of establishing and operating sky bus metro service in Indian cities. The terms of reference of this Committee are as under:

(i) To examine the techno-economic and financial feasibility of the Sky Bus Metro system.

(ii) To ascertain the safety of the system.

(iii) To critically evaluate novel system component, such as suspended rail technology, traversing systems, etc.

(iv) To critically evaluate the integration of different technologies.

(v) Any other matter considered relevant by the Committee.

Report of this Committee is still awaited. Issues regarding the reduction in traffic congestion and cost of transport shall be decided once the report of the above Committee is received.

(g) Does not arise.

[English]

Allotment of Land

1382. SHRI K.C. PALANISAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Tamil Nadu has requested the Ministry of Defence for allotment of land in tamil Nadu for constructions of houses for various eligible people including State Government employees; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Government of Tamil Nadu had requested the Ministry of Defence in 1998 for allotment of Defence land in revenue Survey No. 3915 and Revenue Survey No. 4107 in George Town, Chennai to Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board, Chennai, for construction of tenements for slum dwellers. There is no other proposal pending with the Ministry of Defence.

(b) The Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board decided not to implement the proposed scheme since the Board did not want to pay the cost of land for 8920 sq. ft. in revenue Survey No. 3915. The land in Revenue Survey No. 4107 measuring 13024 sq. ft. involved in the project had earlier been transferred to Tamil Nadu Wakf Board in 1984.

Unauthorised Petrol Pumps

1383. SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the unauthorized petrol pumps being run in various parts of the country including Delhi; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action being taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) There have been a few cases of unauthorized (benami) operation of retail outlets (petrol pumps), belonging to the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs), in the country, including in the national Capital Territory of Delhi. The OMCs have taken/ initiated necessary action in those cases as per the provisions of the dealership agreements, etc., including termination of the dealership, in accordance with extant Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG).

Awareness about Cultural Values

1384. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that strong Indian culture values is vanishing from the Indian youths;

(b) is so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the concrete steps the Government is taking or proposed to launch awareness programmes/drives about Indian cultural values among the young Indian youths;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is any proposal to set up any Cultural Centre in West Bengal;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) Under the scheme of Scholarship and Junior Fellowship, the scholarships and fellowships are awarded to young artists in the field of Indian Classical Dance, Indian Classical Music, Theatre, Visual Art and Folk/Traditional forms of Arts etc.

The Centre for Cultural Resource and Training, an autonomous organisation under this Ministry has been revitalizing the education system by creating understanding and awareness among students about the plurality of the regional cultures of India and integrating this with education. The main thrust of the Centre is to make youth aware of the importance of culture in all developmental programmes.

(e) to (g) under the Scheme of Financial Assistance for Setting up of Multi-Purpose Cultural Complexes to State Governments, West Bengal Government has been given an initial instalment of Rs. 35.00 lakhs for setting up of Multi-Purpose Cultural Complex.

Renewal of Tracks on NFR

1385. SHRI M. K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has identified aged and ageing railway tracks that require renewal on the North-East Frontier Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the length of railway tracks requiring renewal and the estimated cost thereof; and

(c) the length of the tracks renewed during each of the last three years and in the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Repair and maintenance of track is a continuous process. Renewals are also sanctioned and are carried out as and when the same becomes due for renewal on age-cum-condition basis, subject to availability of funds and resources. The track renewal works are sanctioned every year, through the Railway budget with the approval of Parliament.

The track renewal works of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) are also sanctioned along with those of the other Zonal railways. In regard to NFR, track renewal works for approximately 700 kms, costing Rs. 395.00 crore (approximate) were sanctioned and were yet to be executed, as on 01.04.04. This also includes new works sanctioned for the year 2004-05.

(c) The year-wise details of track renewal works done on NFR, during the last three years and for the current financial year, are indicated as under:

Year	Renewals carried out (in kms)
2001-02	86.10
2002-03	213.8
2003-04	160.8
2004-05	
Target for whole year	200
(work done upto Oct' 04)	68.15

Earning of Railway

1386. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have still to realize large amount of its earnings;

(b) if so, the details of the earnings outstanding as on date to be realized;

(c) the steps taken to realize the outstanding earnings;

(d) whether there is any proposal to fix the accountability and responsibility of the railwaymen for failing in their duties to realize the earnings; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The amount of unrealized earnings up to September 2004 is Rs. 2951 crore, out of which major amount of unrealized earnings (Rs. 1762 crore) pertains to State Electricity Boards/Power Houses (SEBs/PHs).

(c) A statement is attached.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. However, provisions already exit under Railway Rules for fixing accountability and responsibility of railwaymen in this regard.

Statement

The steps taken to realize the outstanding earnings are:

(1) Close Monitoring of recovery of outstanding earnings is done at all levels by holding meetings with the representatives of State Electricity Boards/Power Houses and other parties. Special drives for clearance of outstanding dues are launched from time to time.

(2) Since major amount of unrealized earnings pertains to State Electricity Boards/Power Houses they are being encouraged to follow the scheme for prepayment of freight for carriage of coal.

(3) Adjustment of dues outstanding from State Electricity Boards/Power Houses is done against traction bills payable to them by the Railways.

(4) Meetings are also held with Secretaries of the concerned Ministries and Chief Secretaries of the States from time to time.

[Translation]

Offshore Drilling during Ninth Five Year Plan

1387. PROF. CHANDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for domestic production of oil through contended offshore drilling in the Ninth Five Year Plan and the extent to which the target has been achieved;

(b) the target fixed for the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(c) the latest position of availability of gas and oil in the country as per present requirement; and

(d) the total amount required for exploitation of sources by the end of Tenth and Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The target set for production of crude oil by Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) as well as the projection for crude oil production by private companies/Joint Ventures (Pvt/JVs) during the 9th Five Year Plan period and the actual performance against them is given below:

[In Million Metric Tonnes (MMT)]

Company	Offshore	
	Target	Actual
ONGC	94.17	87.58
Pvt/JV	*	17.44

Note: 1. Oil India Ltd. (Oil) has no oil production from offshore areas.

2. *No projection by Pvt/JVs was made for oil production from onshore and offshore areas separately.

(b) The target fixed for crude oil production from offshore areas by ONGC in the 10th Five Year Plan is 88.004 MMT. The projection for offshore oil production as per the 10th Five Year Plan for fields/blocks operated by Pvt/JVs is 15.504 MMT.

(c) During 2003-04, the indigenous production of crude oil was 33.373 MMT as against the total crude oil requirement of 118.678 MMT. The shortfall was met through import.

As regards natural gas, the production during 2003-04 was 87.32 Million Metric Standard Cubic Metres per day (MMSCMD) as against the demand of 155 MMSCMD projected in the 10th Plan document.

(d) The Plan outlays for the exploitation of oil and gas resources by ONGC and OIL during the 10th Five Year Plan are Rs. 22,267 cr. and Rs. 2,343 cr., respectively.

As regards Pvt/JVs, the total fund requirement for extraction of oil from various sources by the end of 10th Five Year Plan has not been firmed up. However, the actual expenditure incurred by Pvt./JVs in blocks awarded under NELP for development activities from 2002-03 to 2004-05 (up to Sept. 2004) of the 10th Plan is Rs. 7,379 cr.

The 11th Plan outlay for domestic Exploration and Production (E&P) activities has not been formulated.

[English]

Films Produced by Film Division

1388. SHRI B. VINOD KUMAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be please to state:

(a) whether Film Division produces films and biographical films;

(b) if so, the names of the films produced during each of the last three years, till date; and

(c) the details of further programme of production of biographical films alongwith the names of films which are under production?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Speech Recognition Enquiry System in Railways

1389. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce a speech recognition system for enquiries in the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which this system is likely to be operative in all the Metropolitan Cities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) An Integrated Train Enquiry system (Call Centre) has been implemented at Bangalore and Patna. At Bangalore, Automatic Speech Recognition System is being tried out for the first time.

(c) There is no proposal for the present for Introduction of Speech Recognition System for railway enquiries in other Metropolitan Cities.

[Translation]

District Disabled Rehabilitation Centres

1390. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA:
SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to refer to reply to USQ No. 4231 dated August 26, 2004 regarding District Disabled Rehabilitation Centres and state:

(a) whether the said information has been collected so far;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the said information is likely to be collected;

(c) the number of disabled persons rehabilitated by these DDRCs during the last three years, till date, center-wise; and

(d) the details of sanctioned strength and number of officers and staff working in these centres, center-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN):

(a) Yes, Sir. The information is being submitted to Assurance Committee.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) and (d) Available information of 81 DDRCs is at statement enclosed. The information of the remaining 52 DDRCs is being collected.

Statement

S.No.	Name of DDRC	No. of disabled rehabilitated during the last three years	Total posts filled
1	2	3	4
1.	DDRC Alot	931	3
2.	DDRC Agar	216	4
3.	DDRC Agartala	283	12
4.	DDRC Ahmedabad	707	8
5.	DDRC Aizwal	1454	8
6.	DDRC Allahabad	7264	6
7.	DDRC Almora	3224	3
8.	DDRC Ambedkarnagar	1600	6
9.	DDRC Anantapur	46432	4
10.	DDRC Aurangabad	2866	7
11.	DDRC Ballia	10124	12
12.	DDRC Banka	2533	11
13.	DDRC Bastar	333	8
14.	DDRC Belgaum	4799	7
15.	DDRC Bellary	8332	—
16.	DDRC Buldana	1680	5
17.	DDRC Dakshin Dinajpur	10784	9
18.	DDRC Darbhanga	5930	8
19.	DDRC Dewas	2389	8
20.	DDRC Dharamshala	5269	6
21.	DDRC Dibrugarh	381	5
22.	DDRC Dimapur	5019	8
23.	DDRC Dumka	2164	11
24.	DDRC E Singhbhum	408	11
25.	DDRC Farrukhabad	1422	7
26.	DDRC Ferozpur	5021	12
27.	DDRC Gulbarga	12646	4
28.	DDRC Gwalior	10031	11
29.	DDRC Haridwar	4678	7
30.	DDRC Hazaribagh	8915	12
31.	DDRC Imphal	1561	11
32.	DDRC Indore	6951	8
33.	DDRC Itanagar	559	4
34.	DDRC Jalpaiguri	1348	7

1	2	3	4
35.	DDRC Jamnagar	2704	7
36.	DDRC Jashpur	751	7
37.	DDRC Jawad	45	3
38.	DDRC Jehanabad	635	8
39.	DDRC Jhabua	8455	7
40.	DDRC Jhansi	3731	15
41.	DDRC Karimnagar	8358	7
42.	DDRC Kishanganj	2541	13
43.	DDRC Koraput	19084	9
44.	DDRC Kozhikode	17101	9
45.	DDRC Madurai	20453	8
46.	DDRC Mahim	387	6
47.	DDRC Mandsaur	117	4
48.	DDRC Mandya	1294	7
49.	DDRC Mangalore	5649	6
50.	DDRC Muzafarpur	2896	11
51.	DDRC Nawada	952	11
52.	DDRC Patiala	10781	10
53.	DDRC Phulbani	29760	9
54.	DDRC Pilibhit	16057	18
55.	DDRC Port Blair	805	1
56.	DDRC Raigarh	29781	9
57.	DDRC Rajgarh	14422	9
58.	DDRC Rajkot	3728	7
59.	DDRC Ranchi	8618	6
60.	DDRC Sagar	9009	7
61.	DDRC Samastipur	240	3
62.	DDRC Sangrur	1538	5
63.	DDRC Saran (Chapra)	5640	8
64.	DDRC Satna	351	8
65.	DDRC Selam	1124	7
66.	DDRC Shimla	6286	12
67.	DDRC Silchar	3850	9
68.	DDRC Sindhudurg	12363	8
69.	DDRC Surat	5479	7
70.	DDRC Tehri	5014	6
71.	DDRC Tezpur	3053	11
72.	DDRC Thiruvananthapuram	15399	8
73.	DDRC Thoothukudi	9218	8
74.	DDRC Thrissur	13363	8
75.	DDRC Tumkur	11303	8
76.	DDRC Udaipur	16913	7
77.	DDRC Ujjan	12498	8
78.	DDRC Vadodara	26	7
79.	DDRC Virudhnagar	580	7
80.	DDRC Vishakhapatnam	35582	3
81.	DDRC Wardha	12403	6
	Total	568611	621

Sanctioned strength of posts in DDRC according to the scheme is 11 (eleven).

[English]

Seizure of Silver and Foreign Goods from Ahmedabad Mail

1391. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether silver and foreign goods have been seized from the Ahmedabad Mail;

(b) if so, the details of the incident and value of silver and foreign goods seized alongwith the number of persons arrested in this regard;

(c) whether the railway employees are also involved in this case; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken against them so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, on 02.7.2004, on an information received by the Railway Vigilance, suspected packages were unloaded from the front brake van of Ashram Express and 600 Kilograms of silver, 11 Kilograms of gold, Rs. 41,68,330 in cash and precious stones worth Rs. 65,000, totally valued at Rs. 1.5 crore were seized. Case was handed over to Government Railway Police/Delhi Main who have registered a case under section 420, 406, 36 of the Indian Penal Code and Section 163 of the Railways Act, 1989 with the arrest of one accused.

(c) No, Sir. No involvement of any Railway employees in this case has come to light.

(d) Does not arise, as none were found involved.

[Translation]

Survey for Ajmer-Pushkar-Medta, Medta Jaitran-Bilara-Bapawar Rail Line

1392. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the initial survey for Ajmer-Pushkar-Medta, Medta-Jaitran-Bilara-Bapawar railway line;

(b) whether the Government propose to conduct fresh survey of the above route;

(c) if so, the details thereof, the date on which the decision for construction of Ajmer-Pushkar rail line was taken and the progress made so far to implement this decision;

(d) the reasons for the slow pace of progress;

(e) whether the process for acquisition of the required land has been completed;

(f) if not, the reasons therefor;

(g) whether there will be continuous increase in the construction cost of the above project due to delay in its construction; and

(h) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Survey for new broad gauge line from Ajmer to Merta Road *via* Pushkar was completed in March, 1999. As per survey report, the cost of construction of 96.57 kms long line between Ajmer-Merta Road was assessed as Rs.208.76 crore with a rate of return of 0.79%. In the survey report, the viability of new line from Ajmer to Pushkar was also worked out separately as per which cost of construction of 26.30 kms long line was assessed as Rs.66.54 crore with a rate of return of (-) 4.06%. Survey for Merta Road-Jaitran-Bilara-Beawar was not conducted.

(b) to (f) Updating surveys for new broad gauge lines between Pushkar-Merta Road and Bilara-Bar have been included in the Budget 2004-05. Further consideration of these lines would be feasible once the survey reports become available. The work of construction of rail line between Ajmer and Pushkar has been included in the Budget 2000-01. An amount of Rs.10.93 crore has been deposited with the State Govt. towards land acquisition. The State Government has given the possession of only the private land so far. An amount of Rs.5 crore has been provided in the Budget 2004-05 for this work. The work would be taken up once the land is fully handed over to the Railways. The work is progressing as per availability of resources.

(g) and (h) Normally, the cost of the project increases during the construction period due to increase in cost of material, fuel, labour etc. In this case also, the cost of the project is likely to increase depending upon the completion period of the project.

[English]

Setting up of Airforce Station at Madurai

1393. SHRI A.K. MOORTHY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to start an airforce station at Madurai in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the detail thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(a) and (c) There is no operational requirement.

Transfer of Bhiwani Junction of Haryana

1394. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government had decided to transfer Biwani Junction of Haryana from Bikaner division to Delhi division in the year 1999;

(b) if so, the reasons for non-implementation of the decision; and

(c) the fresh steps taken by the Government to transfer Bhiwani Junction to Delhi Division?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) It was decided to transfer Biwani Junction from Bikaner Division to Delhi Division in 1999. However, the same could not be implemented due to operational and administrative reasons. Later in 2002, while operationalising the new Zones and Divisions, it was reviewed again and decided that Bhiwani (excluding) to Rohtak (excluding) section be transferred from Delhi Division to Bikaner Division as part of territorial adjustments for operational convenience. This change has been effected from 1.04.2003 and no further change is envisaged. Bhiwani Junction continues to be in Bikaner Division.

Programmes for Consumer Affairs

1395. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Doordarshan has planning to launch a special programme on Consumer Awareness;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has informed that a series comprising three programmes 'Consumer Education', 'Jaago Grahak Jaago' and 'Grahak Dost' is already being telecast by Doordarshan on DD-1 National Network since 28th February, 2004. Consumer organisations and their activities are constantly highlighted by Doordarshan.

Filling up of Vacancies in South Western Railway

1396. SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of total number of recruitments made in respect of various categories of posts in South Western Railway Zone, during the period April 2004 to October 2004;

(b) the details of number of candidates of Bihar origin recruited in the above posts; and

(c) the details of the number of the candidates belonging to Karnataka, Andhra, Tamil Nadu in such recruitments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) 691 (Six hundred ninety one only)

(b) and (c) The position of recruits on the basis of domicile is not maintained.

Installation of ILS to North-Eastern Airports

1397. SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether in view of constant cancellation of flights to North-Eastern hill States due to non-installation of I.L.S., the Government propose to instal ILS in all NE airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which it is likely to be installed; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (*a*) to (c) The Instrument Landing System (ILS) has already been provided at Guwahati, Imphal, Agartala and Dibrugarh airports and is planned to be installed at Silchar and Lilabari airports in North Eastern region subject to availability of the required land from the respective State Governments.

(d) Does not arise.

Export of Arms and Ammunition

1398. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken to increase export of arms and ammunitions by Ordnance Factories and the achievements made therein;

(b) the items and the countries to which arms and ammunitions have been exported and value thereof;

(c) whether any complaints were received about the quality of arms and ammunitions so exported; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE) : (a) The Ordinance Factory Board (OFB) has taken various steps to promote defence exports like registration with defence procurement agencies of various countries, quick response to enquiry, advertisement in defence related publications and by participation in International Defence Exhibitions. This has resulted in defence exports increasing from Rs. 6.19 crores in 1999-2000 to Rs.104 crores in 2003-2004.

(b) The main items of supply are INSAS Rifle and LMG, Mine Protected Vehicle, 105 mm Light Field Gun, various type of ammunition and miscellaneous stores to Nepal, USA, Egypt, Oman and other countries.

(c) In a particular case, a complaint was received regarding the functioning of Rifle 5.56 mm INSAS.

(d) A team was sent from the OFB to investigate the matter. Lack of training of the user was found to be main reason for the complaint. With necessary training imparted by the OFB personnel, the matter was resolved.

Rail Lines between Surat and Bhusawal

1399. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether doubling of railway line between Surat and Bhusawal has been started to facilitate high speed and modern trains on this section;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the work done so far in this regard on this section; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) On Surat-Bhusawal line, double line already exists between Surat-Udhna (4 km) and Jalgaon-Bhusawal (25 Km) sections. A survey for doubling of Udhna-Jalgaon section has already been completed. The survey report is under finalisation in consultation with Western Railway. Further decision would be taken once the results of the survey are finalized.

[Translation]

'Village on Rail' Project

1400. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways, with the Ministry of Tourism has begun drafting a blue-print for the 'Village-on-Rails' project;

(b) if so, the details of the project; and

(c) the time by which the draft of said project is likely to be ready and implemented in the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) The Ministry of Railways has launched a new special tourist train called 'Village on Wheels' consisting of sleeper class coaches to run on pre-determined circuits to enable tourists from different regions to visit important places of religious, cultural and historical importance at an affordable cost as a comprehensive package including boarding and lodging, sightseeing, local transport, meals etc. The first trains has been flagged off on 29.11.2004 in the following circuit :

Rajendra Nagar - Patna – Varanasi – Agra – Mathura – Delhi – Jammu Tawi (Vaishno Devi) – Amritsar – Haridwar (Rishikesh) – Patna – Rajendra Nagar.

It is a 9-days trip with an all inclusive tariff of Rs.4,500 per passenger.

Shifting of Ambedkar Foundation and Library

1401. SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to shift the location of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Foundation and Library from the earlier site allotted at Janpath; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

[English]

Increase in Fare Concession to Senior Citizens

1402. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of Government to increase Railway travel concession for senior citizens from 30% to 50% especially for visiting religious places in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government also extend accommodation in holiday home of Railways as well as guest houses of Railways for senior citizens; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Payments to Producers

1403. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Delhi Doordarshan makes full payment to the producers without having their programme in hand;

(b) if so, the number of producers violated the terms of contract during the last three years;

(c) the losses suffered by the D.D. by not getting the money back from producers;

(d) whether Prasar Bharati Board has cleared the self-Financed Commissioning which provided that a producer will make a programme at his own risk and cost and DD's role would be confined to marketing and telecasting;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the time by which the decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has informed that as per the commissioned guidelines approved by Prasar Bharati Board on 13.08.2002, the release of funds to the producers is done as follows:

(i) signing of agreement and script approval	— 30%
(ii) approval of rough cuts	— 30%
(iii) on approval of final product (including the Chartered Accountant's certificate)	— 40%

Delhi Doordarshan Kendra has informed that they have not commissioned any programme during the last five years. Hence, the question of payment does not arise.

(d) to (f) Yes, Sir. Prasar Bharati Board has approved a scheme on 14.10.2004 of Self Financed Commissioning (SFC). Under this Scheme, the outside producer would be required to produce the programme at his own risk and cost. Prasar Bharati have informed that Doordarshan would market the programme, telecast it and make payment thereafter. Payment for the programme would be linked to its grading and viewership measured through TAM ratings. Prasar Bharati have further informed that this is, however, not presently being contemplated to be extended to documentaries.

[English]

Renovation of Petrol Pumps by HPCL

1404. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL:
SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA:

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

(a) the number of petrol pumps renovated by the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited during the last three years;

(b) the details thereof;

(c) the details of old stocks in godown as on date; and

(d) the reasons, if the old stock has not been stored?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) During the last three years Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) has renovated 1523 retail outlets in the country.

The details are as under:

Year	No. of Retail Outlets Renovated
2001-02	447
2002-03	541
2003-04	535
Total	1523

The renovation work for Retail Outlets includes construction of Sales Room, Canopy, Drive-way, Pump Island, installation of Pumps and Tanks and illumination.

(c) and (d) The renovation of petrol pumps is carried out through registered contractors. Supply of all construction material except tanks and dispensing pumps is arranged by the contractors. Any scrap and disposable material generated during the work is disposed of as per Corporation's procedure.

[Translation]

Timings of NCERT Programme

1405. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether NCERT programmes are broadcast during day time by DD;

(b) if so, whether Government is aware that children for whom the programmes are meant will not be able to watch them;

(c) if so, whether there is a proposal to change the timing of the broadcast; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has informed that Doordarshan telecasts 'Tarang', a programme produced by NCERT for children, from 10.30 AM to 11.00 AM. This programme is relayed from 'Gyan Darshan' channel of IGNOU. The programmes telecast in this slot can be watched by children in their respective schools.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Obscenities on T.V. Serials

1406. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD NISHAD: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the episode of serial "Kyonki Sas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi" broadcasted on 12th October, 2004 had a rape scene which was shown for five minutes continuously;

(b) if so, whether any voluntary organisation has made a complaint with the Ministry in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any action has been taken so far against serial producer, director and the T.V. Channel;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Government propose to fix a limit/ guidelines regarding the broadcasting of obscenities in the scrials; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Star TV has confirmed that a rape scene was telecast in its episode on 12.10.2004 of the serial "Kyonki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi", Further, they have informed that the episode was constructed to sensitise viewers about crimes committed against women and specifically to highlight the incidence of marital rape.

(b) to (e) No complaint has been received in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in this regard.

(f) and (g) As per Section 5 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act 1995, no programme of a TV Channel should be transmitted or re-transmitted through cable service unless it is in conformity with the prescribed Programme Code. The Programme Code prescribed vide Rule 6 of Cable Television Networks Rules 1994, *inter alia*, provides that no programme should be carried in the Cable Service which offends against good taste or decency; denigrates women through the depiction in any manner of the figure of a women, her form or body or any part thereof in such a way as to have the effect of being indecent, or derogatory to women, or is likely to deprave, corrupt or injure the public morality or morals; and is not suitable for unrestricted public exhibition. The Central Government can take action for violation of the Code under Section 20 of the Cable Act. The Central Government has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee to look into the violations of the programme Code.

Laying of New Rail Line in Garchiroli of Maharashtra

1407. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is pending with the Government for laying new rail line in tribal district of Garchiroli of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any timeframe has been fixed for the above; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) A survey for new line between Wadsa-Armori-Gadchiroli was completed in 2000-01. As per the survey, cost of construction of this 50 km long line was assessed as Rs. 77 crore with rate of return of (-) 8.19%. Keeping in view constraint of resources and heavy throwforward of ongoing projects, it has not been found feasible to consider the proposed line.

[Translation]

Funds for ongoing Railway Lines in Orissa

1408. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the allocation of fund made for the ongoing Railway lines in Orissa for 2004-05;

(b) the estimate cost of these lines; and

(c) the progress of those projects as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The project-wise up-to-date progress along with target date of completion, wherever fixed, estimated cost and budget outlay provided during 2004-05 for various on-going New Line, Gauge Conversion and Doubling works falling fully or partly in Orissa are as given under:-

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Present Status	Estimated Cost (Rs. in crore)	Budget Allocation during 2004-05 (Rs. in crore)
1	2	3	4	5
New Lines				
1.	Daitari-Banspani (155 Kms)	Banspani-Joruli (11 Kms) section has been completed and commissioned. Joruli-Keonjhar (48 Kms) section has also been completed. On Keojhar-Tomka (98 Kms) section, earthwork, bridgeworks and other ancillary works are in progress. The project is likely to be completed during 2005-06, depending upon availability of resources. The work is under National Rail Vikas Yojna.	590.60	83.00

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh (56 Kms)	Land has been acquired partially. In phase-1, work has been taken up from Lanjigarh to Bhawanipatna (31 Kms), where earthwork and bridgework are in progress.	119.29	8.00
3.	Khurda Road-Bolangir (289 Kms)	Final Location Survey has been completed partially. Land has been acquired partially. Work is in progress on a length of 2.5 Kms from Khurda Road end, where the land is available with the Railway.	700.00	15.38
4.	Haridaspur-Paradeep (82 Kms)	Final Location survey and soil investigation of major bridges have been completed. Land has been acquired partially. The project is being implemented under National Rail Vikas Yojana (NRVY).	301.64	6.00
5.	Angul-Sukinda Road (98.7 Kms)	Final Location Survey and soil investigation for all major bridges have been completed.	415.47	2.00
6.	Talcher-Bimlagarh (154 Kms)	New work taken up in Supplementary Budget 2003-04. Final Location Survey and preliminary arrangements like preparation of plans & estimates are being taken up.	726.96	5.00
Gauge Conversion				
1.	Rupsa-Bangriposi (89 Kms)	In phase-I, guage conversion of Rupsa-Baripada (52 Kms) segment has been taken up, which is targeted for completion during 2004-05.	89.00	27.54
2.	Naupada-Gunupur (90 Kms)	Final location survey has been completed. Land acquisition is in progress. Contracts for earthwork and bridges have been awarded and the work is in progress.	91.30	15.00
Doubling				
1.	Nergundi-Cuttac':- Raghunathpur (43 Kms)	Kapilas Road-Nergundi-Birupa Cabin segment has been completed and commissioned. Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress on rest of the section. The work on Cuttack-Raghunathpur is likely to be completed during 2004-05.	122.25	15.00
2.	2nd Bridges on Mahanadi & Birupa (3 Kms)	Work of 2nd bridge over River Birupa has been completed. Work of 2nd bridge over River Mahanadi bridge is being executed by Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd. (RVNL).	109.82	11.00

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Lanjigarh-Titlagarh (47 Kms)	Kesinga-Norla Road (23 Kms) section has been completed and commissioned. Norla Road-Lanjigarh (11 Kms) section is targeted for completion during 2004-05. Earthwork and bridgework are in progress on rest of the section.	100.05	20.00
4.	Rajathgarth-Barang (20 Kms)	Final Location Survey and geo-technical investigation of all major bridges except that on River Mahanadi have been completed. Land acquisition is in progress. The work is being executed by RVNL.	157.98	15.00
5.	Khurda Road-Puri (Phase-I) (15.3 Kms)	Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress. Station buildings at Haripurgram, Motari and Delang have been completed.	47.28	10.00
6.	Sambalpur-Rengali (22.7 Kms)	Final Location Survey has been completed. Land acquisition is under process and tenders are under finalization.	70.36	10.00
7.	Jharsuguda Bypass Line (8.73 Kms)	Final Location Survey has been completed. Detailed estimate is under preparation.	19.62	3.50
8.	Cuttack-Barang (12 Kms)	Final Location Survey is in progress. The work is being executed by RVNL.	127.13	20.00
9.	Khurda Road-Barang 3rd Line (35 Kms)	Final Location Survey is in progress. The work is being executed by RVNL.	133.41	10.00

Provision for Laying of Additional Rail Lines

1409. SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of rail sections in which the rail operating load exceeds 100 percent saturation limit;

(b) whether the Government has any scheme to minimise the said saturation load by laying additional rail lines on such sections; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There is no such index called rail operating load maintained over the Indian Railways.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Airport at Pondicherry

1410. PROF. M. RAMADASS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the closure of a mini airport functioning at Pondicherry;

(b) whether the Government propose to re-establishing the airport at Pondicherry in view of the increasing demand for air facilities in the context of growing tourism and industrial needs; and

(c) if so, the action proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The airport

at Pondicherry is fully operational. At present, only non-scheduled flights and flying club are operating at this airport.

(b) and (c) There is no plan at present to upgrade this airport due to non-commitment of any airline to commence scheduled services to this airport.

[English]

Upgradation of Infrastructure Facilities at Airports

1411. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA
SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the foreign airlines have started tweking the schedules of their flights to Delhi in a bid to avoid any delays and cancellations due to dense fog over Delhi during peak winters;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has taken any steps to upgrade the airport infrastructure in order to meet the heavy rush of flights;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Few Airlines *viz.* Air India, British Airways, China Airlines, Cathay Pacific Airways, Emirates, Kuwait Airways, Malaysian Airlines, Austrian Airlines, Asiana Airlines, Royal Jordanian, Singapore Airlines, Aeroflot, Saudi Arabian Airlines, Myanmar Airways, Thai Airways and Turkish Airlines have rescheduled their flights to avoid any delays and cancellations due to likelihood of dense fog over Delhi during peak winters.

(c) and (d) Cat-III-A Instrument Landing System (ILS) is already operational at Delhi international Airport to facilitate arrival and departure of flights in a visibility range of not less than 200 metres. The Government is in the process of installing category III-B ILS so as to enable aircraft to land and take off even when visibility is less than 200 meters. Indian Airlines and Air India have trained 49 and 55 pilots in Cat-III-A, 20 and 11 pilots trained in III-B and 171 and 142 pilots trained for Cat-II operations respectively. Fog Preparedness for the ensuring winter has been reviewed with the representatives of all concerned agencies. A Coordination Committee shall monitor the start up clearances to manage and prioritize the movement of flights during fog. Meteorological Department shall be providing timely trends and forecast of fog and also make it available on the internet site. Indian Airlines have set up a Coordination Cell to monitor fog situation on all India basis and a system of Flight Information Dissemination through the Call Centres. SMS service broadcast through TV/FM channels are being introduced on all India basis for giving information regarding delays, rescheduling, cancellation to air passengers. Air India has prepared a Contingency Plan for ensuring timely movement of flights during Winter Season. Private Airlines are also taking measures to manage operations during fog to mitigate any inconvenience to passengers.

(e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Joint Exercise with Singapore Air Force

1412. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT:
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the joint exercise of Indian Air Force and Signapore Air Force was undertaken at Gwalior;

(b) if so, the aircraft of the Indian Air Force participated in the joint exercise;

(c) the number of the countries with which such joint exercises were undertaken by the I.A.F. during the current year and the benefits Indian Air Force got from these exercises;

(d) whether exchange of technical know how was also done during these joint exercises; and

(e) if so, the details of technical know how given by our Air Force to the Defence personnel of other countries?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following aircraft of the Indian Air Force participated in the join exercises:

(i) SU-30

(ii) Mirage-2000

(iii) MiG-29

(iv) MiG-21 Bison

(v) MiG-27

(c) The joint exercises were undertaken with United States of America, Singapore and South Africa. The joint exercises have resulted in improvement in strategic relationship with advanced foreign Air forces; long distance planning and deployment; evaluation of self-capability; familiarization with new technology and operational philosophy; aircraft and equipment evaluation; and an insight to training requirements.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Function of NSFDC

1413. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the main functions of the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC);

(b) the details of funds allocated and released by the corporation during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;

(c) the details of funds actually utilized by the State Governments/UT administrations, allocated/released by the Corporation during the said period, State/UT-wise; and

(d) the number of persons benefited by NSFDC in different States during the said period, State/UT-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) The main function of the NSFDC is to provide credit-support to scheduled caste persons living below double the poverty line (presently annual family income of Rs. 40,000 in rural areas and Rs. 55,000 in urban areas).

(b) to (d) The State/UT-wise details of funds allocated and released by the NSFDC, funds utilized by the State Channelising Agencies and the number of persons benefited under the NSFDC-funded schemes during each of the last three years and current year are at statement.

Statement

State/UT-Wise Funds Allocated, Released to SCAs, Utilisation Reported by the SCAs and Number of Persons Benefitted for last 3 years and current year

(Rs. in lakhs)

S.No.	State	2001-2002				2002-2003			
		Funds Allocated to SCAs	Funds Released to SCAs	Utilisation by SCA	No. of SC Persons benefitted	Funds Allocated to SCAs	Funds Released to SCAs	Utilisation by SCA	No. of SC persons benefitted
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1185.66	2317.05	957.99	10214	1185.66	3909.32	2259.38	34081
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	3.15	0.00	0.00	0	3.15	0.00	0.00	0
3.	Assam	1290.76	917.53	23.24	12	1290.76	0.00	368.35	1209
4.	Bihar	1151.51	680.00	385.11	430	1117.42	0.00	520.05	260
5.	Chhattisgarh	212.19	261.10	0.00	0	240.48	631.00	396.36	162

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6.	Goa	2.73	20.56	1.00	5	2.73	15.76	25.42	15
7.	Gujarat	342.57	642.52	203.92	814	342.57	680.85	1087.58	5228
8.	Haryana	363.90	165.04	284.31	133	363.90	261.38	261.88	102
9.	Himachal Pradesh	146.68	333.27	251.79	85	146.67	454.57	343.92	105
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	72.19	330.42	16.94	6	72.19	0.00	36.44	11
11.	Jharkhand	255.74	297.20	0.00	0	289.84	303.35	51.66	42
12.	Karnataka	824.91	2082.19	1243.16	2751	824.90	1233.35	1408.45	5656
13.	Kerala	323.11	46.05	233.47	243	323.11	280.27	304.64	1704
14.	Madhya Pradesh	865.41	1317.36	685.99	753	837.11	1618.95	747.55	882
15.	Maharashtra	980.33	1203.91	326.08	204	980.34	1333.55	1722.41	2538
16.	Manipur	28.87	0.00	40.73	24	28.86	98.05	47.50	45
17.	Meghalaya	7.06	0.00	0.00	0	7.06	0.00	0.00	0
18.	Mizoram	0.53	0.00	0.00	0	0.54	6.00	0.00	0
19.	Nagaland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
20.	Orissa	574.17	129.55	1062.72	419	574.17	140.71	358.25	248
21.	Punjab	642.80	10.16	68.93	62	642.81	99.77	75.02	145
22.	Rajasthan	851.61	271.13	236.01	199	851.60	312.40	238.80	294
23.	Sikkim	18.73	91.97	47.56	67	18.73	1.80	95.94	99
24.	Tamilnadu	1199.11	485.69	823.48	343	1199.11	276.14	264.36	88
25.	Tripura	350.90	354.16	114.02	131	350.90	301.15	498.77	797
26.	Uttar Pradesh	3143.66	2516.45	968.79	728	3139.21	2547.34	1728.20	14751
27.	Uttaranchal	133.49	247.95	0.00	0	137.94	493.56	332.43	211
28.	West Bengal	1800.03	2008.90	930.34	11136	1800.03	749.80	236.82	454
29.	Andaman & Nicobar	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	2999.98	0.00	0.00	0
30.	Chandigarh	11.87	93.82	97.81	114	11.86	28.47	50.07	104
31.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0.74	0.00	0.81	1.00	0.74	0.00	21.90	8.00
32.	Daman & Diu								
33.	Delhi	200.91	387.96	6.17	1	200.91	229.63	276.59	192

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
34.	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
35.	Pondicherry	14.70	157.81	4.50	5	14.70	0.00	77.28	43
	Total:	17000.02	17379.65	9014.87	28880	19999.98	16007.17	13836.02	69474

Note. (i) Utilisation figures in a year include the utilisation during the year against disbursement during that year and previous year(s).

(ii) Figures are subject to change on further reporting of utilisation from the SCAs.

State/UT-wise Funds Allocated, Released to SCAs, Utilisation Reported by the SCAs and Number of Persons Benefitted for last 3 years and current year

(Rs. in lakhs)

S.No.	State	2003-2004				2004-2005 (as on 30.11.2004)			
		Funds Allocated to SCAs	Funds Released to SCAs	Utilisation by SCA	No. of SC persons benefitted	Funds Allocated to SCAs	Funds Released to SCAS	Utilisation by SCA	No. of SC persons benefitted
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1029.70	3487.39	3104.16	34286	1170.01	297.00	2063.77	15465
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.39	0.00	0.00	0	0.80	0.00	0.00	0
3.	Assam	161.31	0.00	217.88	940	234.73	0.00	0.00	0
4.	Bihar	970.44	0.00	309.52	172	1237.25	0.00	8.39	11
5.	Chhattisgarh	208.85	252.75	241.76	77	229.34	28.50	257.14	86
6.	Goa	2.37	8.68	16.63	12	2.26	0.00	0.40	2
7.	Gujarat	297.51	1245.33	5.24	48	340.66	10.08	776.26	3598
8.	Haryana	316.04	93.05	201.60	69	387.90	79.69	11.77	4
9.	Himachal Pradesh	127.38	203.38	117.99	37	142.44	51.79	72.57	128
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	62.70	0.00	95.15	34	73.02	101.56	6.83	10
11.	Jharkhand	251.71	283.95	478.61	232	302.41	0.00	15.63	32
12.	Karnataka	716.40	414.75	1079.54	6735	812.02	600.00	344.93	1381
13.	Kerala	280.61	389.56	311.47	904	296.21	195.12	108.57	291
14.	Madhya Pradesh	727.00	702.29	1458.33	1590	868.08	0.00	32.10	214
15.	Maharashtra	851.39	1333.08	495.63	657	936.97	615.70	681.86	783
16.	Manipur	3.61	0.00	50.20	30	5.71	0.00	0.00	0
17.	Meghalaya	0.88	0.00	0.00	0	1.44	0.00	0.00	0
18.	Mizoram	0.06	0.00	0.00	0	0.03	0.00	0.00	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
19.	Nagaland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
20.	Orissa	498.65	73.98	45.30	28	576.69	0.00	74.26	16
21.	Punjab	558.25	32.45	39.09	90	666.45	45.27	5.54	12
22.	Rajasthan	739.59	223.04	143.72	112	919.21	87.40	111.08	131
23.	Sikkim	2.34	133.70	55.35	43	3.49	0.00	72.30	65
24.	Tamilnadu	1041.38	0.00	265.81	233	1124.31	0.00	6.49	4
25.	Tripura	43.86	74.80	99.05	136	71.44	0.00	17.20	24
26.	Uttar Pradesh	2726.30	815.00	1606.18	9817	3332.70	650.00	804.36	9924
27.	Uttaranchal	119.80	0.00	204.64	183	143.86	100.67	21.14	6
28.	West Bengal	1563.29	863.41	345.60	501	1749.64	85.42	179.89	114
29.	Andaman & Nicobar	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
30.	Chandigarh	10.30	39.35	26.20	82	14.94	15.16	24.22	45
31.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.85	0.00	0.00	0.00
32.	Daman & Diu								
33.	Delhi	174.48	613.10	315.12	112	222.18	8.28	368.31	1103
34.	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0
35.	Pondicherry	12.76	24.02	121.19	82	14.97	0.00	2.63	4
	Total:	13500.00	11307.09	11450.96	57242	15882.01	2971.64	6067.64	33453

Note: (i) Utilisation figures in a year include the utilisation during the year against disbursement druing that the year and previous year(s).

(ii) Figures are subject to change on further reporting of utilisation from the SCAs.

Amendment of Pension Scheme

1414. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a demand to amend the pension scheme to give pension benefit to about 100 pensioners of Mazagaon Dock Ltd. retired between 1970 to 1984 on the line of Central Government Employees;

(b) if so, whether the Government has received any representation in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) There are 35 ex-employees and 90 windows of ex-employees of Mazagon Dock Limited, Mumbai who retired between 1970 and 1984 with an average pension of Rs. 230 p.m. A demand by the pensioners to revise their pension was included in the Charter of Demands and the same was before the Industrial Court, Mumbai since 1980. The Industrial Court disposed of the case on 6.5.1998 without giving any award. However, considering the steep rise of the prices of essential commodities, the Company, on humanitarian grounds, enhanced the pension to these pensioners on five occasions, *i.e.* in 1983, 1988, 1993, 1996 and 1998. The last enhancement of 50% was given to them from 1.10.1998.

Government of India have been receiving representations for amendment in the pension scheme on the lines of Central Government employees. The representations have been considered by the Government. Since the pensioners are getting pension as per the Company's own pension, it cannot be linked with the pension scheme applicable to the Central Government employees.

Maintenance of Chirag Delhi Fort

1415. MOHD. MUKEEM: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the old and famous monuments and places such as Chirag Delhi which are a great tourist attraction and named after a sufi saint are lying in ruins and unattended and even the main Gate has been broken up and encroached upon by shopkeepers and others;

(b) whether Chirage Delhi gates and the old fort are a protected monument; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to maintain and upkeep the Chirag Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The upprotected monuments in Chirag Delhi are not in a good state of preservation and do have problems of encroachment. Bahlol Lodi's Tomb and Lal Gumbad are the only two protected monuments in Chirag Delhi as per Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remain Act, 1958. While Bahlol Lodi's Tomb is in good state of upkeep and maintenance, Lal Gumbad is encroached upon and the matter is presently *sub-judice* in the High Court of Delhi.

(b) and (c) While Chirag Delhi gates are not protected, the Old Fort (Purana Qila) is under protection of the Central Government. The Archaeological Survey of India is not concerned with the maintenance and upkeep of unprotected monuments. However, the monuments declared as protected in Delhi are being maintained regularly as per their requirement.

Financial Assistance to Gujarat

1416. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government provides assistance to the State Governments for construction of new museums under the centrally sponsored schemes;

(b) if so, the funds provided to Gujarat during the last three years;

(c) the number of schemes for which these funds were provided alongwith the details of progress of these schemes;

(d) whether the Gujarat Government has forwarded any action plan to the Union Government in the current financial year for the protected monuments and new musems in Junagarh District;

(e) if so, the details of the same; and

(f) the progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Does not arise.

Recruitment Rule of Panchayat Secretaries

1417. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has considered to modify the Recruitment Rules of Panchayat Secretaries in Andaman and Nicobar Administration;

(b) if so, the details thereof with the methodology;

(c) if not, the measures being taken by the Government to modify the recruitment rules to accommodate Panchayat Secretaries to Promotional Post of Executive Officer or equivalent in the Administration;

(d) whether the Government has received any representation in this regard' and

(e) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Attack on Press/Media Personnel

1418. SHRI P.C. THOMAS:
SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA:
SHRI S. AJAY KUMAR:

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

(a) whether there were a series of attacks on Press and Media personnel in some parts of India recently;

(b) if so, whether in October/November some such incidents have been reported in Kerala?

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

(d) whether Press Council of India or any other Central Authorities have received such complaints; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) Some incidents of violence and roughing up of newspersons, were brought to the notice of the Press Council by Dr. Sebastian Paul, M.P., Lok Sabha, and Member, Press Council of India.

A memorandum dated 2.12.2004 by the Kerala Journalists Union has also been filed with the Press Council, seeking urgent intervention to check the increasing attacks on journalists and media institutions in Kerala by the Police and Political Party workers.

The Press Council of India in its meeting held on 16.11.2004 at New Delhi, has taken serious note of the reports and expressed its deep concern over the incidents. The Council decided to set up a three member Fact Finding Committee, to make an on-the-spot inquiry into the alleged incident.

The Council vide its letter dated 3.12.2004, has written to the Government of Kerala, to look into the matter and to direct the concerned authorities, to ensure that the media is able to discharge its function without any hindrance.

Board of Reconstruction of SPEs

1419. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:
SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:
SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA:
SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI:
SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:
SHRI P.K. VASUDEVAN NAIR:
SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA:
SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:
SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU:
SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH:

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

(a) whether the Government has announced that a board of reconstruction of public sector Enterprises would be set up to guide policy on the sector;

(b) if so, whether the main purpose of constitution of the board;

(c) whether the BRPSE has been constituted;

(d) if so, the details thereof and to what extent the board is so far given its advice to the Govemnent;

(e) the extent to which the Government has accepted and implemented their recommendations; and

(f) if not, the reasons for delay in constitution of the said Board?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (f) The Government have established a Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises on 6th December, 2004. The Board consists of a Chairman, three non-official members, three official members including member-secretary, one permanent invitee and a special invitee. The terms of reference to the Board are to advise the Government on ways and means for strengthening public sector enterprises (PSEs) in general and making them more autonomous and professional, to consider restructuring of PSEs and suggesting ways and means for funding such schemes, to examine proposals for revival/restructuring of sick/loss making PSEs for their turnaround, to advise on disinvestments/closure/sale in respect of chronically sick/loss making companies which cannot be revived and to advise about sources of fund for the payment of all legitimate dues and compensation to workers and other costs of closure, and to monitor incipient sickness. As the Board has been constituted only on 6.12.2004, it has not made any recommendations to the Government so far.

Welfare Schemes of IOC in Mizoram

1420. SHRI VANLAL ZAWMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Assam Oil Division, a part of Indian Oil Corporation is running profitable business in Mizoram, for quite a long time;

(b) if so, the number of Welfare Schemes is in operation by the Indian Oil Corporation during the last three years; and

(c) the names of various welfare schemes and when these schemes were launched, amount spent on each of the schemes during the same period?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Assam Oil Division (AOD) have been making substantial losses in the State of Mizoram during the last three years.

(b) and (c) IOC have not directly operated any welfare schemes in the State of Mizoram for the last three years. However, the dealers of IOC(AOD) are providing some public welfare measures like repairs of roads in the areas where they are having their business.

[Translation]

Improvement in Air Traffic Control System at Airports

1421. SHRI HARISHCHANDRA CHAVAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to improve Air Traffic Control system at airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the efforts made by the Government so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Improvement/modernization of Air Traffic Control (ATC) system at airports is a continuous process which is taken up on the basis of operational requirements. In order to augment the capacity of airspace to handle more number of flights, Reduced Vertical Separation Minima (RVSM) has been introduced in India. Various ATC systems *viz.* Dedicated Satellite Communication Network (DSCN), Surveillance Radars, Automatic Dependent System (ADS) with Controller-Pilot Data Link Communication (CPDLC), Doppler's Very high frequency Omni Range (DVOR), Automatic Message Switching System (AMSS), Flight Information Display System (FIDS) etc. have been installed/are likely to be installed at various national and international airports based on their requirements. A project for networking of radars has already been approved. Its implementation would bring down the number of area control centres and ensure more effective and better control over air traffic. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has already finalized an action plan with Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) for implementation of a Satellite based Global Positioning System (GPS) for providing navigation to aircrafts.

New Rail Lines in Bihar and Jharkhand

1422. SHRI MANOJ KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of surveys for laying of new rail lines in Bihar and Jharkhand are in progress;

(b) the total amount spent on these surveys till date against the annual allocation made for this purpose;

(c) whether the Survey of the New Railway line Barwadih-Chirmiri has been completed;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the time by which the survey of this line is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The details of surveys in progress for laying of new rail lines falling/ partly in Bihar and Jharkhand together with the total expenditure incurred on these surveys upto 31.3.2004 and the allocation made in 2004-05 are as under:-

Name of Survey	Approximate expenditure incurred upto 31.3.2004 (Rs. in Lakhs)	Outlay provided during 2004-05 (Rs. in Lakhs)	Target date for completion
1	2	3	4
1. Ara-Bhabua Road (Mohaniya)	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	5.00	30.06.2005
2. Madhepura-Singheshwarasthan-Karjayen Bhimnagar	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	0.65	30.06.2005

1	2	3	4
3. Bihariganj-Kursela via Rupauli, Dhamdaha	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	0.65	30.06.2005
4. Motihari to Sitamarhi via Shivhar	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	0.60	30.06.2005
5. Chhapra-Muzaffarpur via Garkha Maker and Rewaghat	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	2.20	30.06.2005
6. Aurangabad-Bihta via Anugrah Narain Road, Arwal & Paliganj	—	6.00	30.06.2005
7. Bihariganj-Simribakhtiarpur	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	0.40	30.06.2005
8. Sultanganj-Katoria via Asarganj, Tarapore, Belhar	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	2.00	31.03.2005
9. Bariarpur-Mananpur via Kharagpur-Laxmipur, Barahat	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	2.00	31.03.2005
10. Jhajha-Girdih via Sonuchakai	5.28	0.46	31.03.2005
11. Supaul-Galgalia via Araria	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	0.50	31.03.2005
12. Hazaribagh-Garwa Road	0.57	5.89	30.06.2005
13. Chatra-Gaya	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	0.60	30.06.2005
14. Tori-Chatra	—	1.62	31.03.2005
15. Hansdiha-Godda	0.50	1.46	30.06.2005
16. Kandra-Namkom	New survey included in Budget 2004-05	2.00	31.03.2005
17. Ranchi-Kandra	1.00	2.00	31.03.2005
Grand Total	7.35	34.03	

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Chirimiri-Bishrampur section is already an existing Broad Gauge line. Bishrampur-Ambikapur line is under construction. As per the results of the survey, cost of construction of 182.20 km long BG line between Ambikapur-Barwadih has been assessed at Rs. 406.86 crore with a rate of return of 4.85%. In view of the acute constraints of resources and the heavy throwforward of ongoing projects, the proposal could not be taken up for consideration.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

[English]

Operation of Private Airlines from Trivandrum Airport

1423. SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Private Airlines operators have sought permission to operate from Trivandrum Airport;

(b) if so, the details of the permission granted; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-East Region. It is, however, upto the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines issued by the Government.

Further, amongst private scheduled operators, Jet Airways is already operating scheduled air services to/ from Trivandrum as per the following details:

Mumbai-Trivandrum-Mumbai—Daily

Outstanding Dues of Indian Airlines

1424. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines is facing lot of problems of outstanding dues;

(b) if so, the total amount of outstanding dues to be paid by Indian Airlines and to whom alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the efforts being made by the Government to help the IA to get rid of this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Indian Airlines is meeting all its financial obligations. The Company has excellent track record of meeting its debts and other financial liabilities and enjoys a high credit rating.

[Translation]

Resumption of Boeing Air Service

1425. SHRI RAMSEVAK SINGH Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to resume New Delhi-Gwalior-Jabalpur Dornier Air service and the Gwalior-Bhopal Indore-Mumbai Boeing Air services which have been discontinued since 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Indian Airlines is presently conducting a feasibility study to link non-trunk routes like Gwalior etc.

Shortage of Staff

1426. SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is shortage of staff in Akashwani and Doordarshan;

(b) if so, whether the said departments have sought approval from the Government for appointment of more number of employees;

(c) if so, whether the Government has taken any decision in this regard so far;

(d) is so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) According to Prasar Bharati there is a shortage of staff in Akashwani and Doordarshan and they have submitted proposals to Government for fresh appointments.

(c) to (e) The proposals are being examined in the Ministry keeping in view the various instructions on the subject.

[English]

Poor Passengers Amenities at Vadodara and Ahmedabad Airports

1427. SHRI BHARATSINH MADHAVSINH SOLANKI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:
(a) whether the Government is aware of the poor passengers amenities at the Vadodara and Ahmedabad Airports where even the luggage/baggage of the passengers get damaged on this account;

(b) is so, the steps taken by the Government to upgrade the Airport and improve the passenger amenities;

(c) whether a proposal to provide land for Air Cargo Complex for perishables at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, Ahmedabad is pending with Airport Authority of India; and

(d) if so, the details and present status in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The Terminal Building at Vadodara Airport is adequate to serve 500 passengers at a time and is equipped with all modern passenger amenities. At Ahmedabad, a new domestic departure block equipped with all modern passenger facilities to serve 600 passengers is being constructed and is likely to be completed by July, 2005. There are also plans for construction of a New Domestic Arrival Block for 600 passengers and expansion of international terminal building at Ahmedabad.

(c) and (d) A proposal for allotment of 1080 Sq. mtr. of land to M/s Gujarat Agro Industries Corporation Ltd. (GAICL) for setting up of an Air Cargo Complex for perishable commodities at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, Ahmedabad has been received and is being examined by Airports Authority of India.

[Translation]

Introduction of Dr. Ambedkar Samajik Samata Kendra Scheme

1428. SHRI MUNSHI RAM:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is introducing Dr. Ambedkar Samajik Samata Kendra Scheme;

(b) if so, whether the amount under this scheme would be spend by Panchayats/Municipalities and Non-Governmental Organisations;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the total funds allocated/released and spent so far under this scheme in different States, State-wise particularly in Bijnour district of Uttar Pradesh;

(e) whether the funds would be provided to these organizations by the State Governments; and

(f) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) Yes Sir, the scheme is functional.

(b) Panchayats/Municipalities/NGO's are eligible to receive the grants-in-aid under the scheme.

(c) The details of maximum amount admissible under the Scheme are given at statement enclosed.

(d) The total funds allocated under the scheme are Rs. 4.90 crores. And so far, the grant amounting to Rs. 34.30 lakh has been released for seven kendras in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. The details are as given below:

State	No. of Kendras	Amount released (Rs. in lakhs)
Madhya Pradesh	5	25.30
Rajasthan	1	4.5
Maharashtra	1	4.5

No proposal has been received for Bijnour District of Uttar Pradesh.

(e) No Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Statement

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	Item	Class of Cities A	B	C
Non Recurring				
1.	Building (Construction,/renovation/repair/ addition/alteration	50	20	10
2.	Books, magazines, educational information, research material and audio visual aids	10	4	4
3.	Furniture	10	4	2
	Recurring			
4.	Assistance for maintenance	1.5	1.2	1

Sensitive Railway Stations

1429. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:
SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there had been an incident of stampede at some stations due to excessive rush of passengers;

(b) whether the Government has identified or decare some railway stations as sensitive;

(c) if so, the details thereof particulary in U.P., Zone/ State-wise;

(d) whether the Government is contemplating to formulate any scheme for modernization of some railway stations particularly big stations to reduce rush at railway stations in lieu of increasing the number of trains;

(e) whether some stations are likely to be upgraded as big stations in order to reduce congestion there; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. On 13.11.2004 Train No. 2388 Down Jan Sadharan Express scheduled to start at 1510 hrs. was placed at Platform No. 3 at 1100 hrs., and the doors were opened at 1210 hrs. There was heavy rush at New Delhi Railway Station due to festivals of Chhat and Id towards Bihar. While crowd was descending to Platform No. 3 to board Jan Sadharan Express, suddenly women passenger, due to pressure of rush, slipped down on the landing in the middle of the staircase connecting Foot Over Bridge and Platform No 2/3. Consequently a stampede started which resulted in stumbling of some more passengers.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) In South Western Railway (Karnataka), Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli, Davangere and Arsikere have been identified as sensitive.

In South Central (Andhra Pradesh), Tirupathi, Renigunta, Vijayawada and Rajahmundry have been identified.

In Eastern Railway (West Bengal), Howrah and Sealdah have been identified.

In Northeast Frontier Railway (Assam), Guwahati has been identified.

(d) to (f) Upgradation/renovation/modernisation of railway stations including big stations, is a continuous process and the same is undertaken in accordance with laid down norms as per category of station, traffic growth, *inter-se* priorities & availability of funds.

[English]

World Heritage Properties in India

1430. SHRI SUDAM MARNDI:
SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU:
SHRI K.S. RAO:
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Heritage Committee has given some guidelines for better management and regional development planning of the World Heritage properties in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to submit its report to the UNESCO's World Heritage Centre in February 1, 2005;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether several heritage buildings need special attention and need saviour for their protection;

(f) if so, the details thereof, monument-wise; and

(g) the steps being taken by the Government to protect the historical monuments in the country?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The World Heritage Committee has recommended formulation of comprehensive site management plans for cultural sites, *viz*, group of monuments at Hampi, Mahabodhi Temple at Bodhgaya, Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri, to address conservation and management issues.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. As required under the operational guidelines laid down by World Heritage Committee status of conservation of above mentioned sites is required to be submitted before 1st February, 2005. Requisite report on conservation measures and development activities undertaken is being formulated for onward transmission to World Heritage Centre.

(e) to (g) Archaeological Survey of India protects and maintains 3652 notified monuments/sites of national

importance all over the country as per provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. Besides, about 5000 monuments/sites are protected and maintained by State Archaeology Departments all over the country. However, a large number of monuments/sites/heritage buildings still remains unprotected nation-wide and need protection and preservation. The Ministry of Culture, Government of India has formulated National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities with the objective of documenting and preparing a National Register of built heritage sites. Archaeological Survey of India will act as National Nodal Agency for execution of the mission and requisite action to implement the Mission has been initiated.

Disrespect of National Flag in Karipur Airport

1431. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS:
SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR:
SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA:
SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN:
SHRI P.K. VASUDEVAN NAIR:
SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that a mob removed the national flag on top of the airport terminal at Karipur Airport and hoisted the flag of a political party;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted into the incident;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any action has been initiated to book the culprits; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The workers of Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) had tied their flag on the communication antenna on the terrace of the domestic terminal building at Karipur Airport in Calicut but National Flag was not removed from its position.

(c) to (f) Airport Director, Karipur Airport and Chief Airport Security Officer (CASO), CISF, Karipur (Calicut) Airport have conducted enquiry about this incident. Two persons have been arrested by local police on the basis of an FIR lodged by Airports Authority of India (AAI) and registered by Kondotty Police Station.

[Translation]

Licence Fee on TV Radio Sets

1432. SHRI MUNAWAR HASSAN;
SHRI ARJUN SETHI;
SHRI HARISH NAGPAL;
SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA;
SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH;
SHRI BALESHWAR YADAV;

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

(a) whether the Government proposes to impose annual licence fee on TV and Radio sets;

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

(c) whether the Government has assessed the likely impact on the middle/lower middle and weaker sections of society;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to re-consider its decision; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) No specific proposals are under consideration. However, various ideas have been mooted for strengthening Prasar Bharati's autonomous financial base.

[English]

RoB in West Bengal

1433. SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal from the Government of West Bengal for construction of road over bridges; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government with particular reference to Dankuni RoB?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. All the firm proposals received from State Government and conforming to the extant rules and feasibility of execution at site are included in the Railways' Works Programme. Road over bridge at Dankuni at Km. 11/30-32 was sanctioned in 2001-02. Geotechnical survey at site has been completed. Temporary Arrangements Drawing has been sent to State Government Road Authorities for approval.

Maintenance of Char Minar

1434. SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether ASI (Archaeological Survey of India) is maintaining and upkeeping the well known monument Char Minar in Hyderabad;

(b) whether the Government is aware of any encroachment below the monument by beggars & others;

(c) whether Char Minar is also losing its shine and whiteness because of poor maintenance & pollution;

(d) if so, the effective steps the Government has taken in this regard;

(e) whether any specific plan has been chalked out to give a face lift to this monument; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The attention of the Government has not been drawn to encroachments by beggars & others.

(c) There is no lack of maintenance and the monument is not losing its shine and whiteness. However, due to vehicular traffic, the monument is exposed to effects of noise and air pollution.

(d) Scientific studies have indicated that the suspended particle matter as well as the traffic noise index and sound pressure values are on higher side. The barricading around the Charminar has been moved further by 13 feet and along the retaining wall, one metre wide trench has been cut and filled up with earth, turfed with grass and flower plants to minimize the effect of vibrations due to vehicular traffic.

Periodical chemical treatment is undertaken to remove black soot.

(e) and (f) ASI is periodically undertaking conservation and preservation measures of this monument. Fallen balconies of South-west minars and steps etc. are conserved. Missing portion of stucco has been repaired. Illumination is carried out from outside.

State Government has prepared plans to divert the vehicular traffic and make it a pedestrian zone.

Procurement of Helicopters

1435. SHRI ARJUN SETHI:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:
SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:
DR. M. JAGANNATH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Army is importing helicopters designed for high altitude operations from Russia, United States and Europe;

(b) if so, whether Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is unable to deliver similar helicopters in the near future; and

(c) if so, when would the HAL be able to build high altitude operationable helicopters?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There is a proposal to import helicopters to replace Cheetah and Chetak for high altitude operations for which global 'Request for Proposal' (RFP) was issued.

(b) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) at present does not manufacture helicopter in the category for which RFP has been issued. The proposal envisages import of some helicopters and Transfer of Technology from the successful vendor to enable HAL to manufacture the helicopters.

(c) HAL will be able to manufacture these helicopters after acquiring the Transfer of Technology.

Chinese Model of Rural Development

1436. SHRI LONAPPAN NAMBADAN: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government contemplates to revamp the rural development programmes on the lines of the Chinese model;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the salient features of those models;

(c) whether a Round Table Conference was held at Mysore on 28-29 August, 2004 to formulate a draft action plan in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken on the action plan discussed in the said conference?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) A Conference of Chief Ministers and State Ministers in charge of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj on Poverty Alleviation and Rural Prosperity through Panchayati Raj was organized in New Delhi on 29-30 June, 2004, jointly by the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The Prime Minister, in his inaugural address at this Conference, emphasized the need to learn from the Chinese Model of Rural Business Hubs that add value to agricultural produce within the rural areas. The Conference decided to hold seven Round Table Conferences to formulate a draft action plan for achieving the objectives of strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions to enable them to become true institutions of self-government for planning and implementation of programmes of economic development and social justice as envisioned in the Constitution. Round Table-II was held on 28-29 August, 2004 at Mysore where the subject "Panchayati Raj: Planning and implementation and Rural Business Hubs" was discussed. Certain presentations were made in regard to Agriculture/Horticulture, bio-diesel through the plant *Jatropha*, exploiting isolated gas wells for Panchayats by the experts in the field. The Ministers in-charge of Panchayati Raj thereafter, requested the Minister of Panchayati Raj to hold a national presentation of rural business hubs. Accordingly, a National Presentation on Rural Business Hubs with the theme 'Economic Empowerment through Panchayats' was held on 5th November, 2004 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) from the States and Union Territories, as also certain members of the CII participated in the presentation. Presentations were made on several subjects, namely, Agriculture/ Horticulture, Bamboo products and process, Khadi and Village Industries, Handicrafts, Rural fashion-Handlooms and Garments, Bio-diesel through Jatropha, Power through Bio-mass Exploiting isolated Gas Wells for Panchayats, Power Generation for Panchayats, Micro Finance, District Plan for Rural Business Hubs, Role of e-Governance in rural service delivery and Leveraging IT enabled rural business hubs (e-Choupal). Open house discussions were also held.

(c) to (e) Yes Sir. The proceedings of the second Round Table Conference are enclosed as statement. Ministers in-charge of Panchayats and their representatives agreed to recommend to their respective Governments, the conclusions reached during the six Round Table Conferences on the subjects under considerations for further necessary adoption. Similary, the conclusions which will be reached during the seventh Round Table Conference are also proposed to be recommended by the Ministers in-charge of Panchayati Raj to their respective Governments for adoption. These conclusions thereafter are proposed to be adopted at the meeting of the Chief Ministers, which is scheduled to be held at the beginning of the next year, for further necessary action.

Statement

Second Round Table of State Ministers of Panchayati Raj Mysore, 28th-29th August, 2004

Ministers in-charge of Panchayati Raj and their representatives, bearing in mind the spirit of cooperative federalism which must inform the effective implementation of Panchayati Raj as set out in Para-IX of the Constitution of India and related provisions, including in particular, Article 243ZD (District Planning Committees), agreed to recommend to their respective Governments, for joint acceptance by the Centre and the States, the following points of action:-

I. Planning

1. There shall be constituted in every State, at the district level, a District Planning Committee (DPC) by the end of the current financial year wherever such DPCs do not already exist.
2. All DPCs should be constituted according to the procedure laid down in the Constitution in Article 243ZD (2).

3. All States must make provision, by law, for the functions relating to District Planning Committees.

4. District planning must take into account:

   (i) resource endowment of the area;

   (ii) felt needs of the people; and

   (iii) relative absorptive capacity.

5. As provided for in the Constitution, each tier of the Panchayati Raj system—Village, Intermediate and District-must prepare the perspective Five Year Plan and Annual Plans for their respective jurisdiction. The same exercise should be undertaken in the Municipalities of each district. The DPC should "consolidate" the plans prepared by the Panchayats and Municipalities, as provided for in the Constitution, rather than prepare the District Plan of its own accord or of its own volition.

6. To fine-tune the plans prepared at different levels, as also to undertake the consolidation of plans in the DPC in a technically acceptable sense, State Governments, in accordance with the provisions of Article 243ZD(3)(b), may specify institutions, organizations and individuals, who may assist the Panchayats, Municipalities and DPCs in preparing plans of a technically acceptable nature.

7. To facilitate such planning, the State Government, in accordance with the provisions of Article 243ZD, may indicate to each level of the Panchayats and Municipalities, "the extent and type of available resources, whether financial or otherwise".

8. To the extent possible, resources should be made available to the Panchayats and the Municipalities on an untied, general purpose basis. Where grants are tied to schemes, guidelines should be broad and simple so that they are readily understood by elected representatives at the Panchayat and Municipality level.

9. Recognizing the financial constraints under which most State Governments at present operate, the primary responsibility for providing untied grants and simplified schemes rests with the Union Government and the Planning Commission. The Central Government may, therefore, consider establishing a mechanism at the Centre which will poll together all the Central Government and Finance Commission's resources with a view to channellising as large proportion of these as possible to the PRIs through the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) which might be renamed as the District Panchayat Development Agencies (DPDAs) since they will be receiving all the resources of the Central Government rather than just those of the Ministry of Rural Development alone. In any case, wherever State Governments have obolished DRDAs, and merged them with Zilla Panchayats, this channel may be used. The proposed DPDA may be so merged with the District Panchayat that its resources, both financial and in terms of technical manpower, are made available to all tiers of the Panchayati Raj system in accordance with the activity maps prepared by the State Governments for each tier of the Panchayati Raj system.

10. Thus, even as in the case of the devolution of functions, functionaries and finances, planning at each level of the PRIs may be undertaken in accordance with activity mapping.

11. The States, depending upon their resource availability, might appropriately strengthen the sound finances of the PRIs so that planning at the District and Sub-District level is based on an indication of the resources available and those that would be made available, for the activities devolved on them.

12. In the budgets of State Governments, besides the traditional division between the State sector and the District sector, consideration may be given to incorporating a Panchayat sector in each departmental budget. At the Centre, the Planning Commission, in consultation with the Central Ministries concerned, might work out similar appropriate arrangements.

13. In allotting financial resource to PRIs, the distinction between administrative grants and development grants may be maintained.

14. State Governments may consider incorporating in their State laws provision for the formation of Standing Committees within each Panchayat body to undertake the responsibilities relating to planning and implementation for the subjects allotted to them. These Committees could have an earmarked budget, based on the Panchayats

allocating funds to the Standing Committees, depending on their respective responsibilities.

15. In the preparation of District Plans, priority should be give, first, to plans for the provision of basic minimum needs; second, to the provision of services; third, to facilitating Rural Business Hubs; and, fourth, to general economic development.

16. The Planning Commission is requested to ensure that the 11th Plan begins with and is founded on District Plans prepared in accordance with the provisions of Part-IX and IXA of the Constitution.

II. Implementation

1. As institutions of local government, Panchayati Raj Institutions are required to not only plan but also to implement such programmes of economic development and social justice as may be "entrusted" to them, including those in relation to the matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule. As such, points relating to implementation parallel those relating to planning. What applies to planning applies *pari passu* to implementation.

2. Article 243G of the Constitution provides for the implementation of schemes to be "entrusted" to PRIs. This means entrusted schemes should be implemented by PRIs and not by line departments.

3. For the effective implementation of entrusted schemes, chairpersons must act as "chairperson-in-council". There must be full activation of subject-related Standing Committees of the Panchayat so that all elected members of the Panchayat participate in managing all aspects of implementation, from conception to approval; from the calling of tenders to the finalization of vendors; and from conducting supervision of on-going works to certifying the issue of utilization certificates. Of course, the Gram Sabha needs to be involved in every stage of the process.

4. Effective implementation also requires that the Gram Sabha plays an active role in auditing both the physical and financial performance of the Gram Panchayat's plans, programmes and projects, as also "entrusted" schemes. Three major functions of the Gram Sabha should be incorporated in the legislation of States:-

   (i) Slection of beneficiaries;

   (ii) Approval of plans, programmes and projects prepared by the Panchayats;

   (iii) Authorize the issue of Utilization Certificates after having verified the progress of a work. It is crucial that the Gram Sabha's social audit functions be written into the law.

5. The adoption of a Citizens' Charter, the Right to Information by law and community-based movements such as *Jan Sunwais* have been found to be greatly effective aids in the exercise of the effective devolution of powers and responsibilities to the PRIs. It is, therefore, recommended that a time-bound plan be put in place, along with a built-in system of checks and balances, for ensuring transparency and community participation in the working of the Panchayats.

III. Parallel Bodies

1. The devolution of functions, functionaries and finances, based on activity mapping is required by the Constitution (Article 243G) to be devolved to only the Panchayats and not to any parallel body.

2. If, for reasons of institutional constraints, parallel bodies have been set up or are to be set up, these must be brought into an organic, symbiotic relationship with the PRIs at the appropriate level so that PRIs are fully involved with the work of the parallel bodies.

3. To the extent possible, parallel bodies should be established only where indispensable, and invariably in consultation with, and with the collaboration of, the PRIs at the appropriate level.

4. By law, parallel bodies should be required to report periodically to the Gram Sabha(s) so that

the community as a whole is kept informed of the activities of parallel bodies.

5. The Central and State Governments may evolve modalities and mechanisms for granting permission to parallel bodies, including those established by foreign and multilateral donor agencies, so that parallel bodies do not undermine the Constitutional authority of PRIs as "institutions of self-government" but work together to their mutual benefit and the common benefit of the community.

Benami (ESM) Transport Companies

1437. SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had introduced a Scheme in 1979 for the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen by which Ex-servicemen companies (ESM) are formed for the transportation of coal from the mines;

(b) if so, the names of ESM companies formed under this scheme;

(c) whether there are complaints that most of these ESM companies are bogus/benami being run by Coal Mafia; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to identify such benami (ESM) transport companies and action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present, 101 Ex-servicemen Coal Transport companies are functioning in coal subsidiaries of Coal India Limited, names of which are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The complaints were examined by the Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR) and it was found that Ex-servicemen Coal Transport Companies are functioning strictly according to the laid down procedure and adhering to various provisions of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between DGR and Coal India Limited Besides, no violation of MoU by any Ex-servicemen company has been reported by any of the coal subsidiaries.

Statement

Names of Ex-Servicemen Coal Transport Companies Presently Functioning in Coal Subsidiaries of Coal India Limited

Sl. No.	Name of the Company
1	2
1.	Seba Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
2.	Pioneer ESM Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
3.	Chetak TPT Pvt. Ltd.
4.	Subhadra TPT Pvt. Ltd.
5.	Shri Raj Coal Carriers
6.	Utkal Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
7.	Super Freight Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
8.	Hingula Transport Pvt. Ltd.
9.	Amar Kantak Coal Carriers
10.	Vinshree Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
11.	Pawan Pootra Hanuman TPT (P) Ltd.
12.	Super Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
13.	Gopalpur TPT Pvt. Ltd.
14.	Lingaraj TPT Pvt. Ltd.
15.	IB Valley TPT Pvt. Ltd.
16.	Lilari Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
17.	Navneet Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
18.	Lajkura Transport Pvt. Ltd.
19.	Aliza TPT Pvt. Ltd.
20.	Lakhanpur Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
21.	RKG Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
22.	Kalinga Road Carriers (P) Ltd.
23.	Vireshwara Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
24.	Jotmon Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
25.	Bhramini Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
26.	GG Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
27.	Singhson Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.

1	2
28.	Om Sai TPT Pvt. Ltd.
29.	Gangotri Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
30.	Khushi Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
31.	Shaurya Vir Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
32.	Pioneer Coal Linkers Pvt. Ltd.
33.	Sanjay Exm Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
34.	KL Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
35.	Exm Everest Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
36.	Shatrujeet Exm TPT Pvt. Ltd.
37.	Swarup Coal Transport Pvt. Ltd.
38.	Vanguard Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
39.	SSV Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
40.	Wardha Coal Transport Pvt. Ltd.
41.	Kartikay Bulk Movers Pvt. Ltd.
42.	Shreem Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
43.	Triveni Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
44.	NP Earthmovers Pvt. Ltd.
45.	Zordots Earthmovers Pvt. Ltd.
46.	Anita & Angels TPT Pvt. Ltd.
47.	GSL Associates Pvt. Ltd.
48.	Navjiwan Earthmovers Pvt. Ltd.
49.	R.S. Earthmovers Pvt. Ltd.
50.	Bilaspur Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
51.	Akal Purkh Exm TPT Pvt. Ltd.
52.	Baba Mastnath Transporters Pvt. Ltd.
53.	Masters Transporters Pvt. Ltd.
54.	Param Mittar Coal Movers Pvt. Ltd.
55.	Jagannath Coal Transport Pvt. Ltd.
56.	Gagan Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
57.	Maa Karni Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
58.	Chanakya Transport Pvt. Ltd.
59.	Dipika Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
60.	MB EXM Transport Pvt. Ltd.
61.	Dhanpuri Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
62.	Shivani Transport Pvt. Ltd.
63.	Gajraj Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
64.	GL Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
65.	Vindhya Coal Movers Pvt. Ltd.
66.	Korba Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
67.	Sri Dada Dev Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
68.	Sumati Transport Pvt. Ltd.
69.	Shivam Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
70.	Chhattisgarh Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
71.	Kusmunda Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
72.	Shri Ganraj Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
73.	Gevra Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
74.	Arjuna Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
75.	VN Transport Pvt. Ltd.
76.	HN Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
77.	Jogender Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
78.	Kanwal Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
79.	Anupama Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
80.	Sawhney Coal Transportation Pvt. Ltd.
81.	Sainik Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
82.	Shri Angad TPT Pvt. Ltd.
83.	Bhiwani Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
84.	Dada Mathak Wala Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
85.	Greyhound TPT Pvt. Ltd.
86.	Varahi Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
87.	Ambey Transport Pvt. Ltd.
88.	Mansa Devi Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
89.	Natraj Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.

1	2
90.	Oneiric Carriers Ways Pvt. Ltd.
91.	Tripurare Coal TPT Pvt. Ltd.
92.	Joy Carrier Ways Pvt. Ltd.
93.	Tribhuvan Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
94.	Eagle Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
95.	Dolphin TPT Pvt. Ltd.
96.	Neeni TPT Pvt. Ltd.
97.	Jaguar TPT Pvt. Ltd.
98.	Eternal Transport Co. Pvt. Ltd.
99.	Balajee Coal Carriers Pvt. Ltd.
100.	Ganapati Coal Movers Pvt. Ltd.
101.	Belphar TPT Pvt. Ltd.

Proposal for Use of Battery Re-Generator

1438. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether RDSO examined a proposal for use of battery re-generator to enhance life of used batteries in Railways;

(b) is so, the details findings of each trial made period-wise and location-wise; and

(c) the details of technical specification made, if any, and target set for completion of trial towards field application of the technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The results of trials carried out by Northern and Notheast frontier during the years 2000 & 2003 respectively remained inconclusive.

(c) The provisional technical specification No. RDSO/PE/SPEC/TL/00031-02 (Rev. '0') framed by Research, Design & Standards Organisation (RDSO) for battery-de-sulphator-cum-charging system in October, 2002 has been circulated to Central, Northern & Southern Railways for procuring the equipment and conducting extensive field trials on the regenerated batteries. The outcome of trials of regenerated batteries using the above equipment for a period of 18 months from the date of commissioning will determine the course of further action.

[Translation]

Constitution of Committee for Allocation of Funds to NGO for Handicapped

1439. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has constituted any Committee to allocate funds to NGOs for the welfare of handicapped; and

(b) if so, the number of the meetings held by the said committee as well as the amount allocated through it during the last three years, till date, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Restructuring of Ordance Factory Board

1440. SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to restructure the Ordnance Factory Board by nominating experts on it; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Procurement of New Aircraft for IA/AI

1441. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA:
SHRI K.S. RAO:
SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ:
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:
SHRI KAMLA PRASAD RAWAT:
SRRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:
SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has accorded approval for the procurement of new aircraft for Indian Airlines and Air India;

(b) if so, the details along with the number of aircraft likely to be purchased by IA/AI with the details of companies;

(c) the amount sanctioned by the Government for this prupose;

(d) whether the Government propose to seek financial assistance from international credit agencies for this purpose;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the extent to which it would help Indian Airlines and Air India to boost their profit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Indian Airlines proposal for 43 aircraft comprising 19 A-319, 4 A-320 and 20 A-321 manufactured by Airbus Industries with engines from CFM International was considered by the PIB in its meeting held on 10.11.2004. The net project cost is Rs. 10089 crores. Provision of Rs. 325 crores approved by government towards equity enhancement has been considered in Indian Airlines proposal. In its meeting held on 24.11.2004, Air India Board has approved a revised fleet plan as per which the fleet size of Air India would be enhanced from present level of 34 aircraft to 74 aircraft by the year 2012/13. Air India project report in this regard has, however, not been received by the Government.

(d) and (e) Airlines will raise funds through their internal resources and also through commercial borrowing from International/Indian market after obtaining requisite approvals from the respective Boards/Government.

(f) The induction of new generation aircraft in the airlines fleet would bring savings in operating cost due to higher fuel efficiency, lower maintenance cost, reduction in unscheduled maintenance etc. Besides, the proposed induction of aircraft would enable the airlines to maintain capacity by replacing old aircraft and add new capacity necessary to meet traffic demand and expand market reach. It would also enhance customer appeal towards to product.

[English]

Excavation in Chandraketugarh

1442. SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether nearly a century after the archaeological site was discovered at Chandraketugarh in north 24 parganas of West Bengal, it remains an enigma to historians;

(b) if so, whether bricks and potteries dating back to second century BC were found during subsequent excavations;

(c) is so, whether the site has been laying in neglect and was recently in the eye of a storm when a cellular firm dug up the area to erect a telecommunication tower;

(d) if so, whether the Government would like to go in for a study to explain the development of artistic tradition, who were the people represented in the terracotta figures, what are the purpose of the objects and how do these relate to major art styles in other parts of India; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir. The archaeological site of Chandraketugarh in District 24 Parganas (North), West Bengal, is not an enigma to historians. Excavations here revealed an early urban settlement datable to *circa* 6th-5th century B.C.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The site is not in a neglected condition. The unauthorized digging that had just started at the site was immediately stopped. No damage was done to the site.

(d) and (e) Several publications in Bengali and English are already available on the subject. Notable amongst them are:

1. *Descriptive list of Sculptures & Coins* in the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad;
2. *Proceedings of Indian History Congress*;
3. *Lalit Kala;*

4. *Studies in Museum and Museology*;

5. *Archaeology of Eastern India, New Perspectives;*

6. *Chandraketugarh*, and

7. *Garh Chandraketur Katha* (in Bengali).

The Government have no plans to carry out any separate study.

[Translation]

Dissolution of National Commission for Handicapped

1443. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to dissolve National Commission for Handicapped;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Commission has completed his work and the schemes formulated under the Commission have been completed;

(d) if not, the details in this regard;

(e) whether the Government is unable to provide funds for the remaining work of the schemes;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the corrective action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) and (b) National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD) was set up vide Resolution dated 16th October, 2003. At that time it was also decided to repeal the provisions relating to the post of Chief Commissioner of Disabilities (CCD) under the 'Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 (PWD). However, the NCPD after studying the role assigned to the office of CCD recommended that CCD must continue as a separate entity.

On reconsideration, it was decided not to abolish the post of CCD. However, it was decided to wind up NCPD vide Resolution dated 20th October, 2004.

(c) to (g) NCPD had not formulated any schemes.

However, persons with disabilities are being assisted under various chemes of the Central Government *viz* Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme, Assistance to Disabled Persons for purchase/fitting of Aids & Appliances (ADIP), Loans through National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation, Training & Rehab-Services through national institutes, Composite Regional Centres (CRCs), District Rehabilitation Centres (DRCs), Regional Rehabilitation Training Centres (RRTCs) and District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DRCs), provision for providing need based services to persons with autism, mental retardation, cerebral palsy and multiple disabilities through National Trust, National Scholarships etc. Besides, State Governments also run their own schemes for welfare of persons with disabilities.

[Translation]

Profit making PSUs

1444. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA:
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

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

(a) whether some of the public sector enterprises run as heavy industries are running in profit;

(b) if so, the total number of these industries and the average amont earned annually during the last three years;

(c) the capital invested in these industries by the Government; and

(d) the total number of employees working in these industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Nine Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) directly under the Department of Heavy Industry, made profit during 2003-04. The average amount of profit earned annually by these PSEs during the last three years (2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04) was Rs. 881.41 crore.

(c) The capital invested in terms of equity by the Government/holding company in these PSEs as on 31.03.2004 was Rs. 1043.22 crore.

(d) The total number of employees working in these PSEs as on 31.03.2004 was 52059.

[English]

ROB/RUB in Kerala

1445. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the Road over/under bridges under various stages of construction in Kerala giving the cost date commencement and expected completion of the works of each project;

(b) whether the construction works of the bridges in Kerala was suspended following an accident at the construction site of a bridge in Thrissur district:

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the works have been resumed since then; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) A Statement is attached.

(b) to (e) The work of construction of complete Road Over Bridge including the Railway portion of work and approaches at Thrissur is being done by Government of Kerala through Road and Bridge Development Corporation of Kerala (RBDCK) which in turn has further entrusted the work to a construction agency. There was an accident on approach span (non Railway portion) of Road Over Bridge in lieu of Level Crossing No.17 near Thrissur on 16.03.2004. The responsibility of execution of approaches lies with the State Government. Railway has not stopped work at Thrissur or at any other location in State of Kerala.

Statement

Various Road Over/Under Bridges in Kerala sanctioned on cost sharing basis alongwith Railway and state Government's share of cost are given below. These works are executed jointly by Railway and State Government Railway construct the bridge proper (bridge over the track) and approaches by State Government In some cases, State Government is executing railway portion of work also. Execution of cost sharing works involves preparation of general arrangement drawings (GAD), preparation of estimate, preparation of launching scheme, finalisation of tender and final execution of work. These sanctioned woks are presently in various stages of planning and execution. Railway shall complete its portion of work alongwith the approaches executed by State Government.

S.No.	Name of Work	Railway's Share (Rs. in lakhs)	State's Share (Rs. in lakhs)
1	2	3	4
1.	Ferok-Kallayi-ROB in lieu of LC No. 177 at Km.600/4-5 on Shoranur-Mangalore section	538	533
2.	Varkala-Road Under Bridge in lieu of LC No. 561 at Km. 179/13-14	237	305
3.	ROB between Wadakancherry and Mulagunnathukavu in lieu of LC No. 13 at Km. 19/0-1	48	48
4.	Cheravattur & Nileshwar-ROB in lieu of LC No. 269 at Km. 805/5-6 bet. Cheravattur & Nileshwar stn. In Shoranur-Mangalore Section (Cochin Harbour Yard)	511	499
5.	ROB in lieu of LC No. 272 at Km. 810/1-2 bet. Kanhangadi and Nileshwar stns. (Padanakkad) in Shoranur-Mangalore sec.	511	499
6.	Cherrode-Shoranur-Calicut-ROB in lieu of LC No.215 at Km 713/10-11	311	389

1	2	3	4
7.	Chalakudi-ROB in lieu of LC No.48 at Km. 62/9-8 at Chalakudi in Shoranur-Emakulam section.	375	375
8.	Elattur & Quilandi-ROB in lieu of LC No. 196 at Km. 679/1-2 bet. Elattur and Quilandi (Vengalam stns. In Shoranur-Mangalore Section	499	499
9.	Vengali ROB in lieu of LC No. 192 @ Km. 673/8-9 bet. West Hill and Elattur stns in Shoranur-Mangalore Section	581	581
10.	Velayil ROB at Km. 666/11-12 bet. Calicut & West Hills. in lieu of LC No. 186 in Shoranur-Mangalore Section	850	844
11.	ROB in lieu of LC No. 239 at Km. 749-2-3 bet. Ettokot and Cannanore stns in Shoranur-Mangalore Section	511	499
12.	Chova-ROB in lieu of LC No. 238 at Km. 743/3-4 bet. Ettokot and Cannanore stns in Shoranur-Mangalore Section	511	499
13.	Nandi ROB in lieu of LC No. 206 at Km. 695/12-13 bet. Ettokot and Cannanore stns in Shoranur-Mangalore Section	610	610
14.	Chengottukavu-ROB in lieu of LC No. 199 at Km. 686/1-2 bet. Elattur and Quilandi stns in Shoranur-Mangalore Section.	606	606
15.	Angamali-ROB in lieu of LC No.64 at Km.80/12-13 between Angamally & Aluva station of Shoranur-Ernakulam section.	538	533
16.	Ernakulam-Tirunettur-ROB in lieu of LC No.76T at Km. 1/9-10.	524	518
17.	Palghat Town-Pollachi-ROB in lieu of LC No.50 at Km. 54/12-13 between Palghat-Palghat Town stations on Palghat-Pollachi Section.	524	518
18.	Pullapady-Thamman Road-ROB in lieu of LC No.73 at Km. 105/5-6 on Pullapady-Thammanam Road on Ernakulam town-Ernakulam Junction Section.	559	942
19.	Ernakulam-Quilon Road ROB in lieu of LC No.2 at km 3/19-20	524	518
20.	Tirur-ROB in lieu of LC No. 174 at km. 639/14-15 on Shoranur-Mangalore Sec.	571	559
21.	Kuttipuram-ROB in lieu of LC No.171 at km. 626/10-11 on Shoranur-Mangalore Sec.	538	533
22.	Korattiyangadi-ROB in lieu of LC No.54 at Km. 67/13-14 on Shoranur-Ernakulam Sec.	538	533

1	2	3	4
23.	Mundoor Road-ROB in lieu of LC No.17 at km.28/10-11 on Shoranur-Ernakulam Sec.	538	533
24.	Ollur-ROB in lieu of LC No. CRL Yard at km.39/13-14(Ollur Yard) on Shoranur-Ernakulam Sec.	571	559
25.	Kalamasserry-ROB in lieu of LC No.67 at km. 95/7-8 on Shoranur-Ernakulam Sec.	538	533
26.	Badagara-ROB in lieu of LC No. 229 at km. 732/9-10 on Shoranur-Mangalore Sec.	538	533
27.	Karukutti-Angamali ROB in lieu of LC No 59 at Km 74/600-700 in SRR-ERS section.	518	518
28.	Irugur-Coimbatore-Podanur RUB in lieu of LC No.20	75	155
29.	Payyanur-ROB in lieu of LC No. 271 at km 807/6-7 in Shoranur-Mangalore section	538	533
30.	Idapally-Ernakulam-ROB in lieu of LC No. 69A at Km 101/10-11 between Idappali-Ernakulam Stations.	590	572
31.	Kanjikode-ROB in lieu of LC No. 159 at Km. 531/8-10 bet Kanjikode-Palghat stns on Erode-Palghat section.	590	571
32.	Westhill-ROB in lieu of LC No.201 at Km 688/2-3 bet. Elattur-quilandi stns on Shoranur-Mangalore section.	576	587
33.	Pallikere-Kottikulam-ROB in lieu of LC No. 276 at Km 825/15-826/1 bet Pallikara-Kotikulam stns on Shoranur-Mangalore section.	587	576
34.	Pollachi-Pundunagaram-Palghat Town-ROB in lieu of LC No.49 at Km 53/10-11 bet Palghat-Palghat Town stations on Shoranur-Mangalore section.	587	576
35.	Palghat-Palghat Town-ROB in lieu of LC No. 52 at Km. 56/4-5 bet. Palghat-Palghat town stns. on Palghat-Pollachi section.	555	574
36.	Quilon-Mayyanad-ROB in lieu of LC No.543	588	576
37.	Cochin harbour ROB in lieu of LC No 14 at Km 25/5-6 between Punkunam and Mulagunathukava station	607	607
38.	Karukutti-Angamali ROB in lieu of LC No 19 at Km30/14-15 between Karukutti and Angamalistan Station	496	496
39.	Mangalore-ROB in lieu of LC No 170 at Km 615/3-4 at Thirunavauya station	5119	496
40.	Calicut ROB in lieu of LC No 185 at Km 666/3-4 at Calicut and West Hill station	511	511

1	2	3	4
41.	Badagara ROB in lieu of LC No 216 at Km 714/14 between Badagara and Mukall station	638	638
42.	Mahe ROB in lieu of LC No 226 at Km 730/7-8 between Mahe and Telicherry station	528	528
43.	Cannore ROB in lieu of LC No. 241 at Km 752/1-2 between Cannonore and Cannonore South Station	505	505
44.	Nileswar ROB in lieu of LC No. 268 at Km 801/9-10 between Charavattur and Nileshawar Station	575	575
45.	Nandikkara-ROB in lieu of LC No. 31 at Km. 49/2-3 between Pudukkad and Irinjalakuda Station	463	463
46.	Shoranur-Ernakulam section ROB in lieu of LC No.45 at Km.58/2-3 between Irinjalakuda & Chlakkaudi stns.	463	463
47.	Divine Nagar ROB in lieu of LC No.52 at Km. 65/11-12 between Chalakudi & Karukkutti stns (Divine nagar)	463	463
48.	Vellanchira ROB in lieu of LC No. 46 at Km. 60/15 between Irinjalakuda & Chalakkudi stns (Vellanchira)	546	546
49.	ROB in lieu of LC No.261 at Km. 787/15 between Payyanur & Thrikkarippoor stns	513	513
50.	ROB in lieu of LC No.172 at Km. 629/11/1-2 between Tirur & Tanur stns.	512	512
51.	Kunjipally ROB in lieu of LC No.217 at Km. 721/6-7 between Badagara and Mahe stns (Kunjipally)	482	482
52.	ROB in lieu of LC No.228 at Km. 731/14-15 between Tellicherry & Jagannatha Temple stns.	551	551
53.	Karthrikadavu-Road over bridge in lieu of Level crossing No.1	389	389
54.	Shoranur-Ernakulam Road over Bridge in lieu of Level crossing No. 71 near Idappalli	742	742
55.	Cherode-Shoranaur-Culicut-Road over bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 215	314	392
56.	Dharmadam-Etakkot Road over bridge at level crossing No. 232	626	626
57.	Shoranur-Ernakulam-Road over bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 64	538	538
58.	Shoranur-Ernakulam-Road over bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 54	293	293
59.	Elattur-Quilandi Road over bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 201	587	587
60.	Kanhangad-Pallikere-Road over bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 274	607	607

Failure of Rail Reservation System

1446. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Reservation System failed recently for almost two hours in Northern parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways has conducted any inquiry for the failure of system;

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

(e) the steps taken by the Railways to check the recurrence of such failure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No. Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Railway Line on Kottayam-Erumeli

1447. SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the final survey of the proposed Kottayam-Erumeli Railway line has bee completed;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to include the project in the railway work programme for the next year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The final location survey is in progress.

(b) The construction of new line from Kottayam-Erumeli is already included in Railway Budget.

(c) The anticipated cost of the project is Rs. 200 crore. An outlay of Rs. 2 crore has been provided during 2004-05.

[Translation]

Testing of Missiles

1448. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:
SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA:
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of missible tests conducted successfully during the last one year, category-wise;

(b) the range of these missiles;

(c) the time by which these missiles are likely to be inducted;

(d) whether the Government has received some proposals from foreign countries for procurement of missiles;

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

(f) the steps taken by the Government to export of missiles?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) A statement is attached.

(c) Prithvi (P-I) has already been inducted into Army. The development trials of other missiles like Prithvi (P-II) for Air Force, Dhanush for Navy, BrahMos, Agni-I and Agni-II have been completed and these are in the process of induction. Akash, Trishul and Nag will be ready for user trials by December 2005.

(d) and (e) Certain countries have shown interest in BrahMos and Nag. Export of other missiles like Prithvi and Agni class are subject to international obligations on proliferation. Hence such an export is not under consideration.

(f) Indo-Russian joint venture company BrahMos Aerospace has been tasked for production and export of BrahMos missile. Regarding other tactical missiles, decision will be taken, case-by-case.

Statement

No. of flight tests conducted in one year
December 2003 till date

Name of missile system	No. of test	Range in km.
1	2	3
Trishul (Surface to Air Quick Reaction Missile System)	8	09
Akash (Surface to Air, Multi-target Air Defence System)	6	25
Nag (Third Generation Anti Tank Top attack Missile System)	4	04

1	2	3
Agni-I (Surface to Surface Ballistic Missile System)	1	700
Agni-II (Surface to Surface Ballistic Missile System)	1	2000
Prithvi (Surface to Surface Tactical Battlefield Missile System for Army, Air Force & Navy)	3	150 - Army version 250 - Air Force & Navy version
BrahMos (Supersonic Cruise Missile System)	2	290

[English]

Railway Projects in West Bengal

1449. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:
SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the new and pending rail projects and surveys in West Bengal along with the progress made thereon, project-wise;

(b) the time scheule fixed for completion of each of these project/surveys;

(c) whether the Government has received any fresh proposal to conduct survey for construction/conversion of railway lines in West Bengal;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Pending projects are considered as those projects which have been included in the Budget without requisite clearances and clearances are still pending. There is no such pending project in West Bengal. Hon'ble MPs are perhaps referring to ongoing rail projects and surveys falling fully/partly in West Bengal, whose progress and time schedule of completion wherever fixed are as under:-

S. No.	Name of project	Anticipated cost (Rs. in cr.)	Anticipated Expenditure upto 31.3.2004 (Rs. in cr.)	Proposed Outlay 2004-2005 (Rs. in cr.)	Current Status
1	2	3	4	5	6
New Lines					
1.	Laxmikantapur-Namkhana (47.5 km)	100.88	93.97	1.00	Work completed.
2.	Tarakeshwar-Bishnupur with ext up to Kumarkundu bypass connecting Howrah-Bardhman Chord (85 km)	276	22.66	2.99	Land acquisition proceedings are in progress between Tarakeshwar-Arambagh. Work will be commenced once the land becomes available.

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Azimganj (Nasipur)-Jiaganj up to the Ghats (3 km)	22.78	—	0.01	Work has been approved by competent authority with the concurrence of Planning Commission. Preliminary activities for taking up the work are in progress. Final Location Survey has been completed.
4.	Mandarhill-Rampurhat via Dumka (130 km)	254.07	57.43	10.00	Land acquisition proceedings are in progress. Work of earthwork, bridges and other activities are in progress.
5.	New Maynaguri-Jogighopa (245 km)	733	33.97	42.00	Final Location Survey completed. Land acquisition proceedings in progress. Earthwork and bridge works from Maynaguri Road-Changrabandha are in progress.
6.	Eklakhi-Balurghat and Gazol-Itahar (118 km)	274.41	207.25	5.00	Eklakhi-Balurghat completed. Final Location Survey between Gazol-Itahar being taken up.
7.	Tamluk-Digha (87.5 km)	293.97	241.19	11.00	Tamluk-Kanthi completed. Work in progress between Kanthi-Digha which is targeted for completion during 2004-05.
8.	Howrah-Amta and Bargachia-Champadanga (73.5 km)	154.3	68.42	5.00	Howrah-Mahendralalnagar section completed. Mahendralalnagar-Amta has also been completed recently.
Gauge Conversion					
1.	New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri-New Bongaigaon (415.48 km)	820.00	596.49	30.00	New Jalpaiguri-Samuktala Road completed. Samuktala-New Bongaigaon targeted for completion during 2004-05. Work of conversion of branch line from Alipurduar to Bamanhat has also been taken up.
2.	Bankura-Damodar River project including extension of new line from Bowaichandi to Khana (198 km)	158.16	52.95	33.16	Earthwork and bridge works etc. are in progress on Bankura-Damodhar River railway line. Bankura-Sonamukhi targeted for completion during 2004-05.
3.	Katihar-Jogbani (including Katihar-Radhikapur) (196 km)	403.38	97.69	25.00	Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress. Barsoi-Radhikapur targeted for completion during 2004-05.
Doubling					
1.	Tarakeshwar-Sheoraphulli, Ph-I (Sheoraphulli-Nalikul) (18 km)	38.88	15.76	2.04	Sheoraphulli- Diara completed. Balance works are in progress.
2.	Gurup-Shaktigarh 3rd line (26 km)	55.58	44.55	4.00	Gurup-Pallaroad section completed. Pallaroad-Shaktigarh is targeted for completion during 2004-05.

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Habra-Chandpara (22.25 km)	40.81	0.98	2.00	Final Location Survey completed.
4.	Sonarpur Canning Ph.I (Sonarpur-Ghutiari Shariff) (29 km)	30.47	11.11	1.00	Earthwork and bridge works are in progress.
5.	Baruipur-Lakshmikantapur Ph.I (Baruipur-Dakshnia Barasat) (17 km)	31.82	4.8	1.00	Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress.
6.	Bolpur-Ahmedpur (19 km)	54.8	30.31	3.00	Work completed.
7.	Kalinarayanpur-Krishnanagar including ext. as GC from Krishnanagar-Shantipur and new line Krishnanagar to Chartala (51 km)	102.5	5.73	1.00	Earthwork is in progress in part length.
8.	Barasat-Hasanabad doubling with electrification Ph.I (Barasat-Sondalia) (12.12 km)	23.65	3.29	1.00	Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress.
9.	Bandel-Jirat (20 km)	50.13	1.71	1.00	Earthwork and bridge works are in progress.
10.	Baruipur-Magrahat (15 km)	30.09	0.43	1.00	Tenders have been processed.
11.	Ahmedpur-Sainthia (13 km)	26.76	—	12.80	Works are in progress and project is targeted for completion during 2004-2005.
12.	Kumarganj-Eklakhi (6 km)	21.57	5.44	6.00	Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress.
13.	Harishchandrapur-Kumarganj (30 km)	63.22	38.41	16.00	Earthwork and bridge works are in progress.
14.	Tikiapara-Santragachi IV line (5.6 km)	22.5	1.00	20.00	Work is in planning stage.
15.	Panskura-Haldia Ph.I (16 km)	26.02	7.49	10.00	Earthwork and bridge works are in progress.
16.	Pandabeswar-Chinpai (21.41 km)	56.47	-	3.00	New work included in Budget 2004-05 and would be taken up once Budget is passed by Parliament.

1	2	3	4	5	6
17.	Chandpara-Bongaon (9.77 km)	27.48	—	1.00	Preliminary works being taken up.
Metropolitan Transport					
1.	Dum-Dum-Garia, Design and construction of Rapid Transit system (22 km)	2324.70	1972.03	42.00	Work for construction of foundation, sub-structure and super-structure for the vated track are in progress. Targeted for completion by June, 2007.
2.	Circular Railway including Dum-Dum-Tala electrification (18.5 km)	242.42	163.94	41.00	Works on Princepghat to Majarhat and Dum Dum to NSCB Airport are in progress and targeted to be completed on or before March, 2005. Work on Ultadanga to Rajaghat (Ph-I upto Lake Town only) has been frozen till the Chitpur yard layout is finalized and proposal of East-West corridor is firmed up.
Railway Electrification					
1.	Krishnanagar-Lalgola (128 km)	63.83	11.00	15.40	Work is targeted for completion by June, 2006.

The details of ongoing surveys falling fully/partly in West Bengal are as under:-

Sl.No.	Name of survey	Anticipated Cost (Rs. in lacs)	Target date of completion
1	2	3	4
New Lines			
1.	Park Circus to Dhamkhali	4.05	30.06.05
2.	Canning-Sonakhali	1.35	31.03.05
3.	Budge Budge-Namkhana-Frazerganj	4.50	31.03.05
4.	Chowrigacha-Kandi	0.90	31.03.05
5.	Budge Budge-Pujali	0.90	31.03.05
6.	Balurghat-Hili	1.75	31.03.06
7.	Samsi-Chanchal-Harishchandrapur	1.25	31.12.05
8.	Supaul-Galgiia via Araria	1.50	31.03.05
9.	Jhargram-Purulia	1.00	31.03.05
10.	Buramara-Chakulia	2.80	31.03.05

1	2	3	4
Gauge Conversion			
1.	Krishnanagar-Nabadwipghat	0.15	31.03.05
2.	Katwa-Bardhaman	0.40	30.06.05
3.	Katwa-Ahmedpur	2.75	31.03.05
4.	Aluabari-Siliguri via Galgalia	4.00	31.12.05
Doubling			
1.	Santipur-Kalinarayanpur	0.80	31.03.05
2.	Pandabeswar-Sainthia	7.15	30.06.05
3.	Bandel-Katwa	0.80	30.06.05
4.	Krishnanagar-Lalgola	1.00	30.06.05
5.	Kharagpur-Midnapore via Girimaidan	0.08	31.03.05
6.	Rajgoda-Durga Chak	2.50	31.03.05

(c) to (e) A proposal has been received recently for taking up survey for construction of new rail line in West Bengal namely; Panskura-Ghatal-Chandrakona Road. The proposal is under process of sanction.

[Translation]

Blackmarketing of Rail Tickets by Touts

1450. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO:
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:
SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the menace of touts in Blackmarketing of rail tickets at railway stations;

(b) if so, the number of touts apprehended, punished and jailed during each of the last three years, till date, zone-wise;

(c) the number of railway officials found involved with these touts and action taken against them during the said period, zone-wise; and

(d) the measures taken to check the blackmarketing of Railway tickets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Some cases have come to notice.

(b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) Strict disciplinary action is taken against any railway staff, if found conniving in malpractices under the Discipline & Appeal Rules. However, no separate statistics are maintained.

(d) In order to curb the activity of blackmarketing of rail tickets, regular checks are conducted by the Railways. Police is also involved in the drives against touts. Touts apprehended are prosecuted as per law. Besides, during peak rush periods, monitoring at important locations is stepped up.

Statement

Railway	Number of touts prosecuted				Number of touts convicted			
	2001	2002	2003	2004- (upto Sept. 04)	2001	2002	2003	2004 (upto Sept. 04)
Central	52	32	27	23	13	27	25	21
Eastern	321	411	787	935	313	401	713	930
East Central	**	29	59	45	**	21	59	43
East Coast	**	**	73	43	**	**	21	16
Northern	243	218	129	106	125	130	97	49
North Central	**	**	19	16	**	**	13	15
North Eastern	50	35	23	37	38	26	14	19
Northeast Frontier	9	25	15	14	5	17	7	5
North Western	**	8	24	15	**	3	4	Nil
Southern	248	183	72	14	247	181	72	12
South Central	23	9	32	7	18	7	2	Nil
South Eastern	118	113	26	25	33	24	4	1
South East Central	**	**	10	15	**	**	Nil	Nil
South Western	**	**	141	180	**	**	141	180
Western	59	76	85	96	6	14	24	21
West Central	**	**	23	9	**	**	22	4
Total	1123	1139	1545	1580	798	851	1218	1316

** Seven new Zones were carved out of the existing 9 Zones from October, 2002 & April, 2003.

Profit Margin of Oil Companies

1451. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether profit margin of oil companies in country more as compared to the increase in their transaction-cost over the last few years;

(b) if not, the profit margin registered by O.N.G.C. and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. in their transaction in the first six months of the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 separately;

(c) the percentage of profit registered by these companies separately; and

(d) the reasons for steady increase in the percentage of their profit *vis-a-vis* their transactions?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The profit margins and the transaction cost in terms of total expenses of the Oil Companies during the last three years are given in the Statement attached.

(b) The profit margin registered by Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOC) in their transactions in the first six months of the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 are given below:

Profit Margin (%) during April-Sept.

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
ONGC	28.37	29.46	25.30
IOC	5.5	4.5	3.8

(c) Information is given in the Statement attached.

(d) The variation in profit margins of Oil Companies is not related only to variations in the transaction cost. Variation in the prices of crude oil also impacts on the profit margins of Oil Companies.

Statement

Profit margins and Transaction cost of oil Companies

	Profit Margin (%) (Net profit as a % of total revenue)			Transaction Cost (Rs. crore) in terms of total expenses.		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.	25.98	29.75	26.31	14769.00	20482.00	20392.00
Oil India Ltd.	23.95	29.33	27.32	1389.74	1784.87	1994.90
GAIL (India) Ltd.	11.02	13.55	14.72	8961.00	9756.00	9883.00
Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.	2.5	5.1	5.40	108548.00	99725.00	106510.00
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd.	1.74	2.92	3.38	38678.67	46332.33	48675.22
Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.	2.12	2.56	3.14	38768.10	46855.35	51279.69
IBP Co. Ltd.	3.43	1.57	3.12	8256.78	8858.78	10435.52
ONGC-Videsh	60.45	25.34	12.23	13.53	160.16	2745.56
Engineers India Ltd.	4.6	6.00	7.50	494.56	748.12	987.32
Kochi Refineries Ltd.	1.00	4.30	4.80	5794	8835.00	8956.00
Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd.	1.03	3.50	4.24	5882.86	7666.27	8195.55
Bongaigaon Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd.	-14.94	8.54	9.16	1638.37	1782.53	2876.25

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Numaligarh Refinery Ltd.	4.92	6.13	6.22	2358.27	2283.40	2757.89
Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd.	-9.09	-4.80	3.64	6148.65	8766.30	11424.15
Biecco Lawrie Co. Ltd.	-26%	-33%	-10%	54.02	36.86	32.69
Balmer Lawrie Co. Ltd.	1.09%	1.90	1.89	729.04	846.61	959.86

[English]

Plan to Invest on Oil Fields Abroad

1452. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India plans to spend over $ one billion a year to acquire oil fields abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of countries with whom negotiations are going on at present for oil fields;

(c) whether India is facing stiff competition from China in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to acquire oil fields in foreign countries and detailed strategy chalked out in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) To enhance the country's energy security in keeping with the objectives of the Energy Security section of the National Common Minimum Programme, ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL), as well as other national oil companies such as IOC, OIL and GAIL, have been pursuing the acquisition of equity oil abroad, as well as the acquisition abroad of oil and gas exploration acreages and producing properties. These companies have Participating Interests in oil and gas projects located in Vietnam, Sudan, Russia, Iraq, Iran, Myanmar, Libya, Syria, Australia and Ivory Coast. So far these oil companies have made an investment of around US $ 2,500 million in oil and gas projects abroad.

OVL, in association with other oil sector PSUs, is aggressively scouting for E&P opportunities in other countries such as Kazakhastan, Kuwait, Yemen, Qatar, Angola, Cuba, Sierra Leone, Bangladesh and Eucador in addition to efforts to acquire more E&P assets in the existing countries under operation of OVL. An outlay of Rs. 13,550 crore has been approved in the Tenth Five Year Plan for OVL's E&P activities abroad.

(c) and (d) The international oil and gas acquisition arena is very competitive where oil companies from oil and gas deficit nations like China and also from developed countries pose tough competition to OVL.

(e) For extending guidance and advice to Indian oil companies in their efforts to acquire equity oil abroad, Government have constituted an Advisory Committee on Oil Diplomacy for Energy Security comprising experts with specialized knowledge of the country and regions with whom the oil companies are expected to interact.

Facilities for Pune Airport

1453. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to improve the facilities for landing of more civil Aircraft at Pune Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any talks were held with Defence Ministry for improving instruments system and watch hours at the airports;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the progress of the International Civil Airport to come up at Chakan, Pune?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Besides allocating 5 acres of land for expansion of existing apron, Ministry of Defence has been requested for installing the Instrument Landing System (ILS) and for extension of existing Watch Hours to facilitate requirement of Scheduled flights at Pune Airport.

(e) Government of Maharashtra has appointed Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) as a nodal agency for the project and confirmed availability of approximately 1150 acres of land for Chakan airport. Airports Authority of India (AAI) is providing technical consultancy services in finalization of site, preparation of master plan and detailed project report. Detail obstruction survey is likely to be undertaken by AAI.

Facilities to Railway Employees

1454. SHRI P. MOHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to increase the age limit of the railway employees' son in the Privilege Pass, considering the present unemployment situation;

(b) if so, whether the attendent be allowed to travel in the same class for which the Pass holder is eligible; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) No, Sir.

(c) It is not feasible to enlarge the extant travel facilities available to Railway employees and their wards due to financial constraints and other repercussions.

Civil Aviation Schemes in Ninth Five Year Plan

1455. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Civil Aviation Schemes introduced in each State particularly in West Bengal during the Ninth Five Year Plan Period;

(b) the progress made under these schemes as on date, State-wise;

(c) whether the work on these schemes is going on as per schedule;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the amount sanctioned and spent on these schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) The Ministry of Civil Aviation looks after the work of the following organizations:

1. Airports Authority of India
2. Air India Limited
3. Indian Airlines Limited
4. Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited
5. Hotel Corporation of India Limited
6. Directorate General of Civil Aviation
7. Bureau of Civil Aviation Security
8. Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademy.

The budget outlay and expenditure in respect of various organizations for the Ninth Plan is organization-wise and not State-wise. There is no budget allocation for schemes State-wise. The details of outlays approved for the Ninth Five Year Plan and utilization by various organizations is at statement-I enclosed.

However, Airports Authority of India (AAI) undertakes works pertaining to aerodrome and technical facilities in various airports, which come under different States. Details of work carried on by AAI, State-wise including West Bengal is at statement-II & III enclosed.

Statement I

Details of the Outlays Approved for Ninth Five Year Plan and Utilisation of Funds by Various Organisations Thereagainst

(Rs. In crores)

S.No.	Organisation	Ninth Plan Approved Outlay	Actual Expenditure 1997-2002
1.	Air India Ltd.	3664.00	2437.91
2.	Indian Airlines Ltd.	3640.75 (125.00)	2301.75
3.	Airports Authority of India	3421.87 (283.37)	1687.24 (125.45)
4.	Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd.	209.20	62.22
5.	Hotel Corporation of India Ltd.	89.55	73.11
6.	Bureau of Civil Aviation Security	25.00 (25.00)	7.55 (7.55)
7.	Directorate General of Civil Aviation	27.00 (27.00)	16.78 (16.78)
8.	Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi	35.00 (35.00)	33.89 (33.89)
	Total	11112.37 (495.37)	6620.45 (183.67)

Statement II

Civil Aviation Schemes in Ninth Five Year Plan—Aerodrome Works

(Rs. in Crore)

S.No.	State/Civil Aviation Schemes	Sanctioned Amount	Progress Made as on Date	Amount Spent as on Date	Whether the Schemes are going on as per Schedule
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh					
1.	HYDERABAD Construction of New Integrated Terminal Building and Expansion and Modification of Existing Terminal Building	26.61	Completed	28.58	Completed

1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	RAJAHMUNDRI Strengthening of Runway for ATR-72 Operations and Construction of New Taxiway, Apron, Drain and Boundary Wall etc.	8.67	Completed	8.67	Completed
3.	VIJAYAWADA Extension of Runway to 7500 ft., Strengthening of Runway and Associated Pavements and Development of Terminal Building	8.56	Completed	8.98	Completed
4.	VISHAKHAPATNAM Development of Airport for A-300 Operations Including Construction of New Runway and Wall etc.	191.52	31%	40.54	Yes, Work in Progress as Per Schedule
Assam					
5.	DIBRUGARH				
	(a) Construction of New Terminal Complex and Allied Works.	24.58	—	4.24	No. Due to delay in handing over of land by State Govt. drawings being finalised by competition
	(b) Extension of Runway to 8000 ft. Including Acquisition of Land	14.00	2%	2.71	No. Delay due to late handing over of land by state Govt. Work awarded on 17.06.2004
6.	GUWAHATI				
	(a) Expansion and Modification of Terminal Building	27.50	Completed	27.55	Completed
	(b) Acquistion of Land for Extension of Runway upto 1200 ft.	11.46	Completed	11.46	Completed
	(c) Strengthening of Existing Runway	27.63	Completed	27.00	Completed
7.	LILABARI				
	(a) Construction of New Terminal Building	16.50	Completed	16.50	Completed

1	2	3	4	5	6
	(b) Expansion of Runway and Pavement	16.41	Completed	14.76	Completed
8.	TEZPUR Construction of New Cat Complex and New Apron	18.60	Completed	18.60	Completed
Andaman & Nicobar					
9.	PORT BLAIR Development of Terminal Building Complex	19.83	Completed	19.41	Completed
Bihar					
10.	GAYA				
	(a) Strengthening of Runway and Associated Works	13.00	Completed	6.51	Completed
	(b) Construction of New Terminal Building	44.52	50%	18.82	Yes. Work in progress as per schedule
11.	PATNA				
	Construction of Terminal Building and Technical Block	13.93	Completed	13.93	Completed
Delhi					
12.	IGI AIRPORT				
	(a) NITC Phase-II	302.00	Nil	Nil	Scheme put on hold due to restructuring.
	(b) Reconstruction of Terminal 1B	34.04	Nil	Nil	Scheme put on hold due to restructuring
	(c) Construction of Apron GSE Area & Store Building	9.97	Completed	9.00	Completed
	(d) Reconstruction of Terminal 1A	26.00	Completed	22.59	Completed
	(e) Strengthening of R/W 09/27	16.03	Completed	10.54	Completed
	(f) Strengthening of R/W 10/28	43.16	Completed	33.53	Completed
	(g) Import Cargo (Ph-III)	23.66	Completed	18.15	Completed
	(h) Export Cargo (Ph-II)	18.54	Completed	13.26	Completed

1	2	3	4	5	6
Gujarat					
13.	AHMEDABAD				
	(a) Extension of Apron, Strengthening of Runway Upto 11,500 ft. Resurfacing of Taxitack	48.50	Completed	41.90	Completed
	(b) Construction of New Departure Block, Modification to Domestic Terminal Building	46.09	73%	26.00	Yes. Work in progress as per Schedule
	(c) Construction of Parallel Taxitrack with Rapid Exit Taxiway	12.78	Completed	12.00	Completed
14.	BARODA Construction of Terminal Building Including Staff Quarters.	13.73	Completed	13.50	Completed
15.	BHUJ Construction of New Terminal Complex at Bhuj Airport.	19.51	Completed	18.93	Completed
Goa					
16.	DABOLIM Construction of New International Building, Expansion and Modification	12.69	Completed	12.00	Completed
Himachal Pradesh					
17.	KANGRA				
	(a) Resurfacing of Runway Including land acquisition	1.89	Completed	1.83	Completed
	(b) Extension of Runway, Construction of Apron, Taxiway, Terminal Building, Carpark, Operational Wall, Drainage, Augmentation of Power Supply, A/C etc.	10.75	99%	8.60	No. Work delayed due to non availability of land
Jammu & Kashmir					
18.	JAMMU				
	(a) Extension of Runway and Acquisition of land	11.31	Completed	14.30	Completed
	(b) Extension of runway 18 (Towards River)	13.16	—	0.30	No. Land yet to be handed over by Army.

1	2	3	4	5	6
	(c) Expansion and Modification of Terminal Building (C&E)	9.00	Completed	9.00	Completed
19.	KARGIL New Airport	37.81	Completed	33.76	Completed
Karnataka					
20.	BANGALORE Construction of new arrival Hall and International Block and Expansion of Terminal Building.	21.43	Completed	21.43	Completed
Kerala					
21.	CALICUT				
	(a) Extension of Runway to 9377 Ft.	102.87	Completed	101.82	Completed
	(b) Extension and Modification of Domestic Terminal Building for International Operation Including Visitior's Gallery.	89.48	5%	2.00	Yes. Work in progress as per schedule.
Manipur					
22.	IMPHAL				
	(a) Extension and Modification of Terminal Building	17.62	Completed	17.00	Completed
	(b) Resurfacing of Runway and Construction of Isolation Bay	20.94	Completed	13.25	Completed
Madhya Pradesh					
23.	INDORE				
	Construction, Expansion and Modification of Terminal Building and Allied Works.	11.68	Completed	11.68	Completed
24.	JABALPUR				
	(a) Extension of Runway	11.76	Completed	11.70	Completed
	(b) Construction of New Terminal Building	7.14	Completed	7.00	Completed
25.	KHAJURAHO Extension of Runway to 7500 ft.	21.78	85%	14.92	Yes. Work in progress as per schedule.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Maharashtra					
26.	NAGPUR Construction of New Terminal Building	11.78	Completed	10.98	Completed
27.	MUMBAI				
	(a) NITC Phase-III	78.49	Completed	70.47	Completed
	(b) NDTC Phase-II	107.20	Nil	Nil	Scheme put on hold due to restructuring.
	(c) Aerobridge at Bay No. 17, 18 & 19 alongwith Security hold at T-1	19.82	Completed	17.85	Completed
	(d) Widening of Fly over	20.16	Nil	Nil	Schemes put on hold due to restructuring.
	(e) Modification and Expansion of Existing Terminal-2A	20.00			
	(f) Export Cargo Terminal Phase-II	29.50			
Nagaland					
28.	DIMAPUR				
	(a) Construction of New Terminal Building	14.90	Completed	14.90	Completed
	(b) Resurfacing of Runway	10.27	Completed	10.27	Completed
Orissa					
29.	BHUBANESHWAR				
	(a) Extension and Strengthening of Runway to 9000 ft.	12.62	90%	9.64	No. 77M Portion of Runway left out due to non diversion of road by state Govt.
	(b) Construction of new Air Terminal Comples, Taxi-Track, Apron and Allied Work.	17.77	Completed	17.71	Completed
Punjab					
30.	PATHANKOT Development of Civil Enclave Including Residensial Quarters with land	33.34	98%	15.90	Yes, work in Progress there is reduction in scope of work.

1	2	3	4	5	6
31.	AMRITSAR				
	Upgradation & Development of Amritsar Airport. (Govt. has Approved the project Vide No. AV,20015/7/96-VB Dated 23.11.2000 amounting of Rs. 79.27 Crore with budgetary Support from Central Govt. in the debt equity ratio of 1:1.	79.27	75%	49.86	Yes, work in Progress as per Schedule.
Rajasthan					
32.	JAIPUR				
	Extension of runway 09/27, Construction of RCC bridge across the nullah in the extended portion, grade correction, overlay, and construction of shoulders For the existing length of the Runway including construction of Apron for AB-300 and Isolation Bay at Jaipur Airport, Jaipur.	24.03	99%	27.32	Yes, work nearing completion
Tripura					
33.	AGARTALA				
	(a) Expansion of Terminal Complex	27.61	Completed	24.95	Completed
	(b) Extension of Runway and Acquisition of land	28.70	Completed	23.76	Completed
TAMIL NADU					
34.	**Chennai**				
	(a) Construction of Technical Block and Control Tower	23.04	Completed	23.00	Completed
	(b) NITC Phase-II	60.25	Completed	18.95	Completed
	(c) Integrated Cargo Terminal (Ph-I)	42.80	Completed	30.36	Completed
	(d) Administrative Block	14.53	Completed	11.93	Completed
Uttar Pradesh					
35.	AGRA				
	Expansion of Terminal Building and Expansion of Apron and Construction of Link Taxiway	14.07	Completed	10.10	Completed

1	2	3	4	5	6
36.	LUCKNOW				
	(a) Resurfacing of Taxi Track and Extension of Apron, Isolation Bay.	11.81	Completed	12.10	Completed
	(b) Construction of Terminal Building	15.23	Completed	14.23	Completed
	(c) Extension of Runway to 9000 ft. and strengthening of existing Runway including associated Works	23.91	Completed	32.00	Completed
37.	VARANASI				
	(a) Extension of Runway, strengthening of existing runway and provision of Shoulders to the same.	31.43	60%	15.72	No. Road falling on proposed RWY extension portion is yet to be diverted by State Govt.
	(b) Construction of New Terminal Building Including Aerobridge	44.31	Nil	Nil	No. Road falling on proposed new T/B Portion is Yet to be Diverted by State Govt.
West Bengal					
38.	BAGDOGRA Development of Passenger Air Terminal Complex.	13.47	Completed	13.47	Completed
39.	KOLKATA				
	(a) Modification of T-2 (Ph-1)	10.49	Completed	12.19	Completed
	(b) Modification of T-2 (Ph-2)	10.00	Work at Planning Stage Consceptual Drawings Prepared. Estimate Under Scrunity	-	Work at planning stage consceptual drawings prepared. Estimate under scrunity
	(c) Integrated Cargo Complex (Phase-I)	49.66	3%	1.00	Drawing revised due to height constraints. work now in progress and Completion by March 2006
	(d) Construction of Hangar	9.05	95%	2.40	Completion by Jan, 2005
	(e) Strengthenging of Main Runway 19L/01R	16.95	60%	6.00	Work completion by March 2005

Statement-III

Civil Aviation Schemes in Ninth Five Year Plan—Details of Technical Facilities Introduced

(Rs. In Crores)

Sl. #	State/Civil Aviation Schemes	Sanctioned Amount	Progress Made as on Date	Amount Spent as on Date	Whether These Schemes are Going on as Per Schedule
1	2	3	4	5	6
	IGI Airport—Delhi				
1.	(a) Improvement of communication network (EPABX)	1.10	Completed	0.46	Completed
	(b) Installation of Surveillance CCTV System	3.12	Completed	1.23	Completed
	(c) Other (Installation of flight information system, PA system, Fire Alarm system, Security equipment etc.)	11.85	Completed	6.00	Completed
	(d) Computerization	8.17	Completed	4.00	Completed
	(e) Plant & Machinery	140.50	Completed	63.92	Completed
	(f) Tools and Equipments	187.50	Completed	212.82	Completed
	(g) Pax. Facilitation equipments	231.00	Completed	103.18	Completed
	(h) Vehicles	820.00	Completed	479.06	Completed
	(i) Furniture and fixtures.	33.20	Completed	70.00	Completed
2.	CSI Airport—Maharashtra				
	(a) Improvement of communication network (EPABX)	0.89	Completed	0.16	Completed
	(b) Installation of Surveillance CCTV System	3.38	Completed	1.39	Completed
	(c) Other (Installation of flight information system, PA system, Fire Alarm system, Security equipment etc.)	14.84	Completed	5.14	Completed
	(d) Computerization	8.90	Completed	4.97	Completed
	(e) Plant & Machinery	160.00	Completed	97.59	Completed
	(f) Tools and Equipments	90.15	Completed	83.74	Completed
	(g) Pax. Facilitation equipments	162.90	Completed	85.87	Completed
	(h) Vehicles	289.80	Completed	250.44	Completed
	(i) Furniture and fixtures.	102.78	Completed	104.14	Completed

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	**Chennai Airport—Tamilnadu**				
	(a) Improvement of communication network (EPABX)	1.02	Completed	0.11	Completed
	(b) Installation of Surveillance CCTV System	2.10	Completed	0.55	Completed
	(c) Other (Installation of flight information system, PA system, Fire Alarm system, Security equipment etc.)	11.65	Completed	4.78	Completed
	(d) Computerization	3.10	Completed	1.47	Completed
	(e) Plant & Machinery	387.15	Completed	251.08	Completed
	(f) Tools and Equipments	255.70	Completed	201.64	Completed
	(g) Pax. Facilitation equipments	278.39	Completed	106.48	Completed
	(h) Vehicles	281.05	Completed	255.83	Completed
	(i) Furniture and fixtures.	74.00	Completed	28.58	Completed
4.	**Trivandrum Airport—Kerala**				
	(a) Improvement of communication network (EPABX)	0.51	Completed	0.20	Completed
	(b) Installation of Surveillance CCTV System	1.11	Completed	0.27	Completed
	(c) Other (Installation of flight information system, PA system, Fire Alarm system, Security equipment etc.)	2.72	Completed	1.19	Completed
	(d) Computerization	0.93	Completed	0.42	Completed
	(e) Plant & Machinery	37.13	Completed	37.78	Completed
	(f) Tools and Equipments	56.95	Completed	19.16	Completed
	(g) Pax. Facilitation equipments	54.15	Completed	22.49	Completed
	(h) Vehicles	19.08	Completed	22.16	Completed
	(i) Furniture and fixtures.	35.86	Completed	24.55	Completed
5.	NSBI Airport, Kolkata				
	(a) Improvement of communication network (EPABX)	0.45	Completed	0.17	Completed
	(b) Installation of Surveillance CCTV System	1.19	Completed	0.56	Completed
	(c) Other (Installation of flight information system, PA system, Fire Alarm system, Security equipment etc.)	3.37	Completed	2.40	Completed

1	2	3	4	5	6
	(d) Computerization	2.64	Completed	1.59	Completed
	(e) Plant & Machinery	208.30	Completed	401.24	Completed
	(f) Tools and Equipments	169.48	Completed	40.12	Completed
	(g) Pax. Facilitation equipments	187.67	Completed	77.00	Completed
	(h) Vehicles	236.13	Completed	116.46	Completed
	(i) Furniture and fixtures.	50.00	Completed	41.00	Completed

[Translation]

Constitution of Defence Procurement Board

1456. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level Defence Purchase Board has been constituted for the defence deals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government has imposed a ban on the involvement of middlemen in the defence deals;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the cases of involvement of middlemen have come to the notice even after constitution of the said Board;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) A Defence Procurement Board (DPB) has been constituted to oversee all activities related to acquisition on the Capital account in the Department of Defence flowing out of "Buy" and "Buy and Make" decisions. The DPB is chaired by Defence Secretary and Secretary, Department of Defence Production, Secretary, Department of Research & Development, Secretary (Defence Finance), Vice Chief of Defence Staff (VCDS)/ Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to Chairman Chief of Staff Committee (CISC) till VCDS is appointed, Vice Chief of Army Staff, Vice Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Chief of Air Staff and Special Secretary (Acquisition) are its members. The functions of the DPB include the coordination, supervision and monitoring of the acquisition process.

(c) and (d) According to Defence Procurement Procedure 2002 (Version JUne 2003), direct dealing with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), Authorised vendors/Government sponsored export agencies is only permissible. In addition, the standard clauses that are to be signed by any seller of defence equipment to Govenment of India, as a part of the contract, contains specific provisions that contemplate penal action for the use of undue influence.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) and (g) Do not arise.

[English]

Mishap in Sky Bus Project

1457. SHRI ALEMAO CHURCHILL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of a major mishap that occurred at Margao in South Goa during trials of the Skybus project of the Konkan Railway Corporation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of inquiry ordered into the accident, its outcome, and action against guilty officials;

(d) whether any agency exists in the country that can certify the safety and security of the project;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the present status of 25 km. stretch between Panaji to Mapusa to be equipped with the Skybus project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Trial runs on the test track commenced from 25th August 2004. On a return trip, during trial runs on 25th September 2004, the Officer in-charge observed that the Sky Bus speed was not getting controlled as it was approaching the curve ahead of stopping point, and since the speed was restricted to 20 Kmph on the curve, at some distance in advance of the approach of curve, he reacted to take action to abort the experiment by pressing the emergency button. This provides for cutting off the power and application of pneumatic brakes. The officer did not immediately feel reduction of the speed but soon found the Sky Bus going into dynamic instability hitting one of the columns resulting in the said accident. During mishap, late Shri T. Babu Fitter Konkan Railway Corporation expired and two persons S/Shri Laxmi Narayan, Engineer, Kernex Microsystems India Ltd. and Ramchandra Murthy, AC Mechanic, South Western Railway were injured.

An enquiry by a Committee cosisting of four Heads of the Department of Konkan Railway assisted by Prof. S.C.Lakkad, Deputy Director of Indian Institute of Technology, Powai and Austrian Engineer has been ordered by Managing Director, Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd. to go into the details of the accident. The enquiry report is expected to be finalized shortly and further action shall be taken accordingly.

(d) and (e) Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation has constituted a Committee in December 2003 under the Chairmanship of Shri E.V. Indiresan to examine the feasibility of establishing and operating sky bus metro service in Indian cities. The terms of reference of this Committee are as under :

(i) To examine the techno-economic and financial feasibility of the sky bus metro system.

(ii) To ascertain the safety of the system.

(iii) To critically evaluate novel system component, such as suspended rail technology, traversing systems, etc.

(iv) To critically evaluate the integration of different technologies.

(v) Any other matter considered relevant by the Committee.

Report of this Committee is still awaited.

(f) At the behest of the Government of Goa, Konkan Railway have submitted an inception report and estimates for the 10.5 km long Mapusa to Panjim corridor to the Government of Goa, who in turn have recommended and forwarded it to the Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation for sanction and allocation of funds.

LPG Supply through Pipeline

1458. SHRI M. APPADURAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of areas in Delhi where LPG is being supplied through pipeline;

(b) if so, the operational cost of gas pipeline system;

(c) whether it is economical and viable to install pipeline to all parts of Delhi and India other parts of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are not suplyigng LPG through pipelines in Delhi. However, OMCs have introduced LPG reticulated systems to distribute piped LPG to domestic customers in inividual housing complexes in various cities, including Delhi. The system consist of a centralized LPG storage in cylinder bands and is proposed to be extended in other areas depending upon the customers' willingness to adopt the system and commerical considerations of the OMCs.

The rates charged by OMCs for supplying LPG through a reticulated system is as per the prevailing rate of LPG supplied through domestic cylinders.

Rationalisation of Timing of Trains

1459. SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that timing of trains at Trivandrum Central Railway Station is inconvenient to the passengers due to early departures and late arrivals;

(b) if so, the remedial actions initiated by the Government to rationalize the timings to the benefit of passengers from and to the Central station; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) to (c) The schedules of the trains are subject to operational feasibility, availability of path and platforms and convenience of the passengers. With the large number of trains running in the country, it is not possible to have trains arriving/leaving at convenient time at all the stations including Trivandrum Central. The Indian Railways run trains round the clock, hence the trains may arrive/depart at inconvenient hours at one or the other stations. Hence, this is something that cannot be avoided. Some passengers will have to bear with the inconvenient timings.

Modernisation of Railways

1460. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways had sent a Rs. 46,000 crore proposal to the Planning Commission for modernisation of Indian Railways;

(b) if so, the details of the plan prepared by the Railways for modernisation, outlay-wise;

(c) whether the Railways has also prepared the plan for development of freight corridors to improve the efficiency of trains;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the other steps taken by the Railways to modernisation Indian Railways?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Harassment to Women in Local Trains in Mumbai

1461. SHRI PRAKASHBAPU V. PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that number of cases of harrassment to women in local trains in Mumbai is on the rise;

(b) if so, the details of such cases of harassment come to the notice of the Government during the last two years, till date and the action taken thereon; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that women commuters in local trians can travel with safety?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Though maintenance of law and order and control of crime on Railway premises (including Railway Stations) and running trains is the responsibility of the State Government concerned, the Railway co-ordinate with the State Governments for ensuring better security to the passengers, especially women. The Railway administration and Police have taken the following steps :

1. Anti-social elements are regularly removed from Railway premises and trains.
2. Sharing of Special Intelligence and Crime Intelligence between Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) is done at all levels.
3. Periodic High Level co-ordirnation Meetings with GRP and Local Police are ocnduced to analyze the crime position with a view to taking suitable preventive measures.
4. Steps have been taken to sensitize the RPF personnel to the problems of women passengers by orgnizing workshops and seminars.

5. Ladies' compartments are escorted in Mumbai suburban areas by GRP and RPF, utilizing the women staff as far as possible.

6. Special squads consisting of lady ticket checking staff and lady RPF personnel have been formed in Central and Western Railways to facilitate the women passengers by detecting and taking action against unauthorized persons in Ladies Compartments.

7. Armed escorting of Ladies Compartments is done in night hours, Holidays and Sundays.

8. Home Guard staffs are deployed on platforms in front of ladies compartments to deter anti-social elements from entering the Ladies Compartments.

Theft at IGI Airport, Palam

1462. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY:
SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether theft at Indira Gandhi International Airport, Palam has become a common happening recently;

(b) if so, the number of such cases alongwith the nature of the thefts reported during the last three years;

(c) the number of culprits caught in theft cases; and

(d) the steps taken/to be taken to ensure foolproof security at the airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) The information will be collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Honorarium to Sarpanchs

1463. SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Panchayats in the country alongwith the number of Panchayats with elected Sarpanchs;

(b) the number of women, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes sarpanchs, out of them separately, State-wise;

(c) the number of Panchayats with the village secretary and Panchayat buildings in the country; State-wise;

(d) whether the Union Government propose to provide some sort of honorarium to the Sarpanchs;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (f) There are 2,41,310 Panchayats in the country. As per Article 243C of the Constitution, the Chairpersons of Panchayat at the village level shall be elected in such a manner as the Legislature of the State, by law, provide and a Panchayat at the intermediate level or district level shall be elected from amongst the elected members thereof. Union Government does not maintain the record of elected/selected Sarpanches and the community/class which they represent. Panchayats is a State subject and the role of the Union Government is to persuade the State Government/UT Administrations to implement the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution. The data relating to the number of Panchayats with the village secretary and Panchayat building in the country is not maintained at the Union Government level. The Union Government has no proposal to provide honorarium to Sarpanches as it is for the State Governments to take a decision in this regard.

[English]

Shortage of Officers

1464. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the three combatant armed services are facing acute shortage of officers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/propose to be taken by the Government to attract young talented boys in the three wings of the services?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) There has been some shortage

of officers in the Armed Forces. The present shortage of officers in the Army, Air Force and Navy is given below:

Army	Air Force	Navy
11709	470	1060

Vacancies have been existent in varying degrees in Army, Navy and Air Force since 1950, 1953 and 1985 respectively.

Several steps have been undertaken by three Services to fill up the vacant posts. The Image Projection Campaign by the Army has been launched in 1997 and currently Phase-IV of the Campaign is being finalised. In addition seminars, lectures and presentations are organised by the Recruiting Offices at schools and colleges in order to motivate the youth to join the Army. The training capacity of the Army has been increased to facilitate increased intake.

Sustained publicity efforts are being undertaken by the Air Force to attract talented and qualified youth into the officers' cadre. Almost 3000 Schools and Colleges are on the mailing list for sending publicity material. Campus interviews are undertaken by qualified assessors from Selection Boards so as to interact directly with potential candidates and answer their queries about the service. Schools and Colleges are visited regularly for motivational talks.

Extensive publicity and recruitment drives are being carried out by the Navy. Motivation drives are conducted in various colleges/institutions in order to widen the scope of target population.

In addition the commitment and bravery of the Armed Forces is consistently projected through the electronic and print media. The Directorate of Public Relations of Ministry of Defence, regularly interacts with the media persons while giving Defence related information and endeavours to ensure positive publicity of the same. Regular coverage of defence related events in the print and electronic media go a long way in creating awareness among the masses and motivating the youth to join the armed forces. Websites are also operative on the Internet providing career information on the three Services.

Exploration of Oil Blocks In Caspian Sea

1465. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC has plans to invest in exploration of Caspian Sea oil blocks;

(b) the quantum of investment and yield of crude;

(c) the status of ONGC Videsh's past overseas investments in Sakhlain Oilfied (USSR) and Sudanese Oil facilities;

(d) whether India is still exploring the viability of overland gas/crude pipeline projects from Iran and Oman; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) To enhance energy security of the country, ONGC-Videsh Limited (OVL) is pursuing the acquisition of equity oil as well as oil and gas exploration acreages and producing properties in several identified countries, including countries in the Caspian Sea area.

The proposal regarding OVL's participation in oilfields in Caspian Sea is at an initial stage of consideration and, hence, the quantum of investment or the expected oil output cannot be estimated.

(c) Limited production of oil and gas from Sakhalin-I project is expected from 2005-06. Full production of oil and gas from the field is expected from the last quarter of 2006-07.

Of the three Joint Ventures (JVs) formed by OVL in Exploration and Production (E&P) projects in Sudan, the Greater Nile Oil Project is already in commercial production. The other two projects are at the exploration stage.

The Pipeline Project in Sudan started on the Ist July 2004 and is expected to be completed by October 2005.

(d) and (e) Indian and Iran agreed several years ago to explore the options of importing natural gas through pipeline, both offshore and onland. Negotiations in this matter are a continuing process. The Proposal for the import of gas from Oman has not been found feasible.

Capacity Augmentation in Aircraft

1466. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of aircraft and total seating capacity of different airlines operating in the country; and

(b) the steps proposed, if any, for capacity augmentation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The number of aircraft and total seating capacity of different scheduled airlines in the country are as under:

Name of Airlines	No. of aircraft	Seating capacity
1. Air India Ltd.	35*	10343
2. Indian Airlines	51*	7603
3. Airlines Allied Service Ltd	15	1501
4. Jet Airways	42	5303
5. Sahara Airlines	20	2204
6. Deccan Aviation (P) Ltd	10	876

*One aircraft not in use but not yet deregistered.

(b) As part of their capacity augmentation and expansion plans Air India and Indian Airlines have taken action as under:

Air India Board has approved a revised fleet plan which envisages an increase of Air India's fleet size from the present 34 aircraft to 74 aircraft by the year 2012-13. Air India will bring up a formal proposal in this regard for Government's approval in due course.

Indian Airlines's proposal for acquisition of 43 aircraft has since been approved by the Public Investment Board. Indian Airlines will obtain Government's approval in due course.

The decision on capacity augmentation by private scheduled airlines are taken by their management and government approval is given on case to case basis.

FM Radio Stations

1467. SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has drawn up an ambitious road map to set up 400 FM radio stations in the private sector throughout the country;

(b) if so, the locations thereof, particulrly in Karnataka and the objective of setting up FM Station throughout the country;

(c) the terms and conditions of the agreement signed between the private parties and the Central Government in this regard; and

(d) the estimated revenue income from these FM radio stations?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) About 400 stations have been identified, which are envisaged to be utilized for expansion of private FM radio in phase II.

(b) In Karnataka, Bangalore, Hubli, Mangalore, Belgaum, Gulbarga, Mysore and Davangere are envisaged for expansion of private FM radio. In the year 1999, the Government has allowed the setting up of private FM radio stations at 40 locations (Phase-I) with the following main objectives;

(i) Expansion of FM network;

(ii) Radio programmes with superior quality of fidelity and reception and generation of programmes with local content and relevance;

(iii) Fillip to broadcasting and encouragement of new talent;

(iv) Generation of employment;

(v) Generation of revenue for the Government.

(c) and (d) The policy for expansion of private FM radio in phase II is yet to be finalized.

Gas in Krishna and Godavari Basins

1468. SHRI HARI RAM JOGAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether exploration and marketing of natural gas in Krishna and Godavari Basins was given to a private company giving preference in allotting potential sites over State owned ONGC; and

(b) if so, the reasons for such allotment and on

what conditions?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) To boost exploration activity both onland and offshore, including deepwater, the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) was formulated by the Government of India in 1997-98. The policy provides a level playing field in which all companies, including PSUs, compete on equal terms for the award of exploration acreages. At present, there are 14 blocks under operation in the Krishna and Godavari basins; of these, 7 blocks are in deepwater and 7 in shallow water. Under NELP rounds of bidding so far, 10 blocks have been awarded to private comapnies/joint ventures and 4 to National oil companies in accordance with the conditions laid down therein.

Shortage of LPG

1469. SHRI SURESH ANGADI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether severe shortage of Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) has been reported from several States including Southern States resulting in non-supply of LPG to consumers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Central Government to make available LPG and help in normalisation of situation?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have not reported any shortage of LPG and they are meeting the demand of their consumers in all parts of the country, including the Southern States. Any specific matter, if brought to the attention of the Government or the Oil Marketing Companies, on any deliberate creation of artificial scarcity, will be investigated and acted upon in accordance with extant Marketing Discipline Guidelines.

Permission to IA/AI/Private Airlines for Routes

1470. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA:
SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is planning to permit Indian Airlines/Air India to operate on more national/ international routes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such permission is also likely to be granted to private operators;

(d) if so, whether there will be any impact on national carrier due to the decision;

(e) if so, the steps taken to correct the situation;

(f) whether the Government propose to permit the Govenemt employees to avail the benefits for claiming Leave Travel Concession being offered by private operators; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor and the present norms laid down in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Routes and requisite traffic rights for operation of international air services are specified in India's Air Services Agreements with different countries. Airlines designated by Government can operate on the agreed routes subject to the availability of traffic rights as per their commerical judgement. as regads, domestic routes, airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines.

(c) to (e) Govenment has presently permitted Private Domestic Scheduled Operators (PDSOs) to operate to SAARC countries against unutilized entitlements of the Indian side subject to the provision for designation of multiple airlines in the respective Air Services Agreements. Jet Airways and Air Sahara have been designated for operatons to Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal as requested by them. No adverse impact on Air India and Indian Airlines is envisaged as the operations of private airlines are permitted on the unutilized traffic rights.

(f) and (g) As per the provisions laid down under Central Civil Services Leave Travel Concession (LTC) Rules, Government servants drawing pay of Rs 18,400 and above are entitled to travel by Air Economy (Y) Class by National Carriers or AC First Class by train, at their option. No proposal to permit LTC on private airlines is under consideration of the Government.

Setting up of Drug De-Addiction Centres

1471. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposals from various State Government/UT administrations and NGOs, for setting up of drug de-addiction centers and formulating various welfare schemes for drug addicts;

(b) if, so, the details of such proposals received during the current year, State/UT-wise and NGO-wise.

(c) the action taken on each of them; and

(d) the status of the pending proposals, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A statement showing the details of proposals received during the year 2004-05 for setting up of de-addiction Centres and the action taken thereon is enclosed.

Statement

[As On 30.11.2004]

S.No.	Name of the organisation NGO	Action taken
1	2	3
1.	Sandeep Shiksha Prasar Evam Samaj Kalyan Samiti, Datia, Madhya Pradesh	The case has been rejected since the organisation does not have the required experience.
2.	Jeevan Jyoti Health Services Society, Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh	-do-
3.	New Pratap Shiksha Samiti, Seehore, Madhya Pradesh	-do-
4.	Shriram Shiksha Samiti, Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh	-do-
5.	Concern for Advancement of Rural Efforst [CARE], Pfutsero, Phek, Nagaland	-do-
6.	Women and Child Care Society, Chandigarh	-do-
7.	Manav Sarathi, Guwahati, Assam	The case has been rejected since there are more than two Centres in the district applied for.
8.	Yug Chetna Prasar Evam Kalyan Samiti, Bhind, Madhya Pradesh	The case has been rejected since the organisation does not have the required experience.
9.	Munshi Prem Chand Society, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh	-do-
10.	Rural Development Association, Karong, Senapati District, Manipur	The case has been processed for sanction.
11.	Born Again Rehabilitation Centre, Ukhrul, Manipur	-do-
12.	Gilead's Balm Drug Addict Care Centre, Churachandpur, Manipur	The case has been rejected since there are more than two Centres in the district applied for.
13.	Rural Aid Service, Churachandpur, Manipur	-do-
14.	Mission for Social Reforms, Aizawl, Mizoram	-do-
15.	Bethany Health Centre, Aizawl, Mizoram	-do-
16.	Agape Home, Aizawl, Mizoram	-do-
17.	Care Counselling Centre, Mokokchung, Nagaland	The case has been processed for sanction.
18.	Nagaland Tribal Welfare Education and Residential Institution, Kohima, Nagaland	The case has been rejected since there are more than two Centres in the district applied for.

1	2	3
19.	Indian Red Cross Society, Ferozpur, Punjab	The case has been processed for sanction.
20.	Adesh Welfare Society, Muktsar, Punjab	-do-
21.	Society for Promotion of Youth and Masses, Delhi	-do-
22.	Matushree Charitable Trust, Sabarkantha, Gujarat	-do-
23.	The Koothattukulam Co-operative Hospital Limited, Ernakulam, Kerala	The case has been rejected since there are more than two Centres in the district applied for.
24.	Sri Haralayya Hitavardhak Sangha, Bijapur, Karnataka.	The case has been processed for sanction.
25.	Bharata Ratna Mahila Mandali, Cuddapah, Andhra Pradesh	The case has been rejected since the organisation does not have the required experience.
26.	Sri Sai Seva Samithi, Nalgonda, Andhra Pradesh	The case has been processed for sanction.
27.	Parkkavan Trust, Trichy, Tamil Nadu	The case has been rejected since there are more than two Centres in the district applied for.
28.	DOVE, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh	The case has been processed for sanction.
29.	Niranthara Social Welfare Society, Kolar, Karnataka	The case has been rejected since the organisation does not have the required experience.

Dropping of Live Bomb

1472. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Iskra trainer aircraft of the Indian Air Force accidently dropped a 25 pound live bomb near a village adjacent to Jamnagar Air Base in Gujarat on November 4, 2004;

(b) if, so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry had been ordered to this incident; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On 4th November, 2004, during a practice bomb live sortie by Iskra trainer aircraft over Sarmat range, the pilot experienced a failure of bomb release. The pilot carried out two more passes over the range but could not release the bomb. The pilot saw the bomb on the bomb carrier of the aircraft while flying back to the base. However, after landing, the pilot noticed that the bomb was missing from the bomb carrier of the aircraft. Later on, the civil police reported that the bomb had fallen in an open field in Lakhabawal village, south of Jamnagar, Gujarat. A haystack had caught fire due to the bomb explosion. Compensation of Rs. 2000/- has been paid to the affected farmer.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A Court of Inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the causes of this incident. The suspect Light Store Bomb Carrier has been sent for defect investigation.

Placement of Rack Wagons

1473. SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Minstry has received any request from the State Governments with regard to the placement of full rack wagons in different centres for transporting the foodgrains and other materials; and

(b) if, so, the Ministry has taken any steps for more wagons in railway divisons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Ministry of Railways is ensuring availability of wagons including foodgrain wagons in different Railway

Divisions subject to booking of traffic and the capacity of terminals to handle it.

Encroachment on Defence Land

1474. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken to upkeep of unusable land of Defence Estate.

(b) the area of Defence Land under encroachment, State/Cantonment-wise; and

(c) the effective steps being taken to prevent and remove encroachment on the said land?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Direction, have been issued to Director General, Defence Estates and Services Headquarters to take effective steps for ensuring vigilance, detection and prevention of encroachments on defence land.

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

(c) Detailed directions have been issued to Director General, Defence Estates and Services Headquarters to take steps for prevention of encroachments and also to take action for removal of encroachments, under the Provisions of Cantonment Act, 1924 and Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971.

Peace Keeping Force

1475. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of countries in which the indian Defence Troops are participating as 'Peace Keeping Force';

(b) the number of the defence staff (commissioned/ non-commissioned rank) deputed abroad in these operations; and

(c) the expenditure incurred by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Troops of the Indian armed forces (Army and Air Force) are currently participating in the following countries under UN Peace Keeping Missions:

(i) United National Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

(ii) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, and

(iii) United Nations Missions in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

(b) the number of armed forces personnel deputed in these operations, on date, is 3452 personnel, including 416 commissioned officers and 3036 non commissioned personnel.

(c) The expenditure incurred by the Government on account of troops cost, self sustainment of the troops in the Mission and for the contingent owned equipment is reimbursed by the United Nations.

Employment Opportunity on Railway Stations

1476. SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO:
SHRI ILYAS AZMI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has carried out or contemplating to carry out any survey to find out employment opportunities on railway stations and on the additional railway land adjoining to railway stations;

(b) if, so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of contracts/licences issued to start shops and stalls to create employment opportunities on these places during each of the last three years; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Catering activities at Railway stations and on adjoining railway land has potential of generating employment opportunities in the form of manpower deployment for such activities. However, Railways are hiving off such activities to Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. (IRCTC) and all new catering licences will be awarded by IRCTC. IRCTS has surveyed and is in process of survey for setting up of new catering units, Food Plazas, Budget Hotels, Rail Neer Plant etc.

Hon'ble Minister for Railways announced on the floor of Parliament that IRCTC will set up 50 new Food Plazas, six Budget Hotels and Rail Neer Plants in the first phase which in turn will also generate employment opportunities. IRCTC has set up Nil Food Plazas in 2001-02, 4 Food Plazas in 2002-03, 15 Food Plazas in 2003-04 and 8 Food Plazas in current year i.e., 2004-05. Approximately 1620 persons got employment in these Food Plazas. 12 new Food Plazas will be set up in the next four months, which will give employment to 720 persons. Similarly, Nil Static Catering Units were set up in 2001-02 and 2002-03, 02 Small Static Units in 2003-04 and 1 Static Unit was set up in current year i.e. 2004-05. 30 persons in total got employment in these static units. IRCTC installed two Rail Neer Plant at Nangloi (Delhi) and Danapur in the year 2003-04 in which 150 persons got employment. IRCTC has also finished a survey for setting up of Budget Hotels at 6 major places, which will generate employment for 600 persons. All such employments, mentioned above, will be generated through licensees.

Railway Land, which is not immediately required for railway uses, is also utilized for

(i) Grow More Food Scheme, by licencing the land to Railway employees belonging to Group 'C' and 'D'.

(ii) Plantation of Jatropha Curcas for producing Bio-diesel.

(iii) Commercial plantation through joint venture.

(iv) Commercial Development.

For the efficient management of vacant Railway land, it is envisaged to create "Railway Land Development Authority" which will handle all the commercial development of vacant land.

Revival of Railway Production Units

1477. SHRI PRADEEP GANDHI:
SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA:
SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD:
PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT:
SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:
SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:
DR. M. JAGANNATH:
SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways has decided not to use equipments manufactured by foreign countries;

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

(c) the details of equipments imported by the Railways during each of the last three years;

(d) whether the Railways propose to modernise their workshops which have been lying closed;

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

(f) the funds allocated for the purpose during the current financial year?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) A statement is attached.

(d) At present there is no proposal to modernise/ reopen the workshops, which have been lying closed.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

Statement

Details of Equipments Imported by the Railways during the Year 2001-02

(in lakhs of Rupees)

S.No.	Description of item	Qty.	Value
1	2	3	4
1.	Vital sign monitor	1	1.45
2.	Ifoflourance vapouriser	1	1.41

1	2	3	4
3.	CNC Milling Machine	2	408.00
4.	Bevel edge preparation Milling Machine	2	15.87
5.	Coordinate Measuring Machine 3D	1	76.66
6.	CNC Milling and drilling Machine	1	150.81
7.	Pin welding Machine	2	4.31
8.	Welding trolly with magnetic track	1	12.82
9.	Converyorised Component Painting system	1	145.59
10.	Crack testing Machine	1	1.21
11.	Gogan Coilling Machine	1	8.14
12.	Gogan Coilling Machine	2	3.69
13.	Bar Planning Machine	1	85.59
14.	Bar Heating furnace	1	6.99
15.	Bar Heating furnace	3	4.31
16.	Blood Cell counter	1	4.31
17.	Endoscope Machine	1	2.90
18.	Auto Refractor	1	4.56
19.	Ventilator/Respirator	1	9.72
20.	Auto Keratometer	1	1.17
21.	Accessories of Ear, Nose, Throat Operating Microscope	1	3.35
22.	Gripper Unit	2	41.72
23.	Hydrogen Determinator	1	27.96
24.	Ballast Cleaners	6	5789.00
25.	Dynamic Track stabiliser	4	
26.	Track relaying train	1	
		Total	6811.54

Details of Equipments Imported by the Railways during the Year 2002-03

(in lakhs of Rupees)

S.No.	Description of item	Qty.	Value
1	2	3	4
1.	Auto Analyser	1	19.78
2.	Bogio Frame Dimensional Checking Machine	2	45.93

1	2	3	4
3.	Spectometer	1	25.21
4.	CNC Turret Punch press	1	179.51
5.	CNC Press Brake 800 Tonnes	1	314.04
6.	CNC turning Centre	2	162.66
7.	CNC turning Centre	1	87.61
8.	CNC Modular top spindle edge Prep. Machine	1	89.89
9.	CNC axle turning lathe	3	217.26
10.	Re-railling equipments	59	2092.04
11.	Hydraulic Rescue Device	62	436.79
12.	Plasma coupled inductively spectrograph	3	87.87
13.	Dual end roughing lathe	1	1103.50
14.	CNC milling Machine	1	1310.45
15.	Simulator In Motion	12	10474.00
16.	Welding Beval preparation Machine	2	13.57
17.	Ultra Sound Machine	1	4.76
18.	Cut Grinding Machine	1	5.76
19.	Defibrilator	1	4.86
20.	Lieca Microscope	1	1.38
21.	Rotary Microtome	1	3.49
22.	Operation Table	1	10.03
23.	Sandum Cilo sping	1	2.91
24.	Temposonic displacement	1	3.27
25.	Cut Grinding Machine	1	5.76
26.	Tamping Machine	11	7773.00
27.	Ballast Cleaners	5	
28.	Dynamic Track Stabiliser	3	
29.	Shoulder Ballast Cleaning Machine	4	
		Total	24475.36

Details of Equipments Imported by the Railways during the Year 2003-04

(in lakhs of Rupees)

S.No.	Description of item	Qty.	Value
1.	Auto absorption spectrograph meter for industrial waste	1	9.59
2.	CNC Gear hobbing Machine	1	260.89
3.	CNC Gear Grinding Machine	2	653.73
4.	CNC Laser Cutting Machine	2	506.03
5.	CNC Laser Cutting and weding Machine	2	1799.22
6.	Co-ordinate measuring Machine	1	312.63
7.	Creep Feed Grinding Machine	1	306.06
8.	Pipe Threading Machine	2	35.24
9.	Internal Grinding Machine	1	418.11
10.	Huck Bolt installation Equipment	1	25.36
11.	Spectrum analyser	1	13.73
12.	Ultrasound whole body colour doppler Machine	1	15.69
13.	Defibrilator with Monitor	1	3.41
14.	Electro Stimulator	1	1.36
15.	Air Compressor	1	4.02
16.	Spectrum analyser	1	13.73
17.	Tamping Machine	13	
18.	Ballast Cleaners	3	12573.00
19.	Dynamic Track Stabiliser	5	
20.	Shoulder Ballast Cleaning Machine	2	
		Total	16951.80

Air Service for New Destinations

1478. SHRI BHAL CHANDRA YADAV:
SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide air services to other new destinations in its domestic services;

(b) if, so, the names of the places included in the above proposal;

(c) whether Gorakhpur is also included in the above proposal;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government propose to start regular air services from Sholapur airport; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise. Gorakhpur is already connected by private scheduled operator Sahara Airlines.

(d) Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-Eastern region. It is, however, upto the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of Route dispersal Guidelnies.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

[English]

New Line between Jiribam and Toupur, Manipur

1479. DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated for the newly sanctioned rail line between Jiribam and Toupur (Manipur);

(b) whether the work has been started on this line;

(c) if so, the progress made so far; and

(d) the time by which this line is expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) An allocation of Rs. 3 crore has been made for the Jiribam-Toupur new line project during 2004-05.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Preliminary activities like final location survey, preparation of plans and estimated etc. have been taken up.

(d) The project would be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

[Translation]

Financial Assistance to NGO's by Maulana Azad Education Foundation

1480. SHRI FURKAN ANSARI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes implemented by Maulana Azad Education Foundation in the country;

(b) the details of financial assistance allocated/ sanctioned by the Foundation to Non-Governmental Organisations in different States/Union Territories under the said schemes particularly in Jharkhand during 2003-04 and 2004-05, scheme-wise, NGO-wise and State/Union Territory-wise; and

(c) the financial assistance actually utilized by these NGOs under the said scheme during the said period, scheme-wise, NGO-wise and State/Union Territory-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) Following schemes are being implemented by Maulana Azad Education Foundation:

(i) To establish residential school for girls belonging to the educationally backward minorities.

(ii) To promote education amongst educationally backward minorities by giving financial assistance to establish hostels for girls in school/colleges.

(iii) To assist schools and colleges for their expansion and upgradation.

(iv) To establish/strengthen Engineering Colleges, Medical Colleges, Polytechnic, ITI and Vocational Training Centers.

(v) Assistance for Remedial Coaching Programmes for the students belonging to educationally backward minorities from classes IX to XII.

(vi) To provide financial assistance for promotion of education especially for upgradation of skills of women and girls belonging to the target group.

(vii) Maulana Azad National Scholorship scheme for meritorious girl students belonging to minorities.

(viii) Maulana Azad Literacy Award to four NGOs every year.

(ix) To establish Maulana Azad Sadbhawana Kendras

(b) and (c) The details of financial assistance allocated/sanctioned by the Foundation in different States/ Union Territories including Jharkhand during the year 2003-04 and 2004-05 are given below:

Category	Grant-in-Aid Sanctioned during			
	2003-04		2004-05	
	No. of NGOs/Local Bodies/Students	Amount (Rs) In lakh	No. of NGOs/Local Bodies/Students	Amount (Rs.) In lakh
1. Construction of Hostel	8	100.00	0	Nil
2. Establishing/Expansion of School/Colleges	32	239.60	0	Nil
Technical Education	2	3.00	0	Nil
Sadbhawna Kendras	4	38.90		Nil
Scholoraship of Meritorious Girls Students	634	63.40	2152	215.20
Remedial Coaching	0	Nil	0	Nil
Literacy Award	0	Nil	3	3.00

Details of grants sanctioned to NGOs and Scholarship to Meritorious Girl Students are enclosed at Statement I and II.

Statement I

Maulana Azad Education Foundation

Details of Grant-in-Aid Sanctioned during the year 2003-04:

S.No.	Name and Address of NGOs	Purpose	Grant-in-Aid sanctioned (Rs.)	Date of release of 1st instalment	Date of Utilisation Certificate submitted
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh					
1.	Chaitanya Bharti Educational society, Kodad, Nalgonda	Girls Hostel Bldg.	1000000.00	22.01.04	Not received
Assam					
2.	Dhulia Regional Physically Handicapped Development Association, Dhulia, Darrang	Construction of Girls Hostel Building	1000000.00	06.10.04	Not received

1	2	3	4	5	6
Jammu and Kashmir					
3.	Sir Syed Muslim Institute of Education, Behrot, Distt. Rajouri	Construction of School Bldg.	1000000	31.3.04	Not received
Karnataka					
4.	Mohaddis-e-Azam Mission, Islampur Road, Hubli, Dharwad	Construction of Girls School Bldg.	1000000	26.3.04	09.9.04
5.	Sunni darul Ulum Mohammadia Charitable Turst, Moodbidri, D.K.	Construction of School Building	500000	21.01.04	29.6.04
6.	Youth Educational Service Association, Health Office, Ramnagram, Bangalore	Construction of Girls Hostel Bldg.	1000000	15.3.04	Not received
Madhya Pradesh					
7.	Muslim Educational Society, Sunser, Shajapur	Construction of School Building	1000000	24.3.04	Not received
8.	Nagar Panchayat, Badawda, Ratlam	Sadbhawna Kendra	1000000	06.02.04	Not received
9.	Nagar Panchayat, Tal, Ratlam	Sadbhawna Kendra	1000000	06.02.04	27.09.04
10.	Nagarpalika Parishad, Nagda, Ujjain	Sadbhawna Kendra	890000	06.02.04	Not received
11.	Nagarpalika Parishad, Agar, Shajapur	Sadbhawna Kendra	1000000	Not released	Not received
12.	Shabul Eidiz Zahabi, 250 Najmi Path, Qamri Marg. Ujjain	Establishment of Computer Lab.	500000	02.09.04	Not received
13.	St. Abu Ayub Ansari Educational Society, 29/3 Ranipura, Indore	Construction of School Building	750000	Not released	Not received
14.	Jamat Ansar Momin, Hariphatak, Bridge Road, Ujjain	Construction of School Building	1000000	23.3.04	Not received
15.	Adarsh Bharti Convent Shiksha Sansthan, 12-Sankadia Sultan Ki Gali, Chand ka Kua, Ujjain	Construction of School Building	1000000	01.7.04	Not received
16.	Aman Education Society, Shahjahanabad, Bhopal	Construction of College Building	1000000	31.3.04	06.8.04
17.	New Progressive Educational Society, 10-Prince Colony, Lower Eidgh Hills, Shahjahanabad, Bhopal	Construction of Girls Hostel Building	1000000	31.3.04	cheque returned
18.	Progressive Educational & Cultural Development Society, Housing Board Colony, Bhopal	Construction of School Building	1000000	31.3.04	13.10.04
Maharashtra					
19.	Hazarat Dada Hayat Kalandar Education Society, Mangrulpir, Akola	Construction of School Building	500000	11.02.04	15.09.04

1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	Friends Welfare Society, Habib Nagar, Amravati	Construction of School Building	1000000	27.02.04	26.7.04
21.	Social Society, Morba, Mangaon, Distt. Raigad	Construction of School Building	710000	31.3.04	23.8.04
22.	Nagothane Education Society, Nagothane, Roha, Distt. Raigad	Construction of School Building	1000000	27.02.04	08.11.04
23.	Ideal Education Society, Dr. Ansari Road, Rabodhi, Distt. Thane	Construction of School Building	1000000	31.3.04	27.9.04
24.	Roha Education & Welfare Assn. AT&PO-Roha, Distt. Raigad	Construction of School Building	1000000	27.02.04	Not received
25.	Mehmooda Shikshan & Mahila Gramin Vikas Bahu-Uddeshia Sastha, Ahmed Complex, Colcha Marg. Sadar, Nagpur	Construction of College Building	1000000	27.02.04	15.6.04
26.	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Social Welfare & Educational Society, Akot, Distt. Akola	Construction of Girls School Building	1000000	29.3.04	19.8.04
27.	The Education Society, 22, Masjid Street, Kadwai, Mumbai	Construction of Hostel Bldg.	1500000	31.3.04	17.8.04
Manipur					
28.	The Hundred Flowers Hr.Sec. School Society, Thangjam, Khunou, Khomidok, Pangel Road, East Imphal	Construction of Girls Hostel Bldg.	2000000	Not released	Not received
29.	New Integrated Rural Management Agency, Nungphous Bazar, Sangaiyumpham, Wangjing, Thoubal	Establishment of Craft Trng. Center	100000	31.3.04	Not received
Rajasthan					
30.	Ishaqia Educational Society, Mohalla Kharadian, Jodhpur	Construction of Girls School	1000000	26.3.04	03.11.04
Tamil Nadu					
31.	Islamia Educational Trust, Abdul Khader Street, Bodinayakannur	Construction of School Bldg.	400000	21.01.04	20.4.04
Uttar Pradesh					
32.	Nadir Educational Society, Atrauli, Agigah	Construction of School Bldg.	500000	31.3.04	Not received
33.	Iqra Junior High School Samiti, Kolhui, Maharajganj	Construction of School Bldg.	400000	31.3.04	Not received

1	2	3	4	5	6
34.	Al-Hilal Foundation, Dariachak, Gorakhnath, Gorakhpur	Construction of School Bldg.	650000	14.3.04	2.11.04
35.	Florence Educational & Welfare Society, Balda Colony, Lucknow	Construction of Inter College Bldg.	1000000	09.01.04	12.5.04
36.	Madarsa Ahle Sunnat Ziaul Ulum, Bagicha Iltifatganj, Ambedkar Nagar	Construction of School Bldg.	200000	31.3.04	Not received
37.	Maulana Azad Educational & Welfare Society, Anjanshaheed, Sagri, Azamgarh	Construction of Girls Hostel Bldg.	1500000	08.01.04	16.6.04
38.	Maulana Azad Educational & Welfare Society, Jalalpur, Ambedkar Nagar	Construction of School Bldg.	300000	31.3.04	01.11.04
39.	Domariaganj Educational & Welfare Society, Azad Nagar, Utraula, Balrampur	Construction of College Bldg.	500000	31.3.04	Not received
40.	Musab Bin Umair Educational Society Sadullah Nagar, Utraula, Balrampur	Construction of Girls School Bldg.	600000	Not released	Not received
41.	Honey Convent Shiksha Samiti, Baagaon, Sarai Mohiddin, Jaunpur	Construction of School Building	500000	29.3.04	Not received
42.	Chand Memorial Charitable Trust, New Friends Colony, New Delhi	Construction of Sch. Bldg. at Tewan Grant.	450000	17.01.04	01.3.04
43.	Managing Committee Muslim Qudrat School, Seohara, Bijnor	Purchase of science Lab. Equip.	500000	07.5.04	Not received
44.	Abbasi Charitable & Educational Society, Amroha, J.P. Nagar	Construction of Girls Hostel Bldg.	1000000	25.05.04	27.9.04
West Bengal					
45.	Millat Girls Academy, J.K. Ghosh Road, Belgachia, Kolkata	Estb. of Vocational Training Centre	200000	31.3.04	30.8.04
46.	Sodpukar Welfare Society, Sodpukar, P.O. Ramchandra Nagar, South 24-Parganas	Construction of School Bldg.	1000000	31.3.04	Not received
		Total	**38150000**		

Statement-II

Maulana Azad Education Foundation

Scholarship is given at the rate of Rs. 10,000/- each students as a one time grant sanctioned to meritorious girl students belonging to minorities

Sl.No.	Name of State/UT	Scholarship Sanctioned 2003-04					Scholarship Sanctioned 2004-05				
		M	C	S	B	Total	M	C	S	B	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	Andhra Pradesh	44	9	0	0	53	110	0	0	0	110
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3.	Assam	2	0	0	0	2	70	0	0	0	70
4.	Bihar	2	0	0	0	2	102	0	0	2	104
5.	Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh	25	0	0	0	25	63	0	0	0	63
6.	Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	8
7.	Gujarat	0	0	0	0	0	500	0	0	0	500
8.	Haryana	3	0	5	0	8	4	0	0	1	5
9.	Himachal Pradesh	4	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11.	Jharkhand	2	0	0	0	2	40	0	0	0	40
12.	Karnataka	30	1	0	0	31	110	27	0	0	137
13.	Kerala	52	28	0	0	80	16	2	0	0	18
14.	Maharashtra	53	0	0	0	53	143	2	0	0	145
15.	Manipur	3	8	0	0	11	5	6	0	0	11
16.	Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17.	Mizoram	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
18.	Nagaland	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0
19.	NCT of Delhi	7	0	0	0	7	49	0	0	1	50
20.	Orissa	12	0	0	0	12	30	0	0	0	30
21.	Punjab	4	0	0	0	4	10	0	0	3	13
22.	Rajasthan	2	0	0	0	2	29	0	0	0	29
23.	Sikkim	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24.	Tamil Nadu	18	16	0	0	34	52	30	0	0	82

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
25.	Tripura	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26.	Uttaranchal	6	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
27.	Uttar Pradesh	172	0	2	0	174	430	0	0	6	436
28.	West Bengal	116	0	0	0	116	290	0	0	0	290
29.	Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9
	Total	557	70	7	0	634	2053	77	0	22	2152

[English]

Protest of Employees for Privatisation of Airports

1481. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:
SHRI SUNIL KHAN:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees of Airport Authority of India have submitted an alternative proposal for modernisation of airports instead of their privatisation;

(b) if so, whether the said comittee has submitted to look into the proposal;

(c) if so, whether the said comittee has submitted its report;

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government on the recommendations of the said committee; and

(e) if not, by when the committee is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The employees of Airports Authority of India (AAI) have submitted a brief modernisation proposal for Delhi and Mumbai airports to the AAI.

(b) A committee has been formed by AAI to look into this modernisation proposal.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The Committee discussed the modernisation proposal with the representatives of the employees. The employees have requested assistance and time for preparing a detailed proposal. The committee will submit its report on receipt of the detailed proposal from the employees of AAI.

[Translation]

Sale of Surplus LPG Production

1482. DR. CHINTA MOHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether private sector institutions are seeking Government consent to sell their surplus LPG production in the parallel market;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the quantum of surplus LPG produced by these private sector institutions in the country;

(d) whether this surplus LPG is going waste due to the lack of Government approval; and

(e) if so, the reasons for not giving the said permission?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) At present, LPG is a deficit product in the country and all the indigenous production, including that of private companies, is marketed by Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) for meeting the domestic requirement of LPG. Private companies are free to import LPG for sale to their consumers.

[English]

Courier Service

1483. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines plans courier service in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when it is proposed to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Airlines plans to convert five B-737 aircraft into freighter aircraft and operate courier service with Nagpur as a hub. The service is to be launched in thirty one cities in two phases.

(c) It is not possible to indicate a definite time frame for commencing the courier service, at this stage.

Revision of Recruitment Guidelines

1484. SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH:
SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the irregularities being committed at various recruitment centers in recruitment of army personnel;

(b) if so, the measures being adopted to check them;

(c) if not whether the Government propose to find out facts;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government propose to take any steps to bring more transparency in army-recruitment procedure;

(f) is so, the details thereof;

(g) whether the Government has any plan to revise the recruitment guidelines to increase the number of personnel for Army and Navy in Defence Services; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (h) There was a report in the media about some touts being active in Delhi area during the recent recruitment rally. It was alleged that they were issuing forged domicile, caste and character certificates for recruitment. The touts were operating away from the recruitment area in Delhi Cantonment and were apprehended by the Police and the police have instituted criminal cases against the persons arrested. The activities of such touts and miscreants are outside the control of the recruiting organization and necessary liaison is maintained by the Army with the civil administration to prevent recurrence of such events. Close vigil is nonetheless maintained by the Army to prevent such incidents.

The recruitment in the Army is carried out through the Open Rally System effective from 1st April, 1998. The Open Rally System has been introduced with the aim of making recruitment more transparent, accessible to the public and to eliminate malpractices of touts and agents. The complete recruitment process of screening, document check, medical investigation, physical eligibility and written test, is carried out at the rally site itself. Coding and evaluation of answer books, decoding the preparation of results is undertaken by different Board of Officers with independent members as observers from field formations, to ensure neutrality and impartiality.

The present system of recruitment is simple, candidate friendly and transparent and has proved to be satisfactory. A large number of candidates are applying to join the armed forces, hence, at present, there is not plan to revise the recruitment guidelines.

[Translation]

Earning through Goods Transport

1485. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an inordinate increase in goods transport during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the amount earned by the Railways through goods-transport during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The cumulative loading upto Octomer' 04, works out to 23.91 million

tonnes more than the loading achieved during the corresponding period of previous year. The cumulative loading is expected to be 7.05 million tonnes more than the propertionate target.

(c) The amount earned by the Railway through goods transport during the current year upto October' 04 is Rs. 16788.89 crore (approx.).

[English]

Illegal Courts by Panchayat Officials

1486. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to bring a law to eliminate illegal courts held by Panchayat officials in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) The Government has not received any complaint about existence of illegal courts held by Panchayat Officials in rural areas. There is no proposal under consideration to bring any amendment to the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 in this regard. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has decided to facilitate and secure implementation of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 by States/UTs in letter and spirit, by encouraging the States/UTs to adopt carefully drawn up plans of action.

Manning of Unmanned Level Crossing

1487. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of manned and unmanned level crossings in the country till date, State-wise;

(b) the steps taken/to be taken by the Government for manning all the unmanned level crossings in the country; and

(c) the details of unmanned level crossings to be manned during the current year alongwith funds provided in this regard, state/zone-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Number of manned and unmanned level crossings (State-wise) as on 31.3.2003.

S.No.	State	Manned	Unmanned (including 'D' class)
1.	Assam	358	551
2.	Andhra Pradesh	1232	1380
3.	Bihar	977	1196
4.	Chhattisgarh	218	348
5.	Delhi	54	3
6.	Gujarat	1445	2895
7.	Haryana	602	294
8.	Himachal Pradesh	40	299
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	20	32
10.	Jharkhand	395	560
11.	Karnataka	615	828
12.	Kerala	399	133
13.	Madhya Pradesh	1206	1121
14.	Maharashtra	1210	1349
15.	Manipur	0	3
16.	Mizoram	0	1
17.	Nagaland	1	0
18.	Orissa	340	982
19.	Punjab	773	991
20.	Rajasthan	1506	2060
21.	Tamil Nadu	1241	1281
22.	Tripura	2	17
23.	Uttar Pradesh	2865	2923
24.	Uttaranchal	62	18
25.	West Bengal	1153	1404
26.	Chandigarh	6	1
27.	Pondicherry	9	9
28.	Goa	12	3
	Total	16741	20682

(b) As per extant rules, in case an unmanned level crossing provided initially and maintained at the cost of the railways needs manning, the cost both initial as well as recurring and maintenance has to be borne by the State Government/Road Authority concerned. However, keeping in view the grave consequences of accidents at umanned level crossing, Railways have decided to man certain level crossings based on the traffic volume and visibility conditions at the unmanned level crossings.

(c) Planning for safety works at level crossings including their manning where required is done-Railway wise and not State-wise and the statictics are maintained zone-wise. A statement giving planning of unmanned level crossings to be taken up for manning during 2004-05 is given below:

S.No.	Railway	No. of unmanned level crossings (including 'D" class)	No. of unmanned level crossings qualifying the criteria for manning	No. of unmanned level crossings qualifying the criteria for manning already sanctioned	No. of unmanned level crossings targeted for manning during the year 04-05	Funds allocated in Plan Head 29 for Safety Works at Unmanned Level Crossings including manning (in crores)
1.	Central	725	13	9	9	5.89
2.	Eastern	571	11	11	11	13.06
3.	Northern	2252	372	116	35	10.00
4.	North Eastern	1813	94	55	20	10.00
5.	Northeast Frontier	1164	35	15	0	6.41
6.	Southern	1404	149	89	30	13.74
7.	South Central	1413	132	35	10	13.44
8.	South Eastern	1073	31	31	10	10.00
9.	Western	3045	111	44	15	10.80
10.	East Central	1064	36	5	5	10.00
11.	East Coast	687	62	45	15	6.39
12.	North Central	2121	35	21	10	8.35
13.	North Western	971	97	38	15	8.40
14.	Southeast Central	1031	34	21	10	8.60
15.	South Western	912	60	25	10	6.00
16.	West Central	436	7	4	3	8.90
	Total	20682	1282	557	211	150.00

Agreement Signed between ONGC & Russia

1488. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ONGC have any proposal to sign/ signed an agreement with the Skochinsky Institute of Mining, Russia for using technology to get from coal mines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the quality and cost of coal gas is equivalent to the natural gas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Skochinsky Institute of Mining, Russia on 25th November 2004 for Underground Coal Gasification (UCG).

Under this MoU, Russian UCG technology will be utilized to covert underground coal/lignite into combustible gases.

(c) and (d) The calorific value of UCG gas is 10% to 35% of natural gas. The cost of the gas is dependent on several factors like depth, thickness, quality, etc. of coal seams. The project is in the preliminary/starting stage and it would be premature to precisely indicate the price.

[Translation]

Crimes in Trains/Stations

1489. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY:
SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE:
SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:
YOGI ADITYA NATH:
SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that there is an increase in crimes in trains and at stations;

(b) whether there has been an increase in the number of cases when passengers have been looted after giving them food items laced with sedatives;

(c) if so, the details of such incidents and the number of other crimes that took place in trains and at stations since January 2004 till date and the action taken in respect of each of those cases;

(d) whether Mumbai-Howrah Express was attacked by the dacoits in the last week of June;

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the total value of cash and kind looted, the number of persons injured and the relief provided to them; and

(f) the steps taken/to be taken by the Government to curb such crimes in trains/stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[English]

Corporate Entity for Trade activity by GAIL

1490. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) is floating a separate corporate entity for its trading activity in India and abroad;

(b) if so, the name of the new corporate, entity and the reasons for creating such an organization; and

(c) the main activities which are likely to be handled by the new entity?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The proposed natural gas regulatory regime envisage unbundling of trading and transmission business. Therefore, GAIL propose to separate trading and transmission of its gas activities. GAIL has engaged consultants to look at various options for business unbundling. It is only thereafter that the timing of the formation of the new entities and their main business activities will become clear.

At present, GAIL is not engaged in gas trading business in any overseas market.

Indo-Pak Co-operation in Energy Sector

1491. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the officials from Petroleum Ministry of India and the officials of Foreign Ministry of Pakistan met in New Delhi and discussed the co-operation in the energy sector;

(b) if so, the main points discussed between two countries during the meeting and agreement reached so far;

(c) whether reviving pipe line from Iran that could yield up to 800 million dollar a year as transit for Pakistan and cheap gas for India.

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps to be taken to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas has discussed co-operation in the hydrocarbons sector with the Pakistan Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Pakistan Prime Minister at meeting in New Delhi. The Prime Minister has also had discussions on the subject with the President of the Pakistan in New York.

(b) Access to hydrocarbon resources in the region; general cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector; and the possibility of Indian export of diesel to Pakistan were amongst the subjects discussed.

(c) to (e) Conversations without commitment have been initiated with Pakistan and Iran about the feasibility of Iran exporting natural gas to India through an overland pipeline. As the conversation are at a preliminary stage, no details have been worked out.

Booking of Rail Tickets on Mobile Phones

1492. SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has introduced a facility to book rail tickets over mobile phones;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this facility is available from Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the money charged/to be charged from the subscribers for availing this facility?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The scheme for purchase of reserved rail tickets through mobile phones has been launched through Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. (IRCTC).

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Mobile phone booking is done through the Internet. Railways do not levy any extra charges other than Internet booking charges for the facility of booking on mobile phone.

Defence Production by Private Companies

1493. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the Government moved to allow private producing companies to produce defense equipments.

(b) whether the Government now favours a synergy between the private and public sector in production of defence equipments;

(c) if so, whether the private companies would be allowed in areas untouched by the 39 ordnance factories in the country; and

(d) if so, the details of the areas that would be offered to the private sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) As far as the current policy is concerned, private sector can manufacture any type of defence equipment subject to compulsory licensing. Government would however prefer optimum utilization of resources available both in public and private sectors, as far as possible.

Education/Vocational Training to Physically Handicapped Persons

1494. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the institutes in various states and Union Territories especially in Chhattisgarh imparting education/vocational training to the physically handicapped persons, State/Union Territory-wise;

(b) the number of persons trained/vocationally trained by these institutions during each of the last three years, till date State/Union Territory-wise; and

(c) the details of the funds allocated/released to these institutions by the Government alongwith its utilization during the said period State/Union Territory-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) Central Government is not running any educational/vocational training center for physically handicapped persons in Chhattisgarh. However, under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme this Ministry is providing grant in aid to one NGO namely lion Charitable trust, G.E. Road, Supela, Bhillai for running Special School for Hearing Impaired. State/Union Territory-wise details of Non-Governmental Organizations receiving grant in aid under Deendayal disabled Rehabilitation Scheme are available in website of this Ministry www.socialjustice.nin.in.

(b) and (c) The Number of beneficiaries, number of NGOs running projects for physically Handicapped and grant released are given in the enclosed statement. Grant in aid is released to the NGOs after adjusting/recovery of any unspent amount of previous year's grant in aid. The details of budget allocation and amount released to the NGOs for the projects for all category of disabled persons under the Scheme during the last three years, till date are as under:

(Rs. in crores)

Year	BE	Amount released
2001-02	58.50	60.71
2002-03	70.00	73.58
2003-04	75.00	71.05
2004-05 (as on 03/12/2004)	80.00	26.75

Statement

State-wise details of number of NGOs, Assistance Given and number of Persons trained/vocationally trained during the years 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2004-05 (i.e. upto 03.12.2004) to the physically handicapped persons under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme

S.No	Name of the State	2001-02			2002-03			2003-04			2004-05(upto 03.12.2004)		
		Number of persons	Number of Organi-sations	Amount Released (Rs. in lac)	Number of persons	Number of Organi-sations	Amount Released (Rs. in lac)	Number of persons	Number of Organi-sations	Amount Released (Rs. in lac)	Number of persons	Number of Organi-sations	Amount Released (Rs. in lac)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4460	48	430.74	5756	57	608.87	5651	56	572.20	6047	41	218.33
2.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	104	1	12.66	104	1	9.73	0		0.00	0		0.00
4.	Assam	558	8	18.71	567	8	44.81	354	3	24.79	379	1	1.59
5.	Bihar	883	9	120.50	1030	10	101.28	588	11	103.78	629	5	21.74
6.	Chandigarh	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
7.	Chhattisgarh	130	1	2.53	125	1	1.61	135	1	3.11	144	1	1.29
8.	Dadra Nagar Haveli	100	1	1.53	0		0.00	0	0.00	0			0.00
9.	Daman & Diu	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
10.	Delhi	1990	11	55.85	2991	13	119.89	2651	11	53.15	2837	10	43.97
11.	Goa	198	3	24.07	214	3	24.28	181	3	23.69	194	2	10.33
12.	Gujarat	2014	8	70.63	2024	8	71.37	1818	7	46.71	1945	3	2036
13.	Haryana	456	6	20.98	486	8	41.25	509	8	47.31	545	6	20.84
14.	Himachal Pradesh	105	3	15.83	123	3	10.90	116	4	10.79	124	4	6.47
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	88	3	3.17	91	2	6.11	94	2	3.10	101	1	1.30
16.	Jharkhand	60	1	1.02	80	2	8.84	89	2	5.78	95	2	3.89
17.	Karnataka	3761	38	336.40	3911	37	423.05	4090	44	492.84	4376	28	138.72
18.	Kerala	1710	13	64.11	1582	12	49.29	1619	13	72.33	1732	13	23.07
19.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
20.	Madhya Pradesh	141	4	9.67	366	5	10.33	479	9	21.92	513	3	5.88
21.	Maharashtra	2771	13	94.51	2938	16	164.09	2346	11	113.44	2510	8	49.23
22.	Manipur	270	5	37.94	323	5	34.37	344	5	45.76	368	5	19.47
23.	Meghalaya	304	3	15.48	260	2	17.43	254	2	19.01	272	2	9.40
24.	Mizoram	165	2	25.07	178	2	25.17	190	2	19.90	203	1	3.73
25.	Nagaland	100	1	1.78	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
26.	Orissa	1385	16	116.49	1645	15	141.60	1670	17	134.35	1787	11	40.51
27.	Pondicherry	65	1	5.85	75	1	6.13	71	1	7.75	76	1	3.64
28.	Punjab	834	6	53.83	1101	7	56.83	1361	9	66.19	1456	8	40.31
29.	Rajasthan	1013	11	71.54	1312	9	55.16	966	11	66.37	1034	8	33.53
30.	Sikkim	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00
31.	Tamil nadu	2188	22	177.29	2717	25	194.94	2811	24	199.93	3008	15	72.47
32.	Tripura	72	1	6.50	76	1	9.36	78	1	9.04	83	1	4.32
33.	Uttar Pradesh	4050	36	331.15	4387	40	319.68	4125	34	326.97	4414	25	112.43
34.	Uttaranchal	212	2	4.67	270	3	25.23	286	2	15.56	306	1	10.26
35.	West Bengal	2672	23	189.22	2685	26	187.75	2688	24	183.96	2876	23	133.53

[English]

National Cultural Fund

1495. SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has set up a National Cultural Fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the main objectives of creating such fund;

(c) the various organizations/persons contributed to that fund since its inception;

(d) the expenditure incurred out of that fund project-wise since its inception;

(e) to what extent the objectives for which the fund was set up has been achieved; and

(f) the details of the steps taken by the Government to generate more contribution to that Fund?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Cultural Fund was set up in 1996 by an Act of Parliament. This fund is managed and administered by the council and an committee. The NCF aims at inviting the participation of the corporate sector, NGOs, state Government and individuals in the task of promoting, protecting and preserving India's cultural heritage both tangible and intangible.

(c) The list of various persons/organizations who contributed to the NCF since its inception is available in the Annual Reports of NCF laid before the Parliament and available in the Parliament Library,

(d) A statement of expenditure incurred project-wise and year-wise since its inception is enclosed.

(e) The objectives of the Fund are achieved by entering into public private partnerships with corporate houses, NGOs and international funding agencies. Since 2000, some Memoranda of Understanding have been signed to fulfill these objectives; while some of them have been completed and many of these are on-going projects. Details of these are given in the Annual Reports of the NCF, which are available in the Parliament Library.

(f) It is proposed to approach more public sector undertakings, corporate houses and international funding agencies to contribute to the fund.

Statement

Expenditure incurred since inception on projects:

1.	1997-1998	Nil
2.	1998-1999	Nil
3.	1999-2000	Nil

1st April, 2000 to 3rd March, 2001

1.	Durgapur Children's Academy of Culture, West Bengal	Nil
2.	Humayun's Tomb, New Delhi	Rs. 9.98 lakhs
3.	Jnana Pravaha Trust, Varanasi	Rs. 31.72. Lakhs
4.	Kishkinda Trust, Anegundi	Rs. 0.76 lakhs
5.	Shaniwarwada, Puna	Rs. 35.13. lakhs
	Total	Rs. 77.59 lakhs

1st April, 2001 to 31st March, 2002

1.	Ramana Maharishi Centre For Learning, Bangalore	Rs. 0.75 lakhs
2.	Shaniwarwada, Pune	Rs. 2.02 lakhs
3.	Durgapur Children's Academy of Culture, West Bengal	Rs. 0.26 lakhs
4.	Jnana Pravaha Trust, Varanasi	Rs. 47.52 lakhs

1st April, 2002 to 31st March, 2003

1.	Durgapur Children's Academy of Culture West Bengal	Rs. 0.50 lakhs
2.	Humayun's Tomb New Delhi	Rs. 16.05 lakhs
3.	Jnana Pravaha Trust, Varanasi	Rs. 17.53 lakhs
4.	Pradesh Synagogue Clock Tower, Cochin	Rs. 3.39 lakhs
5.	Ramana Maharishi Centre For Learning Bangalore	Rs. 0.09 lakhs
6.	Shaniwarwada, Pune	Rs. 3.04 lakhs
7.	Taj Mahal, Agra	Rs. 6.79 lakhs
	Total	Rs. 46.94 lakhs

1st April, 2003 and 31st March, 2004

1.	Jantar Mantar, New Delhi	Rs. 1.00 lakhs
2.	Pardesi Synagogue Clock Tower, Cochin	Rs. 6.50 lakhs
3.	Ramakrishna mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata	Rs. 43.00 lakhs
4.	Taj Mahal, Agra	Rs. 80.00 lakhs
5.	Choudhary Charan Singh Centenary Celebration	Rs. 80.00 lakhs
	Total	Rs. 138.71 lakhs

[Translation]

Profit Earned by Oil Companies

1496. SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the oil companies in public sector as well private sector in the country have earned profits during the year 2003-2004 and during the first half of the year 2004-2005;

(b) if so, the percentage thereof vis-a-vis total sales during these periods; and

(c) the reasons for continuous increase in the profits of these companies despite the rise in the prices of crude oil in the international market?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) All oil Companies in the public sector except Biecco Lawrie Ltd., have earned profits during the year 2003-04. During the first half of 2004-05, all these companies, excluding IBP Company Ltd., have earned profits. The details in respect of private sector companies are not maintained.

(b) The percentage of net profit to total sales in respect of public sector Oil Companies is given in the statement attached.

(c) After the announcement of the dismantling of the Administered price Mechanism, domestic prices of crude oil have been linked to international prices. The increase in international prices has resulted in improved profits for the upstream companies like Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. and Oil India Ltd. as a result of better realisation of value for the crude produced, However, downstream companies like Inidian oil Corporation Ltd., Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd., Bharat Petroleum Corporaton Ltd. have gained on account of better refinery margins, but have suffered on account of under-recoveries due to the revision of retail selling prices of petroleum not matching higher international prices.

Statement

Name of Oil Companies	Percentage of net profit to total sales	
	2003-04	2004-05 (April-sept.)
Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.	26.31	25.30
Oil India Ltd.	27.31	20.53
GAIL (India) Ltd.	15.06	11.75
Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.	5.38	3.84
Hindustan Petroleum Corp. Ltd.	3.38	1.81
Bharat Petroleum Corp. Ltd.	3.17	1.60
IBP Co. Ltd.	2.01	Not applicable*
Chennai Petroleum Corp. Ltd.	4.22	4.63
Kochi Refineries Ltd.	4.82	4.76
Bongaigaon Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd.	10.66	13.80
Numaligarh Refinery Ltd.	6.68	10.92
Balmer Lawrie & Co. Ltd.	1.89	2.27
Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd.	3.64	3.02
ONGC-Videsh Ltd.	12.00	**
Engineers India Ltd.	7.50	15.8
Biecco Lawrie Ltd.	Not applicable*	2.00

Note:

*(1) IBP has incurred losses in the first half of the year 2004-05 whereas Biecco Lawrie had incurred losses in 2003-04

**(2) ONG-Videsh Limited is an unlisted company. It does not publish half results.

[English]

Dues of Kolkata Doordarshan

1497. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Kolkata Doordarshan has to realise outstanding dues of about Rs. 5,92,68,619/- from serial Janmabhumi, Khas-khabar, Mukho-Mukhi, pous Phaguner pala, Rajmehalm, in house, Sanade Tilottoma;

(b) if so, the manner in which the Government will recover these dues;

(c) whether these serials are telecast without any break beyond 1300 days; and

(d) if so, the official held responsible therefore?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has informed that as on date Rs. 24,70,19,240/- is outstanding against these programmes. The matter regarding recovery of dues is sub-judice and is dependent on the outcome of the cases filed by the producer/marketing agency in the high court of Kolkata.

(c) and (d) Prasar Bharati has informed that the programmes Khas-Khabor and Janombhomi" were telecast beyond 1300 days with the approval of competent authority in compliance with the Court order.

Pantry car facility in Long Distance trains

1498. SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI:
SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR:
SHRI JUAL ORAM:
SHRI K.S. RAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that several long distance trains are running without pantry cars;

(b) if so, the names of such long distance trains running without pantry cars and the reasons therefor;

(c) the names of trains in which pantry car facility is provided/to be provided during 2004-05; and

(d) the steps taken/to be taken by Government to provide pantry car facility in such trains where this facility is not available?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are about 102 long distance Superfast/mail Express trains on Indian Railways which presently do not pantry car attached. Name and number of such trains are given in statement I. The reasons for non-provision of pantry car facilities in these trains include sufficient stoppages at stations where satistactory catering services from static catering units are available enroute and operational constraints like non-availability of rolling stock, room on train etc.

(c) There are 5 trains on which pantry car facility has been provided during 2004-05 (Till date). Names of the trains are given in statement-II.

(d) Pantry car services on long distance trains are, however, being introduced in a phased manner subject to availability of resources. Catering services are provided through refreshment rooms enroute.

Statement I

Long distance Superfast Trains running without Pantry car whose journey time is more than 24 hours each way

Sl.No.	Train No.	Name
1	2	3
1.	2315/2316	Sealdah-Ajmer Ananya Exp. (Weekly)
2.	2317/2318	Sealdah-Amritsar Akal Takht Exp. (Weekly)
3.	2319/2320	Asansol-Amritsar Exp. (Weekly)
4.	2405/2406	Bhusawal-Nizamuddin Gondwana Exp. (Bi-Weekly)
5.	2409/2410	Bilaspur-Nizamuddin Exp. (5 Days a week)
6.	2645/2646	Ernakulam-Nizamuddin Exp. (Weekly)
7.	2647/2648	Coimbatore-nizamuddin Kongu Exp. (Weekly)
8.	2905/2906	Porbander-Howrah Exp. (Bi-Weekly)
9.	2977/2978	Ernakulam-jaipur Marusagar Exp. (Weekly)
10.	2983/2984	Bilaspur-Jaipur Exp. (Weekly)

Long Distance Mail/Express Trains Running without Pantry Car whose journey time is more than 24 hours each way

1.	1013/1014	Coimbatore-Lokmanya Tilak (T) Express
2.	1017/1018	Mumbai-Bangalore Chalukya Express
3.	1027/1028	Dadar-Gorakhpur kashi Express
4.	1035/1036	Mumbai-Mysore Sharabathi Express

1	2	3
5.	1039/1040	Kolhapur-Gondia Maharashtra Express.
6.	1043/1044	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Madurai Exp.
7.	1045/1046	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Bhubaneshwar Exp.
8.	1057/1058	Dadar-Amritsar Express
9.	1067/1068	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Faizabad Saket Express
10.	1071/1072	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Varanasi Kamayani Exp.
11.	1069/1070	Lokmanya Tilak (T) Allahabad Exp.
12.	1093/1094	Chhatrapati Shivaji terminal Mumbai-Varanasi Mahanagari Express.
13.	1097/1098	Pune-Ernakulam Pooma Express
14.	1159/1160	Howrah-Gwalior Chambal Exp.
15.	1181/1182	Howrah-Agra Cantt Chambal Exp.
16.	1405/1406	Vishakapatnam-Kakkinada Manmad Express
17.	1447/1448	Howrah-Jabalpur Shaktipunj Express
18.	1463/1464	Rajkot-Jabalpur Exp.
19.	1465/1466	Rajkot-Jabalpur Exp.
20.	3007/3008	Howrah-Sri Ganganagar Udyan Abha Toofan Express
21.	3009/3010	Howrah-Dehradun Doon Express
22.	3013/3014	Howrah-Dehradun Upasna Express
23.	3019/3020	Howrah-Kathgodam Bagh Express
24.	3025/3026	Howrah-Bhopal Express
25.	3039/3040	Howrah-Delhi Janata Exparess
26.	3049/3050	Howrah-Amritsar Express
27.	3111/3112	Sealdah-Delhi Lal Quila Express
28.	3133/3134	Sealdah-Varanasi Express
29.	3287/3288	Tata nagar-Durg-patna South Bihar Exp.
30.	3289/3290	Rajendra Nagar-Jammu Tawi Archana Exp.
31.	3307/3308	Dhanbad-Firozpur Ganga Sutluj Express
32.	3349/3350	Dhanbad-Ahmedabad Express
33.	3413/3414	Malda Town-Bhiwani Farakka Express
34.	3483/3484	Malda Town-Bhiwani Farakka Express
35.	3447/3448	Bhagalpur Dadar Express

1	2	3
36.	4007/4008	Muzaffarpur-Delhi Sadhbhavana Express
37.	4015/4016	Raxaul-Delhi Sadhbhavana Express
38.	4017/4018	Muzaffarpur-Delhi Sadhbhavana Express
39.	4047/4048	Raxaul-Delhi Satyagraha Express
40.	4265/4266	Varanasi-Dehradun Express
41.	4309/4310	Ujjain-Dehradun Ujjaini Express
42.	4311/4312	Bareilly-Dhujala Hazrat Express
43.	4313/4314	Bareilly-Dadar Express
44.	4317/4318	Indore-Dehradun Express
45.	4649/4650	Darbhanga-Amritsar Sarayu Yamuna Exp.
46.	4673/4674	Darbhanga-Amritsar Shaheed Express
47.	4853/4854	Varanasi-Jodhpur Marudhar Express
48.	4863/4864	Varanasi-Jodhpur Marudhar Express
49.	4707/4708	Bikaner-Bandra Terminal Ranakpur Express
50.	5001/5002	Muzaffarpur-Dehradun Express
51.	5025/5026	Gorakhpur-Lokmanya Tilak Godaan Exp.
52.	5027/5028	Hatia-Gorakhpur Maurya Express
53.	5129/5130	Chapra-Lokmanya Tilak (T) Express
54.	5159/5160	Durg-Chapra Saranath Express
55.	5209/5210	Barauni-Amritsar Jansewa Express
56.	5211/5212	Darbhanga-Amristar Jan Nayak Express
57.	5223/5224	Barauni-Gwalior Mail
58.	5707/5708	Katihar-Amritsar Express
59.	5929/5930	Chennai-Dibrugarh Town Express
60.	6003/6004	Howrah-Chennai Mail
61.	6031/6032	Chennai-Jammu Tawi Andaman Express
62.	6093/6094	Chennai-Lucknow Express
63.	6125/6126	Chennai Egmore Jodhpur Express
64.	6357/6358	Nagarcoil Junction Howrah Gurudev Exp.
65.	6359/6360	Ernakulam Rajendra Nagar Express
66.	6511/6512	Yesvantpur-Bilaspur Wainganga Express

1	2	3
67.	6529/6530	Mumbai-Bangalore Udyan Express
68.	6593/6594	Nanded Bangalore Express
69.	6613/6614	Rajkot-Coimbatore Express
70.	7027/7028	Trivandrum-Hyderbad Express
71.	7045/7046	Howrah-Hyderabad East Coast Express
72.	7479/7480	Howrah-Tirupati Express
73.	8005/8006	Howrah-Koraput Express
74.	8029/8030	Howrah-Lokmanya Tilak (T) Express
75.	8103/8104	Tata Nagar-Amritsar Jallianwala Bagh Exp.
76.	8233/8234	Indore-Bilaspur Narmada Express
77.	8415/8416	Bhubaneshwar-Yesvantpur Express
78.	8561/8562	Vishakapatnam Hazrat Nizamuddin Express
79.	8609/8610	Hatia-Lokmanya Tilak (T) Express
80.	9019/9020	Bandra-Dehradun Express
81.	9023/9024	Mumbai-Firozpur Janta Express
82.	9049/9050	Valsad-Rajendra Nagar Express
83.	9111/9112	Ahmedabad Jammu Tawi Express
84.	9163/9164	Ahmedabad-Faizabad Sabarmati Express
85.	9165/9166	Ahmedabad-Muzaffarpur Sabarmati Exp.
86.	9167/9168	Ahmedabad-Varanasi Sabarmati Express
87.	9263/9264	Porbander-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Express
88.	9265/9266	Okha-Dehradun Uttaranchal Express
89.	9305/9306	Indore-Howrah Shipra Express
90.	9313/9314	Indore-Rajindernagar Express
91.	9569/9570	Okha-Varanasi Express
92.	9943/9944	Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Ahmedabad Fast Pass/Exp.

Statement II

Trains Running with Pantry Cars

Sl.No.	Train no	Name of train
1	2	3
Mail/Express Trains		
1.	0103/0104	Mumbai-Madgoan Mandovi Exp.
2.	0111/0112	Mumbai-Madgoan Konkan Kanya Exp.
3.	1007/1008	Mumbai-Pune Deccan Exp.
4.	1009/1010	Mumbai-Pune Sinhagad Exp.
5.	1015/1016	Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-GKP Kushinagar Exp.
6.	1019/1020	Mumbai-Bhubaneshwar Konark Exp.
7.	1021/1022	Mumbai-Pune Indrayani Exp.

1	2	3
8.	1025/1026	Mumbai-Pune Pragati Exp.
9.	1031/1032	Pune-Varanasi Exp.
10.	1033/1034	Pune-Darbhanga Exp.
11.	1037/1038	Pune-Patna Exp.
12.	1063/1064	Dadar-chennai Exp.
13.	1077/1078	Pune-Jammu Tawi Jhelum Exp.
14.	1081/1082	Mumbai-Kanyakumari Exp.
15.	1401/1402	Mumbai-Manmad Panchavati Exp.
16.	3005/3006	Howrah-Amritsar Exp.
17.	3029/3030	Howrat-Dhanbad Coalfield Exp.
18.	3073/3074	Howrat-Jammu Tawi Himgiri Exp.
19.	3151/3152	Sealdah-Jammu Tawi Exp.
20.	3201/3202	Rajendra Nagar-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Exp.
21.	3317/3318	Howrah-Dhanbad Black Diamond Exp.
22.	3351/3352	Dhanbad/Tata Nagar Alleppey Exp.
23.	4055/4056	Delhi-Dibrugarh Town Brahmaputra Mail
24.	4083/4084	Delhi-New Jalpaiguri/Katihar Mahananda Exp.
25.	4257/4258	New Delhi-Varanasi Kashi-Vishwanath Exp.
26.	4659/4660	New Delhi-Amritsar Exp.
27.	4681/4682	New Delhi-Jalandhar Exp.
28.	5011/5012	Gorakhpur-Trivandrum Raptisagar Exp. (Tri weekly)
29.	5045/5046	Gorakhpur-Okha Exp. (weekly)
30.	5063/5064	Gorakhpur-Bandra Awadh Exp. (4 Days)
31.	5087/5088	Gorakhpur-Jammu Tawi Amarnath Exp. (weekly)
32.	5089/5090	Secundrabad-Gorakhpur Exp. (weekly)
33.	5091/5092	Bangalore-Gorakhpur Express (weekly)
34.	5097/5098	Barauni-Jammu Tawi Exp. (weekly)
35.	5205/5206	Muzafarpur-New Delhi Lichhavi Exp.
36.	5217/5218	Lokmanya Tilak terminus-Muzaffapur Exp (4 Days)
37.	5219/5220	Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Darbhanga Exp. (3 Days)
38.	5221/5222	Ernakulam-Barani Express

1	2	3
39.	5263/5264	Muzaffarpur Bandra Awadh Exp (Tri week)
40.	5604/5605	Guwahati-Tinsukia Lido Intercity Exp.
41.	5609/5610	Guwahati-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Awadh Assam Exp.
42.	5621/5622	Guwahati-New Delhi North East Exp.
43.	5623/5624	Ernakulam Guwahati Exp.
44.	5625/5626	Bangalore-Guwahati Exp.
45.	5627/5628	Trivandrum-Guwahati Exp.
46.	5629/5630	Guwahati-Chennai Exp.
47.	5631/5632	Guwahati-Jodhpur/Bikaner Exp.
48.	5645/5646	Guwahati-Dadar Exp.
49.	5647/5648	Guwahati-Dadar Exp. (Via Malda town)
50.	5651/5652	Guwahati-Jammu Tawi Lohit Exp.
51.	5653/5654	Guwahati-Jammu Tawi Exp. (Weekly)
52.	5657/5658	Sealdah-Guwahati Kanchanjunga Exp.
53.	5959/5960	Howrah-Dibrugarh Town Kamrup Exp.
54.	6009/6010	Chennai-Mumbai Mail
55.	6011/6012	Chennai-Mumbai Exp.
56.	6023/6024	Chennai-Bangalore Exp.
57.	6039/6040	Chennai-Varanasi Ganga Kaviri Exp.
58.	6045/6046	Ahemadabad-Chennai Navjeevan Express
59.	6127/6128	Chennai Egmore-Guruvayur Express
60.	6217/6218	Mysore-Nizamuddin Swama Jayanti Exp.
61.	6301/6302	Shoranur-Trivandrum Venad Exp.
62.	6303/6304	Ernakulam-Trivandrum Vanchinad Exp.
63.	6309/6310	Ernakulam-Patna/Rajendranagar Exp. (weekly)
64.	6317/6318	Kanyakumari-Jammu Tawi Himsagar Exp.
65.	6323/6324	Trivandrum-Howrah Exp. (Bi weekly)
66.	6325/6326	Indore-Trivandrum-Ahilya Nagari Exp. (Weekly)
67.	6327/6328	Trivandrum-Bilaspur Exp. (Bi-weekly)
68.	6331/6332	Trivendrum-Mumbai Exp. (Weekly)
69.	6333/6334	Trivandrum-Hapa Exp. (Weekly)

1	2	3
70.	6335/6336	Gandhidham-Nagercoil Exp. (Weekly)
71.	6337/6338	Ernakulam-Okha Exp. (Bi Weekly)
72.	6339/6340	Nagercoil-Mumbai Exp.
73.	6341/6342	Trivandrum-Ernakulam Intercity Exp.
74.	6345/6346	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Trivandrum Netravati Exp.
75.	6349/6350	Trivandrum-Mangalore Parasuram Exp.
76.	6351/6352	Triupati-Nagercoil Exp.
77.	6553/6354	Mumbai-Tirupati Exp.
78.	6355/6356	Kanyakumari-Howrah Exp.
79.	6501/6502	Ahmedabad-Bangalore Exp.
80.	6505/6506	Bangalore-Gandhidham Exp.
81.	6507/6508	Bangalore-Jodhpur Exp.
82.	6509/6510	Ajmer-Bangalore Exp.
83.	6595/6596	Yesvantpur-Rajendranagar Sangamitra Exp.
84.	6687/6688	Mangalore-Jammu Tawi Navyug Exp.
85.	6803/6804	Howrah-Tiruchchi Exp.
86.	7017/7018	Secunderabad-Rajkot Exp.
87.	7021/7022	Nazammudin-Hyderabad Dakshin Exp.
88.	7029/7030	Ernakulam-Hyderabad Sabari Exp.
89.	7685/7686	Kacheguda-Bangalore Exp.
90.	7617/7618	Mumbai-Nanded Tapovan Exp.
91.	8003/8004	Howrah-Yesvantpur Exp.
92.	8033/8034	Ahmedabad-Howrah Express
93.	8101/8102	Tata/Hatia-Jammu Tawi Muri Exp.
94.	8113/8114	Howrah-Tata Nagar Steel Exp.
95.	8237/8238	Bilaspur-Amritsar Chattisgarh Exp.
96.	8111/8112	Howrah-Sambalpur Ispat Exp.
97.	8401/8402	Puri-Okha Exp.
98.	8403/8404	Puri-Ahmedabad Exp.
99.	8405/8406	Puri-Ahmedabad Exp.
100.	8407/8408	Bhubaneshwar-Nizammuddin Hirskud Exp.

1	2	3
101.	8475/8476	Puri-New Delhi Neelachal Exp.
102.	8477/8478	Nizammuddin-Puri Kalinga Utkal Exp.
103.	8603/8604	Hatia-Delhi Swarna Jayanthi Exp.
104.	8605/8606	Hatia-Delhi Jharkhand Swarna Jay. Exp.
105.	9007/9008	Bandra Terminus-Jaipur Aravali Exp.
106.	9011/9012	Mumbai Central-Ahemadabad Gujarat Exp.
107.	9021/9022	Mumbai Central-Surat Flying Ranee Exp.
108.	9045/9046	Surat-Varanasi Tapti Ganga Exp.
109.	9047/9048	Surat-Bhagalpur Tapti Ganga Exp.
110.	9367/9368	Indore-Jammu Tawi Malwa Exp.
111.	9769/9770	Jaipur-Purna Exp.
112.	9775/9776	Jaipur-Bangalore Exp.
	Super Fast Trains:	
1.	2101/2102	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Howrah Janeshwari Exp.
2.	2103/2104	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Nagpur Samarasta Exp.
3.	2123/2124	Mumbai-Pune Deccan Queen Exp.
4.	2129/2130	Pune-Howrah Azad Hind Exp.
5.	2131/2132	Pune-Napur Express
6.	2133/2134	Mumbai-Lucknow Exp.
7.	2137/2138	Mumbai-Firozpur Punjab Mail
8.	2141/2142	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Rajender Nagar Exp.
9.	2165/2166	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Varanasi Exp.
10.	2303/2304	New Delhi-Howrah Poorva Exp.-*Via* Patna
11.	2307/2308	Howrah-Jodhpur/Bikaner Exp.
12.	2311/2312	Howrah-Kalka Mail
13.	2321/2322	Howrah-Mumbai Mail
14.	2381/2382	Howrah-New Delhi Poorva Exp.-*Via* Gaya
15.	2391/2392	New Delhi-Patna Magadh Exp.
16.	2393/2394	Patna-New Delhi Sampoorna Krani Exp.
17.	2401/2402	New Delhi-Patna Shramjivi Exp.
18.	2419/2420	New Delhi-Lucknow Gomti Exp.

1	2	3
19.	2471/2472	Mumbai Central-Jammu Tawi Swaraj Exp.
20.	2473/2474	Ahemadabad-Jammu Tawi Sarvodaya Exp.
21.	2475/2476	Hapa-Jammu Tawi Exp.
22.	2477/2478	Jamnagar-Jammu Tawi Exp.
23.	2553/2554	Barauni-New Delhi Vaishali Exp.
24.	2557/2558	Delhi-Muzaffarpur Sapt Kranti Exp.
25.	2559/2560	New Delhi-Varanasi Shiv Ganga Exp.
26.	2605/2606	Chennai Egmore-Tiruchchi Pallavan Exp.
27.	2607/2608	Chennai-Bangalore Lalbagh Exp.
28.	2615/2616	Chennai-New Delhi Grand Trunk Exp.
29.	2617/2618	Ernakulam-Nizammuddin Mangala Exp.
30.	2621/2622	Chennai-New Delhi Tamil Nadu Exp.
31.	2625/2626	Trivandrum-New Delhi Kerala Exp.
32.	2627/2628	Bangalore-New Delhi Karnataka Exp.
33.	2635/2636	Chennai-Madhurai Vaigai Exp.
34.	2639/2640	Chennai-Bangalore Brindavan Exp.
35.	2641/2642	Nizammuddin-Kanyakumari Thirukkural Exp.
36.	2643/2644	Trivandrum-Nizamuddin Exp. (Weekly)
37.	2675/2676	Coimbatore-Chennai Kovai Exp.
38.	2677/2678	Bangalore-Coimbatore Intercity Exp.
39.	2679/2680	Chennai-Coimbatore Intercity Exp.
40.	2703/2704	Secundrabad-Howrah Faluknuma Exp.
41.	2711/2712	Vijayawada-Chennai Pinakini Exp.
42.	2713/2714	Secundrabad-Vijayawada Satvahana Exp.
43.	2715/2716	Nanded-Amritsar Sachkhand Exp.
44.	2717/2718	Vishakhapatnam-Vijayawada Ratnachal Exp.
45.	2723/2724	Hyderabad-New Delhi A.P. Exp.
46.	2779/2780	Nizammuddin-Vasco De Gama Goa Exp.
47.	2801/2802	Nizammuddin-Puri Purshottam Exp.
48.	2803/2804	Vishakhapatnam-Nizammuddin Swarna Jayanti Exp.
49.	2807/2808	Vishakhapatnam-Nizammuddin Samata Exp.

1	2	3
50.	2809/2810	Mumbai-Howrah Mail
51.	2815/2816	Puri-New Delhi Exp.
52.	2821/2822	Bhubaneshwar-Howrah Dhauli Exp.
53.	2841/2842	Howrah-Chennai-Coromandal Exp.
54.	2859/2860	Mumbai-Howrah Gitaniali Exp.
55.	2903/2904	Mumbai Central-Amritsar Golden Temple Mail
56.	2925/2926	Bandra-Amritsar/Kalka Paschim Exp.
57.	2933/2934	Mumbai Central-Ahmedabad Karnavati Exp.
58.	2955/2956	Mumbai Central-Jaipur Exp.
59.	2967/2968	Jaipur-Chennai Exp.
60.	2979/2980	Bandra-Jaipur Express.
	Rajdhani/Shatabdi Trains	
1.	2305/2306	New Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani Exp.-Via Patna
2.	2309/2310	New Delhi-Patna Rajdhani Exp.
3.	2313/2314	New Delhi-Sealdah Rajdhani Exp.
4.	2301/2302	New Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani Exp.-Via Gaya
5.	2421/2422	New Delhi-Bhubaneshwar Rajdhani Exp.
6.	2429/2430	New Delhi-Bangalore Rajdhani
7.	2423/2424	Dibrugarh Town/Guwahati-New Delhi Rajdhani
8.	2435/2436	Dibrugarh Town/Guwahati-New Delhi Rajdhani Exp.
9.	2437/2438	Secundrabad-Nizammuddin Rajdhani Exp.
10.	2439/2440	New Delhi-Ranchi Rajdhani Exp.
11.	2441/2442	Bilaspur-New Delhi Rajdhani Exp.
12.	2443/2444	Bhubaneshwar-New Delhi Rajdhani Exp.
13.	2425/2426	New Delhi-Jammu Tawi RaJdhani Exp. (Weekly)
14.	2431/2432	Nizammuddin-Trivandrum Rajdhani Exp.
15.	2433/2434	Nizammuddin-Chennai Rajdhani Exp.
16.	2957/2958	Ahmedabad-New Delhi Rajdhani Exp.
17.	2951/2952	New Delhi-Mumbai Central Rajdhani Exp.
18.	2953/2954	New Delhi-Mumbai Central A.K. Rajdhani Exp.

1	2	3
	Shatabdi/Jan Shatabadi Trains with Mini Pantry	
1.	2001/2002	New Delhi-Bhopal Shatabadi Exp.
2.	2027/2028	Mumbai-Pune Shatabdi Exp.
3.	2019/2020	Howrah-Ranchi Shatabdi Exp.
4.	241/242	Kalka-Shimla Shivalik Exp.
5.	2003/2004	Lucknow-New Delhi Shatabdi Exp. (6 days)
6.	2005/2006	New Delhi-Kalka Shatabdi Exp. (6 days)
7.	2011/2012	New Delhi-Chandigarh Shatabdi Exp.
8.	2013/2014	New Delhi-Amritsar Shatabadi Exp.
9.	2015/2016	New Delhi-Ajmer Shatabadi Exp.
10.	2017/2018	New Delhi-Dehradun Shatabdi Exp.
11.	2029/2030	Amritsar-New Delhi Swarna Shatabdi Exp.
12.	2031/2032	Amritsar-New Delhi Shatabdi Exp. (Reverse)
13.	2035/2036	Lucknow-New Delhi Shatabdi Exp. (Weekly)
14.	2037/2038	New Delhi-Kalka Shatabdi Exp. (Weekly)
15.	2007/2008	Chennai-Mysore Shatabdi Exp.
16.	2009/2010	Mumbai Central-Ahmedabad Shatabdi Exp.
17.	2051/2052	Madgaon-Lokmanya Tilak (T) Jan Shatabdi
18.	2061/2062	Habibganj-Jabalpur Jan Shatabdi
19.	2023/2024	Patna-Howrah Jan Shatabdi Exp.
20.	2065/2066	Howrah-Malda Town Jan Shatabdi
21.	2053/2054	Varanasi-Lucknow Jan Shatabdi
22.	2055/2056	New Delhi-Dehradun Jan Shatabdi
23.	2057/2058	New Delhi-Chandigarh Jan Shatabdi
24.	2067/2068	Guwahati-Dimapur Jan Shatabdi
25.	2075/2076	Ernakulam-Trivandrum Jan Shatabdi
26.	2077/2078	Chennai-Vijayawada Jan Shatabdi
27.	2079/2080	Bangalore-Hubli Jan Shatabdi
28.	2083/2084	Thanjavur-Coimbatore Jan Shatabdi
29.	2021/2022	Tata Nagar-Howrah Jan Shatabdi
30.	2069/2070	Tata Nagar-Ranchi Jan Shatabdi

1	2	3
31.	2073/2074	Howrah-Bhubaneshwar Jan Shatabdi
32.	2059/2060	Kota-Nizammuddin Jan Shatabdi
33.	2081/2082	Ahmedabad-New Bhuj Jan Shatabdi
Pantry Car Facility provided during 2004-05		
1.	3413/3414 3483/3484	Malda Town-Bhiwani Farakka Express.
2.	6345/6346	Lokmanya Tilak (T)-Trivandrum-Netravati Express
3.	7091/7092	Secunderabad-Rajendranagar Express
4.	2649/2650	2649/2650 Yesvantpur-Nizamuddin-Sampark Kranti Express
5.	2391/2392	Rajgir/Patna-New Delhi Shramjeevi Express.

Jobless Pilots

1499. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased o state:

(a) whether many of the pilots in the country are jobless;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to provide jobs to the pilots?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVAIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issues licences/ratings to pilots after ascertaining the requirements as laid down in Aircraft Rules, 1937. DGCA does not maintain any record regarding jobless pilots.

[Translation]

Complimentary Passes to Employees

1500. SHRI RAJENDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Air India and Indian Airlines issue complimentary passes to their employees and other important people of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of such passes issued during each of the last three years by both the airlines separately alongwith the value of such passes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. Air India and Indian Airlines issue free/concessional air passages to the employees and their family members on sectors operated by them in terms of their conditions of service. These passages are issued on 'subject-to-load basis' and the accepted for travel in the aircraft only after accommodating revenue-paying passengers. As per the industry practice, free/complimentary tickets are normally issued by Airlines in its commercial interest to tour promoters, travel writers, media personnel, important commercial contacts and prominent personalities to encourage and promote travel in their flights and to help in image building of the company.

The number of free/complimentary tickets issued by Indian Airlines and Air India during the last three years are as under:

Year	No. of tickets issued	
	Indian Airlines	Air India
2001-02	855	1434
2002-03	678	1051
2003-04	507	1150

Handicapped Rehabilitation Centres

1501. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of handicapped rehabilitation centers in the country, State/UT-wise and location-wise;

(b) the financial assistance allotted/released to these rehabilitation centers during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;

(c) the amount spent out of the total financial assistance provided during the said period, Sate/UT-wise;

(d) whether the Government has any proposal to open new rehabilitation centers for handicapped in Usmanabad District in Maharashtra and in other States/ UTs; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) There are 133 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRC) sanctioned through out the country. A list of DDRCs State-wise and location-wise is placed at statement-I.

(b) and (c) The information regarding financial assistance released to District Disability Rehabilitation Centres both grant provided and expenditure incurred for the last three years and the current year is at statement-II

(d) and (e) According to the programme new DDRCs are opened to cover unserved districts in a phased manner. There is no proposal to open a DDRC in Usmanabad district in Maharashtra in the current year.

Statement I

State-wise details of sanctioned District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs)

	Andhra Pradesh		**Assam**
1.	Anantpur	1.	Dibrugarh
2.	Vishakhapatnam	2.	North Kachhar (Silchar)
3.	Karimnagar	3.	Sunitpur (Tejpur)

	Arunachal Pradesh		**Bihar**
1.	Lower Subansari (Inanagar)	1.	Banka
		2.	Darbhanga
		3.	Jehanabad
		4.	Kishanganj
		5.	Muzzafarpur
		6.	Nalanda
		7.	Nawada
		8.	Samastipur
		9.	Saran
		10.	Gaya
	Chhattisgarh		**Gujarat**
1.	Basta,	1.	Ahmedabad
2.	Durg	2.	Anand
3.	Jashpur	3.	Bhavnagar
4.	Raigarh	4.	Dohad (Nadiad)
5.	Raipur	5.	Jamnagar
6.	Rajnandgaon	6.	Junagarh
		7.	Rajkot
		8.	Surat
		9.	Surendarnagar
		10.	Vadodara
	Goa		**Haryana**
1.	North Goa (Panaji)	1.	Hissar
		2.	Rohtak
		3.	Kurukshetra
		4.	Sonepat
	Himachal Pradesh		**Jammu & Kashmir**
1.	Chamba	1.	Anantnag
2.	Mandi	2.	Leh
3.	Shimla	3.	Udhampur

Jharkhand

1. Dumka
2. East Singhbhun (Jameshedpur)
3. Hazaribag
4. Ranchi

Kerala

1. Kozhikode
2. Thiruvananthapuram
3. Thrissur

Meghalaya

1. East Khasi Hill (Shillong)

Maharashtra

1. Latur
2. Buldana
3. Vardha
4. Aurangabad
5. Kolhapur
6. Sindhudurg
7. Mahim

Nagaland

1. Dimapur

Karnataka

1. Mandya
2. Bellary
3. South Kannada (Mangalore)
4. Belgaum
5. Gulbarga
6. Tumkur

Mizoram

1. Aizwal

Manipur

1. Imphal East (Imphal)

Madhya Pradesh

1. Balaghat
2. Damoh
3. Dewas
4. Gwalior
5. Indore
6. Jhabua
7. Khandwa
8. Khargaon
9. Mandsaur
10. Neemuch (Jawad)
11. Rajgarh
12. Ratlam (Alote)
13. Rewa
14. Sagar
15. Satna
16. Shahjapur (Agar)
17. Ujjain

Orissa

1. Kalahandi
2. Kandhamal (Phulbani)
3. Korapur
4. Mayurbhanj
5. Sambalpur

Punjab

1. Amritsar
2. Ferozpur
3. Patiala
4. Sangrur

Sikkim

1. East Sikkim (Gangtok)

Tamil Nadu

1. Kanyakumari
2. Madurai
3. Selam
4. Vellore
5. Virudhunagar
6. Thoothukudi

Uttaranchal

1. Almorah
2. Chamoli
3. Haridwar
4. Tehri Garwal

Andaman & Nicobar Island

1. Port Blair

Daman & Diu

1. Diu

Rajasthan

1. Ajmer
2. Bikaner
3. Jaisalmer
4. Jhunjhunu
5. Jodhpur
6. Tonk
7. Udaipur

Tripura

1. West Tripura (Agartala)

Uttar Pradesh

1. Agra
2. Allahabad
3. Ambedkarnagar
4. Balia
5. Farrukhabad
6. Gonda
7. Gorakhpur
8. Jhansi
9. Mau
10. Meerut
11. Pilibhit
12. Varanasi

West Bengal

1. Jalpaiguri
2. Murshidabad
3. North 24 Parganas
4. South Dinajpur

Dadra & Nagar Haveli

1. Silvasa

Pondicherry

1. Pondichary

Statement II

Grant Released and Expenditure incurred in DDRCs

(Amt. Rs. in lakh)

Name of DDRC	2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05		Total	Total
	Grant	Exp.	Grant	Exp.	Grant	Exp	Grant	Exp.	Grant	Exp
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DDRC Alote			0.16	0.16	12.68	12.68	8.5	8.5	21.34	64.02
DDRC Agar					12.11	12.11	5.5	5.5	17.61	52.83
DDRC Agartala	3.39	3.39	1.35	1.35	3.78	3.78	1.62	1.62	10.14	30.42
DDRC Agra		2.63		2.42	3	2.46			3	13.51
DDRC Ahmedabad	5.15	2.81	11.1	3.45	3.25	6.29			19.5	51.55
DDRC Aizwal	1.78	2.5	3.53	1.87					5.31	14.99
DDRC Allahabad	4.39	4.39	7.8	7.8	7.86	7.86			20.05	60.15
DDRC Almora	2.68	2.68	1.49	1.49	1.39	1.39			5.56	16.68
DDRC Ambedkarnagar					2.84	2.84			2.84	8.52
DDRC Anantapur	5		5.45	3.05		2.32		5	20.82	
DDRC Anantnag					2.3	2.3			2.3	6.9
DDRC Aurangabad	4.76	4.76	1.8	1.8	2.85	2.85	1.26	1.26	10.67	31.01
DDRC Balaghat			5			2.52		0.87	5	13.39
DDRC Ballia	6.1	5.48	4.05	3.79	0	4.46			10.15	34.03
DDRC Banka	0.37	0.37	3.98	3.98	4.34	4.34	2.04	2.04	10.73	32.19
DDRC Bastar					10	5	7		17	39
DDRC Belgaum	8	5.05	5	5.47	8	7.28		1.72	21	61.52
DDRC Bellary	10	4.81		7.02	8	7.72		2.01	18	57.56
DDRC Bikaner			6.5						6.5	13
DDRC Buladana	0.74	0.74	6.16	6.16	5.28	5.28	0		12.18	36.54
DDRC Dakshin Dinajpur	6.05	6.05	2.74	2.74	4.89	4.89	2.44	2.44	16.12	48.36
DDRC Damoh					10	5	7		17	39

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DDRC Darbhanga	0.78	0.78	5.89	5.89	3.77	3.77			10.44	31.32
DDRC Dewas					10	10.76	7		17	44.76
DDRC Dharamshala	3.13	3.13	2.63	2.63	3.7	3.7			9.46	28.38
DDRC Dibrugarh	2.52	2.52	1.68	1.68	2.05	2.05	1.05	1.05	7.3	21.9
DDRC Dimapur	5.52	5.52	10.34	10.34	6.18	6.18			22.04	66.12
DDRC Diu		3.1	3.8	2.34	5	3.41			8.8	26.45
DDRC Dumka	0.72	0.72	3.66	3.66	1.87	1.87			6.25	18.75
DDRC Durg	5					3.64		0.69	5	14.33
DDRC Farrukhabad	3.36	3.46	2.87	2.87	2.57	2.57	1.18	1.18	10.08	30.24
DDRC Ferozepur	9.49	9.49	5.72	5.72	5.71	5.71	2.39	2.39	23.31	69.93
DDRC Gangtok	11.88	11.88	5.59	5.59	5.45	5.45	0		22.92	68.76
DDRC Gauhati									0	0
DDRC Gaya	3.79	3.79	3.18	3.18	1.69	1.69			8.66	25.98
DDRC Goa	9.56	9.56	5.08	5.08	1.86	1.86	1.5	1.5	18	54
DDRC Gonda	5	0.99	4.6	4.12	2.5	6.89			12.1	36.2
DDRC Gorakhpur	7	4.59		5.68	3.5	6.22			16.5	49.49
DDRC Gulbarga	7	6.98	10	5.2	9	6	7	0	33	84.18
DDRC Gwailor	5.91	5.91	6.68	6.68	5.84	5.84			18.43	55.29
DDRC Haridwar	3.16	3.16	2.54	2.54	1.35	1.35			7.05	21.15
DDRC Hazaribagh	3.49	3.49	4.77	4.77	5.9	5.9	2.58	2.58	16.74	50.22
DDRC Hissar				3					3	6
DDRC Imphal	2.45	2.45	2.19	2.19	4.51	4.51	2.1	2.1	11.25	33.75
DDRC Indore	5.07	5.07	3.85	3.85	6.05	6.05	0	0	14.97	44.91
DDRC Itanagar	7.31	7.31	1.81	1.81	2.1	2.1	1.06	1.06	12.28	36.84
DDRC Jalpaiguri	10.05	10.05	5.1	5.1	2	2	3	3	20.15	60.45
DDRC Jamnagar	5.49	5.49	5.57	5.57	8	8	5	5	24.06	72.18

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DDRC Jamshedpur			0.68	0.68	4.73	4.73	1.89	1.89	7.3	21.9
DDRC Jashpur					10	5	7		17	39
DDRC Jawad					12.88	12.88			12.88	38.64
DDRC Jehanabad					0.82	0.82		0.82	2.46	
DDRC Jhabua	6.37	6.37	487	4.87	8.42	8.42			19.66	58.98
DDRC Jhansi	6.5	6.5	6.19	6.19	6.95	6.95	3.83	3.83	23.47	70.41
DDRC Jhunjhunu			6.5						6.5	13
DDRC Jodhpur			6.5						6.5	13
DDRC Junagarh							3	3	3	9
DDRC Kalahandi	2	3.68		0.07		0.14			2	7.89
DDRC Kanyakumari					1.6				1.6	3.2
DDRC Karavatti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
DDRC Karimnagar					10	10.19	7		17	44.19
DDRC Kishanganj	0.16	0.16	1.92	1.92	4.83	4.83	2.27	2.27	9.18	27.54
DDRC Kolhapur	9.73	9.73	11.18	11.18	3.31	3.31	0		24.22	72.66
DDRC Koraput	6.4	6.4	8.07	8.07	4.96	4.96	0	0	19.43	58.29
DDRC Kozhikode	8	11.19	10	8	10	7.5	7		35	96.69
DDRC Krishna									0	0
DDRC Kurukshetra	5		0						5	10
DDRC Latur	2.5	5.73	7	5.78	5	6.03			14.5	46.54
DDRC Leh			6.11	6.11	1.45	1.45			7.56	22.68
DDRC Madurai	8	7.88	10	7.01	10	8.04	7	2.7	35	95.63
DDRC Madyamgram					2.08	2.08			2.08	6.24
DDRC Mahim					12.55	12.55			12.55	37.65
DDRC Mandsaur					11.98	11.98	8.5	8.5	20.48	61.44
DDRC Mandya					10	10.71	7		17	44.71

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DDRC Mangalore	8	4.81	5	5.38	8	6.74		1.52	21	60.45
DDRC Mau	7	3.9	4.8	4.85	3.5	6.32			15.3	45.67
DDRC Mayurbhanj	2	3.73	0	0.23	6.2	4.9	0	0	8.2	25.26
DDRC Meerut	0	2.75	0	2.78	4	2.06	0	0	4	15.59
DDRC Murshidabad	0	0	5.28	5.28	4.58	4.58	0		9.86	29.58
DDRC Muzafarpur	7.86	7.86	6.2	6.2	6.54	6.54	1.84	1.84	22.44	67.32
DDRC Nawada	6.97	6.97	4.93	4.93	5.13	5.13	1.63	1.63	18.66	55.98
DDRC Patiala	5	4.14	6	4.64	0	4.12			11	34.9
DDRC Phulbani	7.94	7.94	6.41	6.41	6.61	6.61			20.96	62.88
DDRC Pilibhit	12.25	12.25	6.83	6.83	8.42	8.42	3.54	3.54	31.04	93.12
DDRC Pondicherry			4.5						4.5	9
DDRC Port Blair					1	1			1	3
DDRC Rajgarh	6.49	6.49	4.52	4.52	8.22	8.22			19.23	57.69
DDRC Raipur	5	0.12		1.41		0.63		0.38	5	12.54
DDRC Rajgarh	5.73	5.73	5.4	5.4	8.96	8.96			20.09	60.27
DDRC Rajkot	5.49	5.49	5.57	5.57	7.6	7.6	5	5	23.66	70.98
DDRC Ranchi	2.28	2.28	10.26	10.26	6.14	6.14			18.68	56.04
DDRC Rewa	5	2.12	5	2.85		4.17	5	2.41	15	41.55
DDRC Rohtak	5					4.81		1.02	5	15.83
DDRC Sagar	6.39	6.39	5.94	5.94	7.63	7.63			19.96	59.88
DDRC Samastipur					0.1	0.1			0.1	0.3
DDRC Sambalpur	2	2.21		0.05		0.05			2	6.31
DDRC Sangrur					1.88	1.88			1.88	5.64
DDRC Saran (Chapra)	2.26	2.26	5.02	5.02	7.08	7.08			14.36	43.08
DDRC Satna					10	5	7		17	39
DDRC Selam	1.27	1.27	3.78	3.78	2.44	2.44	1.74	1.74	9.23	27.69

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
DDRC Shillong	5.75	5.75	11.84	11.84	2.57	2.57			20.16	60.48
DDRC Shimla	0	1.12	7.1	2.42	3.21	4.89			10.38	29
DDRC Silchar	2.55	2.55	5.01	5.01	4.99	4.99	2.3	2.3	14.85	44.55
DDRC Silvasa	7	2.54	4.5	3.91	5	4.37			16.5	43.82
DDRC Sindhdurg	0.74	0.74	3.43	3.43	3.88	3.88	1.44	1.44	9.49	28.47
DDRC Sonipat	5	0.05	0	1.05					5	11.1
DDRC Surat	10.14	10.14	10.1	10.1	5.61	5.61	0		25.85	77.55
DDRC Tehri	3.44	3.44	2.01	2.01	2.04	2.04			7.49	22.47
DDRC Tezpur	1	1	6.63	6.63	9.55	9.55			17.18	51.54
DDRC Thiruvananthapuram	7	9.77	10	6	9	7.37	7	0.17	33	89.31
DDRC Thoothukudi	7	5.38	10	6	9	5.32	7	2	33	84.7
DDRC Thrissur	7	8.19	10	8	9	6.36	7	1	33	89.55
DDRC Tumkur	4	4.79	5	6.99	9.4	7.62		1	18.4	57.2
DDRC Udaipur	0	2.08	10.29	2.61	0	1.86			10.29	27.13
DDRC Udhampur			5.82	5.82	3.94	3.94			9.76	29.28
DDRC Ujjain	6	12.17	10	9	10	7.5	7	2.5	33	97.17
DDRC Vadodra	4.54	2.45	7.04	1.84	10.06	10.06			21.64	57.63
DDRC Varanasi	5	0.97	4.6	3.83	2.5	7.2			12.1	36.2
DDRC Vellore		4.75							0	4.75
DDRC Virudhnagar	2.74	2.74	2.07	2.07	2.11	2.11	1.27	1.27	8.19	24.57
DDRC Vishakhapatnam	5	1.62							5	11.62
DDRC Wardha	7	7.17	10	5	9	6.08	7		33	84.25
Total	425.75	396.31	474.11	404.81	562.62	557.91	189.47	99.46	1651.95	4762.39

Note.: Statement of 122 DDRCs only.

[English]

Handing over of Amguri Gas Field

1502. SHRI KIRIP CHALIHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has handed over Amguri Gas field in Assam to a Canadian firm;

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

(c) whether Government is aware of large scale agitations by people all over the State against this decision;

(d) whether the Government intends to review its decision in this regard in view of public protest and anticipated unrest; and

(e) if so, details thereof, and if not reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) A consortium comprising M/s. Assam Company Ltd. & M/s. Joshi Technology Limited signed a production sharing contract with the Government of India on 23rd February, 2001, for Amguri field in Assam under the second round of offers for the development of small-sized discovered fields. Consequent upon approval by the Government in 2004 of the proposal for change of Operator and assignment of Participating Interest in the Amguri field, the revised Participating Interest in the field are M/s. Canoro Resources Limited (60%) along with Operatorship, and M/s. Assam Company Limited (40%). The field was handed over to M/s. Cancoro Resources Limited by the Assam asset of ONGC on the 29th October, 2004 in accordance with terms and conditions of the PSC.

(c) to (e) Government have received certain representations against handing over of the field to the consortium led by a foreign company. Since there is a legal contract between the Government and the consortium and the field has been handed over to the consortium after grant of the Petroleum Mining Lease by the assam Government, it may not be appropriate to renege from the contract, especially when the Government is making efforts to attract investment for exploration of oil and gas to enhance the energy security of the country in keeping with the Energy Security Sector of the National Common Minimum Programme.

Telecasting of Kashir Channel

1503. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria and guidelines for telecasting regional Doordarshan Kendra's programmes by the cable operators in the county;

(b) whether Kashir channel of Doordarshan Srinagar is not being telecast by the cable operators in the country especially in Delhi; and

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

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) As per the provisions of Section 8 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, the cable operators are requirod to retransmit atleast two DD terrestrial channels and one regional channel of a State in the prime band, in satellite mode. The Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) has notified DD-I (National Channel) and DD News besides one regional channel in this regard. For Delhi and the Hindi language States, DD Bharati has been notified as the regional channel. However, DD Kashir has been notified as regional channel to be telecast for the State of Jammu & Kashmir.

Delay in Introduction of Sampark Kranti Express

1504. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH:
SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether introduction of Sampark Kranti Express in different parts of the country is getting delayed;

(b) if so, the cause of delay and time by which these trains are likely to be introduced;

(c) whether sufficient coaches are not available to start these trains;

(d) whether these trains are scheduled to take same time as other express trains take to travel a particular destination;

(e) if so, whether the Railways propose to reschedule these trains so that they can reach their destination in shorter time; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) No, Sir. 5 out of 18 Sampark Kranti Express trains have already been introduced. Remaining Sampark Kranti Express trains will be introduced during the current financial year.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Gauge Conversion in Rajasthan

1505. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the rail routes targeted for gauge conversion and for new construction in Rajasthan during the tenth five year plan;

(b) the details of the progress made so far by the Government; and

(c) the expenditure incurred so far on these construction works along with the purposes on which it has been incurred?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The details of ongoing gauge conversion and for new rail lines in Rajasthan which are likely to be completed during 10th Plan are as under:-

(Rupees in crore)

Sl.No.	Name of Project	Anticipated cost	Actual expenditure upto March 2004	Budget outlay 2004-05	Progress
1.	Ajmer-Chittaurgarh Udaipur gauge conversion	455.18	88.00	41.55	In the first phase, gauge conversion of Chittaurgarh-Udaipur has been taken up and is targeted for completion during 2004-05. The work is in full swing. The tenders for track linking are under finalization. The work of Ajmer-Chittaurgarh section has also been taken up where earthwork and major/minor bridges are in progress. Ajmer-Chittaurgarh is likely to be completed during 2006-07.
2	Agra Fort-Bandikui gauge conversion	175.03	113.78	40.00	Gauge conversion of Bandikui Bharatpur has been completed and opened for traffic. The work of gauge conversion of Bandikui-Agra Fort is targeted for completion during 2004-05.
3.	Kolayat-Phalodi New line	163.93	15.55	81.00 (Funds from Ministry of Defence)	This project is being funded by Ministry of Defence and is targeted for completion during 2005-06. Earth work, ballast supply and construction of bridges are in progress.

[English]

Adoption Procedure

1506. SHRI A.K. MOORTHY:
SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT is be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that adoption procedure is cumbersome and needs simplifications

(b) whether the Muslims, Christians and Parsis cannot 'legally' adopt a child in the country

(c) if so, the facts thereof; and

(d) the steps proposed for enacting legal standing and rights as 'legal parents' on adoption for non-Hindus and also to simplify the adoption procedure to encourage it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) The details procedure for adoption has been laid down in the Guidelines for In-country Adoption, 2004 [for domestic adoptions] and in the Revised Guidelines of Adoption of Indian Children, 1995, for inter-country adoptions. These guidelines are aimed at streamlining the procedure for adoption and bringing uniformity across the country.

(b) to (d) the personal laws of Muslims, Christians and Parsis do not specifically cover aspects relating to adoption. However, under Section 41 of the Juvenile Justice [Care and Protection of Children] Act, 2000, an orphaned, abandoned, neglected or abused child can be adopted by an eligible parent as per the procedure laid down in this regard.

[English]

Promotion of Art and Sculpture

1507. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated any scheme for promotion of art and sculpture;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which it is likely to encourage international trade of art and sculpture?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Promotion of art is a major responsibility of the Ministry of Culture. The Museums, Libraries, Akademies and other institutions under the Ministry work towards the promotion of art and culture. As regards schemes for promoting sculpture, Lalit Kala Akademi encourages Sculptors by providing facilities and recognizing talents. The scholarship schemes of the Ministry of Culture also encourage Sculptors. Under the Zonal Cultural Centres local Craftsmen and provided encouragement and opportunities. The National Gallery of Modern Art also acquires sculptures from major artists. Our sculptures are taken out during major exhibitions held abroad. However, this Ministry is not dealing with the trade of art and sculpture.

[English]

Provision of Goods Rakes for Hubli Railway Division

1508. SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the number of goods rakes being provided to the Hubli Railway Division. S.W.R. Zone for transportation of Manganese Ore from Bellary to Vasco;

(b) whether the number of rakes being provided are enough to meet the demand and carry the required quantity of Manganese Ore;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) if so, the action taken to meet the demand for additional rakes;

(e) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that this shortage of rakes has not only led to shortfall in the revenues but also to corruption in the Railways; and

(f) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Presently, no Manganese Ore is being loaded to Vasco (Goa).

(b) to (f) There is no demand for movement of Manganese Ore to Goa.

Encroachment on Railway Land

1509. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether C&AG in its report No. 6 of 2004 (Railways)—para 6.3.1 has brought out that the Railway administration has failed in protecting its land valuing Rs. 49.28 crore from encroachments and non-recovery of its due of Rs. 0.93 crore from the sidings owners;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereon and the steps taken to remove the unauthorised occupation and to recover the dues from the sidings owner; and

(c) the area of railway land under unauthorised encroachments falling under the jurisdiction of Northern Railway and steps taken/to be taken to get the same vacated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) Railways have taken up the eviction of said encroachments as per the provisions of the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. However, the eviction proceedings suffered setback due to Court cases, and lack of adequate cooperation from the local administration.

(c) The total area of Railway land under encroachments falling under the jurisdiction of Northern Railway is approximately 1155.71 hectare. Railways are engaged in a continuous exercise to free their land from encroachments as per the provisions of the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971 and the Railways Act, 1989.

Rail Projects from Gujarat and Maharashtra

1510. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:
SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the railway projects received from Gujarat and Maharashtra during each of the last three years;

(b) the action taken on proposal for each project;

(c) the details of the survey conducted during the said period;

(d) the details of the work done in respect of improvement and expansion of rail network in Gujarat and Maharashtra during the said period;

(e) the expenditure incurred under this head during the said period;

(f) the reasons for slow progress in execution of these projects; and

(g) the provisions made by the Government for completion of rail projects in time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (g) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[Translation]

Withdrawal of Coaches from Darjeeling Mail

1511. SHRIMATI MINATI SEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways is planning to withdraw two coaches of Haldibari from Darjeeling Mail via Jalpaiguri;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the cancellation of the two coaches will cause enough inconvenience to the passengers in undertaking journeys to the intervening stations;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to review the matter; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Discrimination at Work with Woman Journalists

1512. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the study conducted by Press Trust of India (PTI) revealed in its report that the women journalists are constantly battling discrimination at work place in terms of salary, promotions, amenities, benefits, areas of work allotted and sexual harassment; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to overcome the situation?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The Government is not aware of any study in this regard by the Press Trust of India (PTI) but have received a report on the Status of Women Journalists in India brought out by the National Commission for Women.

Misappropriation of Kargil Fund

1513. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the misappropriation of funds meant for Kargil martyrs;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to institute a judicial enquiry into this fraud so as to bring out the truth;

(c) if so, the time by when it is likely to be set up; and

(d) If not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No misappropriation of funds meant for Kargil martyrs has been reported. All funds held by the Services are properly accounted for and regularly audited.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) Not applicable.

(d) Not applicable.

Expenditure on Advertisements by HPCL, Delhi Branch

1514. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL:
SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA:

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

(a) the total amount spent on advertisement by the Delhi Branch of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited during the last three years;

(b) whether all the contractors were registered with HPCL, Delhi;

(c) whether unregistered contractors were also given contracts;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reasons for giving contracts of advertisement to unregistered contractors?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The total amount spent by Hindustan Petrolum Corportion Limited (HPCL)'s Delhi Region during the last three years (2001-02 to 2003-04) is Rs. 51.78 lakhs.

(b) Advertisement contracts were given to only registered and empanelled agencies of HPCL.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Sanctioning of Projects in Tenth Five Year Plan

1515. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL:
SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO:
SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:
SHRI ILYAS AZMI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of projects sanctioned for development of Civil Aviation in each States during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) the projects on which work has already been started and whether their progress is as per the schedule;

(c) if not, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to complete these projects within time; and

(d) the extent of success achieved by the Government till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) Various projects included in the Tenth Five Year Plan are as under: (i) construction, strengthening of runways at Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), Gaya (Bihar), Trivandrum (Kerala), Mumbai (Maharashtra), Coimbatore, Madurai and Trichy (Tamil Nadu), Lucknow and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Kolkata (West Bengal) (ii) extension and construction of new runway at Hyderabad and Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Silchar (Assam), Rajkot (Gujarat), Kangra & Kullu (Himachal Pradesh), Jammu (J&K), Mangalore (Karnataka), Bhopal, Khajuraho and Raipur (Madhya Prades), Aurangabad (Maharashtra), Bhubaneshwar (Orissa), Amritsar (Punjab), Jaipur (Rajasthan), Coimbatore, Madurai and Trichy (Tamil Nadu), Lucknow and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), (iii) construction of new terminal buildings at Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Dibrugarh, Lilabari and Tezpur (Assam), Gaya (Bihar), Ahmedabad, Bhuj and Porbandar (Gujarat), Dabolim (Goa), Kullu (Himachal Pradesh), Mangalore (Karnataka), Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh), Aurangabad (Maharashtra), Udaipur (Rajasthan), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), (iv) Construction and strengthening of boundary wall, Apron, residential quarters etc. Hyderabad, Visakhapatam (Andhra Pradesh), Silchar and Tejpur (Assam), Gaya and Purnia (Bihar),INA Colony (Delhi), Ahmedabad and Bhavnagar (Gujarat), Dabolim (Goa), Kangra and Kullu (Himachal Pradesh), Srinagar (Jammu & Kashmir), Calicut and Trivandrum (Kerala), Imphal (Manipur), Mumbai and Juhu (Maharashtra), Amritsar and Pathankot (Punjab), Jodhpur and Jaiselmer (Rajasthan), Agartala (Tripura), Chennai, Madurai, and Trichy (Tamil Nadu), Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), Kolkata and Bagdogra (West Bengal). In most of the schemes work is in progress and as per schedule. However, due to delay in transfer of land by other agencies, some schemes are behind schedule. Efforts are being made by Airports Authority of India by regular monitoring and coordination to complete the projects in time.

[English]

FDI for Nagpur Airport

1516 SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government has taken any decision to allow 49 percent private investment for modernisation, expansion and development of airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Nagpur airport is also covered under the above decision;

(d) if so, whether there is any proposal to allow private investment to convert Nagpur airport into cargo hub; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The Government of India has limited the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to 49% in the Joint Venture Company for modernisation and restructuring of Delhi and Mumbai airports only.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) A multi-modal International Passenger and Cargo Hub airport at Nagpur is proposed to be developed by Government of Maharashtra (GOM). GOM has formed a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) in the name of Maharashtra Airport Development Company (MADC) envisaging private sector investment.

[Translation]

Golden Quadrilateral Scheme

1517. SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have finalised Golden Quadrilateral Scheme;

(b) the details of the routes on which rail lines are likely to be extended under the scheme;

(c) the time limit fixed for the start and completion of work for the said purpose:

(d) the time by which the above scheme is likely to be completed; and

(e) the details of the benefits likely to be accrued to the railway after completion of the above scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) A statement is attached.

(c) and (d) Strengthening of Golden Quadrilateral and its diagonals is a part of National Rail Vikas Yojana on which work commenced in 2003-04 and the Yojana is expected to be completed in five years.

(e) The completion of the works on Golden Quadrilateral and diagonals is expected to remove capacity bottlenecks in the critical sections of the railway network.

Statement

Golden Quadrilateral and Diagonals Works Under National Rail Vikas Yojana

S.No.	Name of Work
1	2
A. Railway Electrification	
	Sanctioned Works
1.	Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar including Talcher-Paradeep
2.	Bhuaneshwar-Kottavalasa Railway Electrification
3.	Guntakal-Renigunta
	Unsanctioned Works
4.	Pune-Guntakal
B. Doublings/multiple lines	
	Sanctioned Works
5.	Pakni-Solapur Doubling
6.	Diva-Kaylan : 5 & 6 Line
7.	Chandanpur-Gurup 3rd line
8.	Gurup-Shaktigarh : 3rd line
9.	Kanpur-Chandari
10.	New Delhi-Tilak Bridge : 5th and 6th line
11.	Kanpur-Panki : 3rd Line (Phase-I)
12.	Attipattu-Korukkupettai : 3rd Line
13.	Gooty-Renigunta Sec: Doubling of Balapalle-Pullampet (Ph-I)
14.	Gooty-Renigunta : Patch Doubling
15.	Talcher-Paradeep (Second bridge on Mahanadi & Birupa)
16.	Bilaspur-Urkura
17.	Tikiapara-Santragachi : 4th Line
18.	Pattabhiram-Thiruvallur : 4th Line and Thiruvallur-Arakkonnam : 3rd Line
19.	Rajatgarh-Barang
20.	Aligarh-Ghaziabad : 3rd Line
21.	Raichur-Guntakal : Doubling
22.	Cuttack-Barang : Doubling
23.	Khurda-Barang : 3rd Line
24.	Sahibabad-Anand Vihar : 3rd and 4th lines
25.	Pakni-Mahol : Doubling
26.	Chennai Beach-Korukkupettai : 3rd Line
27.	Chennai Beach-Attipattu: 4th Line
	Unsanctioned Works
28.	Jn. Cabin-Palwal : 4th Line
29.	Palwal-Bhuteshwar : 3rd Line
30.	Bhopal-Bina : 3rd Line
31.	Kalyan-Kasara : 3rd Line
32.	Igatpuri-Bhusaval : 3rd Line
33.	Panskura-Kharagpur: 3rd Line
34.	Bhigwan-Gulbarga : Doubling
C. Other Works	
	Sanctioned Works
35.	Anand Vihar : Passenger Terminal
	Unsanctioned Works
36.	**Routewise upgradation works to run freight trains at 100 kmph (unsanced.)**
	Mumbai-Chennai
	Chennai-Kolkatta
	Kolkatta-Delhi
	Delhi-Mumbai
	Mumbai-Kolkatta
	Chennai-Delhi

Implementation of Reservation in Jobs for MBC in Pondicherry

1518. PROF. M. RAMADASS: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is aware of implementation of reservation policy to Most Backward Class people in the Union Territory of Pondicherry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government is considering to issue any instruction to the UT administration for extending reservation in the job for MBCs in the Union Territory; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Government of Union Territory of Pondicherry had sought approval of the Central Government for providing reservation to Most Backward Classes and Other Backward Classes notified by them in the ratio of 60:40 in service/employment, admission in educational institutions and for availing other-economic benefits of the schemes being implemented by them.

(c) and (d) The proposal has not been accepted as there is no concept of Most Backward Classes amongst the Other Backward Classes in the Central Government.

Cultural Programme in Pushkar

1519. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD NISHAD: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that for attracting tourists, the tourism department of Rajasthan organised a nacked/indecent dance programme by women on 29th October 2004 in Pushkar to show glimpse of Rajasthani Culture;

(b) if so, whether the Ministry of Culture has asked for any report from the State Government of Rajasthan in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Union Government has issued/ considering to issue any instruction for publicising or propagating culture of the State in all the States of the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

Ten Point Proposal for PSUs

1520. SHRI RAM CHANDRA PASWAN:
SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA:
SHRI RAMAKANT YADAV:

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

(a) whether a ten point proposal has been prepared for bringing about reforms in public sector undertakings;

(b) if so, the outline and other details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has also prepared policy papers for making public sector more efficient to attract global investors; and

(d) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (d) While reviewing the performance of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), the Government have identified following measures to improve their overall performance and to enable them to operate efficiently in a competitive environment with some of them becoming successful global players:

- Greater functional autonomy
- Professionalisation of Board
- Delegation of enhanced financial powers
- Corporate governance
- Review of Navratna and Miniratna schemes
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Institutional mechanism for timely revival/ rehabilitation of sick CPSEs.

- Purchase Preference Policy
- Manpower rationalisation
- Research, development and quality control

The detailed implications and components of these initiatives are being currently processed for finalisation.

[English]

Crude Oil Price

1521. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Prime Minister had a number of discussions with Finance Minister and Petroleum Minister in the month of August to find ways how to deal with spiraling world crude oil prices;

(b) if so, whether the cabinet committee on prices has considered the issue in depth and proposed measures to slow down the inflationary pressure on the economy;

(c) if so, whether the Ministry has also discussed the issue with the consultants of the public sector petroleum companies taking into account the presence on global measures on this issue;

(d) if so, the final agreement reached; and

(e) the steps taken to meet the situation of high price for global market?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) The Government s constantly monitoring and keeping under careful review the domestic consumer prices of four major products, viz., PDS kerosene, domestic LPG, diesel and petrol in consultation with the public sector oil marketing companies.

Considering India's high dependence on oil imports, the increase in international price does impact on the domestic consumer prices of petroleum products. With a view to containing such impact, the position was reviewed by the Government in August 2004 and effective 19.8.2004, while, the excise duties on petrol, diesel and PDS kerosene were reduced by 3%, 3% and 4% respectively, the customs duties on petrol, diesel, PDS kerosene and domestic LPG were reduced by 5% each. The Government had earlier reduced excise duties on petrol, diesel and domestic LPG by 4%, 3% and 8% respectively effective 16.6.2004.

In addition to aforesaid fiscal measures the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved a price band mechanism for petrol and diesel in July 2004 as per which the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) could effect price revisions based on the previous fortnights average international price, provided that the exchange rate adjusted C&F (cost & frieght) product price was within the band of 10% around the mean of (a) las tthree months' rolling average prices; and (b) last one years rolling average prices. In case the C&F prices breach the ceiling due to high volatility, OMCs would keep the prices in the band and approach the Government.

As far as PDS kerosene and domestic LPG are concerned, these are subsidized products. In addition to the Government subsidy, oil PSUs have been sharing the burden by not passing the full increase in international prices on to the domestic consumer prices of these products.

[Translation]

Railway Development Work in Himachal Pradesh

1522. PROF. CHANDER KUMAR:
SHRI SURESH CHANDEL:
DR. COL. (RETD.) DHANI RAM SHANDIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Members of Parliament from Himachal Pradesh had requested for expansion of Kalka-Parvanao broad gauge rail line from Baijnath to Bhanupalli via Chandigarh Jagadhari-Pounta Sahib-Dehradoon, Mandi-Bilaspur, conversion of Pathankot Jogender Nagar Kangara valley rail line into broad gauge Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Rampur, Ghenouli-Pinjore rail line via Nalagarh-Baddi and Kumarhatti-Dehradoon rail line and allocation of fund for the development, expansion and improvement of railway and additional allocation of funds for the construction work on Una-Nangal-Talwara rail lines;

(b) if so, whether budget has been raised accordingly and construction work has been accelerated; and

(c) if so, the progress made in this regard and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c): Yes, Sir. In view of constraint of resources and large shelf of on-going new line projects, it is not feasible to consider construction of proposed new lines. The work of construction of new lines between Kalka-Parvanoo and Nangal Dam-Talwara have already been sanctioned. For construction of Kalka-Parwanoo rail line, the matter with regard to acquisition of land in Kambli village in Himachal Pradesh was taken up with Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, who had proposed to change the location of terminus station from Kambli to Tipra. In view of the space constraints at Tipra, the State Government was advised to reconsider the matter. A three member Committee was constituted by Governor of Himachal Pradesh to finalise the location of terminal station. The Committee has proposed a new line from Chandigarh to Baddi in place of Kalka-Parwanoo as most suitable rail link to be provided in the State of Himachal Pradesh. Details of the proposal have been called for.

Regarding construction of new gauge rail line between Nangal Dam-Una-Talwara, the work from Nangal Dam to Churaru Takrala (33 kms.) has already been completed and opened for traffic. The work has been taken up on Churaru Takrala-Amb Anduara (11 kms.) where land acquisition is in process. Notification under Section 4 has been issued for acquisition of land in 7 villages. The tenders for bridges are under finalization.

An updating survey for new line from Bhanupalli to Bilaspur has been included in the Budget 2004-05. Further consideration for taking up the work would be feasible once the survey report becomes available, depending upon the results of the survey.

Manufacturing of Railway Coaches

1523. SHRI HARISHCHANDRA CHAVAN:
SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of rail coach factories in the country at present;

(b) the number and details of rail coaches manufactured in the country during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the rail coaches in the country have been manufactured more than the target fixed during the current-year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There are two Rail coach manufacturing factories under the Ministry of Railways, Integral Coach Factory at Perambur and Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala. These Production Units are further supplemented by one unit in the Public Sector viz. M/s. Bharat Earthmovers Limited (BEML) at Bangalore and one unit in the Private Sector M/s. Jessops near Calcutta.

(b) The number and details of rail coaches manufactured during each of the last three years are as under:-

Coaches	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Total	2262	1938	2332

(c) No, Sir. The target and of these units are as under:-

Target (2004-05)	Cum. Target (Upto Oct'. 2004)	Cum. Actual (Upto Oct'. 2004)
2596	1350	1328

(d) Does not arise.

Functioning of TV Transmitters

1524. SHRI SITA RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be please to state:

(a) whether a large number of complaints especially from rural and backward areas have been received in regard to faulty functioning of T.V. Transmitters during the last three years;

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

(c) the action taken by the Government to ensure fault free functioning of T.V. Transmitters?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Performance of TV transmitters in Doordarshan Network is generally satisfactory, though complaints of malfunctioning of some transmitters are received from time to time. However, Doordarshan does not maintain any centralized data in this ragard.

(c) According to Prasar Bharati, all efforts are made by Doordarshan to attend to the complaints, However, in the case of VLPTS, which are unmanned installations, it takes some time to attend to the complaints, as maintenance staff has to be sent from the nearby maintenance centres.

[English]

CNG Conversion kits

1525. SHRI SURESH KURUP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether CNG conversion kits for private cars that are endorsable in the registration papers of the vehicle model Maruti 800 are not available in the market;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of the authorised kit manufacturers for different models of private cars; and

(d) the action Government propose to popularize the use of CNG kits in private cars?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. Approved CNG kit for Maruti 800 is available.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) (1) M/s Cleanfuels kits Pvt. Ltd, E-1, Maharani Plaza, 102, Hari Nagar, Ashram, Behind Nefed Building, New Delhi for Maruti Zen Standard.

(2) M/s Transenergy Ltd. 67, Chamiers Road, Chennai & 279 app. Road, Mundka, New Delhi for Maruti Omni, Maruti 800, Maruti Zen.

(3) M/s Logicon Enginers Private Limited for Maruti Esteem, MPFI, VX/Maruti Esteem, carbureted, Premier Padmini.

(d) In order to popularise the use of CNG IN private cars, Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) have initiated the following steps.

(1) Icrease in the Compression Capacity from the present level of 16.48 lakh kgs per day to 18 lakh kgs per day by March 2005.

(2) The number of CNG stations, which at present is 125, is planned to be increased to 132 by March, 2005.

(3) IGL is also considering rolling out a communication plan to spread further awareness amongst the potential private car users informing them about the availability of CNG and the increased infrastructure in the NCT of Delhi. The communication plan also focuses on the Safety and economy aspects of using CNG as compared to other conventional fuels.

[Translation]

Development of Railway in Himachal Pradesh

1526. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to construct a railway line to connect a religious place "Dhothsidh" with the entire country through Pathankot-Jogindra Nagar Railway line via Ranital and Javalamukhi in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In view of constraint of resources and large throwforward of on-going projects, it is not feasible to consider construction of the proposed new line.

[English]

Kidney Racket

1527. SHRI UDAY SINGH:
SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT:
SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:
SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that Army Research and Referral Hospital, New Delhi is involved in kidney racket as reported in the *Times of India* dated October 13, 2004;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to conduct investigations into the Kidney theft cases reported from Army Research and Referral Hospital;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) A First Information Report (FIR) has been filed by the Delhi Police on 6th September 2004 against fraudulent removal of kidney at Army Hospital (Research & Referral), New Delhi. The matter is under investigation by the civil police. Nobody from the Army Hospital (Research & Referral) has been arrested. An Army Court of Inquiry has also been convened by the Army Headquarters in the matter and the Court of Inquiry after having examined the departmental witnesses has not found any culpability of Army doctors of Army Hospital (Research & Referral), New Delhi in the alleged organ transplant racket.

[Translation]

Powers to Gram Sabha

1528. SHRI KAMLA PRASAD RAWAT: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to delegate more powers to Gram Sabhas so as to strengthen the Panchayati Raj;

(b) if so, whether any proposal for modifying the Panchayati Raj System is under the consideration of Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government is contemplating to extend the scope of Panchayati Raj Institutions;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) During the Conference of Chief Ministers and State Ministers in charge of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj on Poverty Alleviation and Rural Prosperity through Panchayati Raj held at New Delhi on 29-30 June, 2004, Jointly organized by the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the Conference decided to hold seven Round Table Conferences to formulate a draft action plan for achieving the objectives of strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions to enable them to become true institutions of self-government for the implementation of programme of economic development and social justice, as envisioned in the Constitution. Six Round Table Conferences have already been held. In the first Round Table Conference held at Kolkata on 24-25 July, 2004 the subject of Gram Sabhas was discussed. The resolution passed by the Ministers in charge of Panchayati Raj and their representatives for recommending to their respective Governments for joint acceptance by the Centre and the States in respect of Gram Sabha is enclosed as statement.

(d) to (f) Six Round Table Conferences have already been held and the seventh Round Table Conference is scheduled from 17th December, 2004 at Jaipur. In these Round Table Conferences all the aspects to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions have been discussed. These resolutions are proposed to be unanimously adopted by the Ministers of Panchayati Raj on 19th December, 2004 at Jaipur and thereafter these resolutions will be discussed during the meeting of the Chief Minister scheduled to be held in early next year, in which these resolutions will be jointly accepted by the Centre and the States. After the acceptance of these resolutions it is expected that the scope of Panchayati Raj Institutions will get enhanced considerably.

Statement

First Round Table of Ministers-In-Charge of Panchayati Raj—Kolkata

24-25th July, 2004

Gram Sabhas

(1) Article 243-A of Part 9 of the Constitution provides for the establishment of Gram Sabhas to "exercise such powers and perform such functions at the village level as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide";

(2) A strong system of Gram Sabhas is the indispensable foundation of good governance through Panchayati Raj;

(3) Based on the two principles stated above, State Government may review the extant legislation to determine the legistative and other steps

which remain to be taken to ensure that the "powers" and " functions" mentioned in Article 243A of the Constitutions are adequately incorporated in the State legislation. In particular, the following points may be examined:—

(1) The need for constituting Sabhas below the Gram level (such as Gram Sansad, Upa-Gram Sabha or Ward Sabha, by whatever name called) with the aim of ensuring that the adult population in each word is given the opportunity of conveying to the Gram Sabha their views on issues coming up for consideration as also holding the elected Ward representative responsible to the adult population in each Ward;

(2) The periodicity of meetings of Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabhas;

(3) Provision for full and satisfactory consultation with special or disadvantaged categories of the population, such as women, SC/ST. landless labourer etc;

(4) Provision for Mahila Sabhas meeting, comprising all the adult women of a Ward/Gram Panchayat area, to deliberate upon and decide the modalities of expressing their views in the Gram/ Ward Sabha;

(5) Endowing the Gram/Ward Sabha with meaningful empowerment through such measures as:

  (a) Right/entitlement to all the information required for the Gram/Ward Sabhas to contribute to transparent and good governance, as well as to make the elected Panchayat truly answerable to the Gram/ Ward Sabha;

  (b) Approve before implementation commences, plans and programmes (including budgets) for economic development and social justice prepared by the Gram Panchayat;

  (c) Authorize the issuance of utilization certificates of funds allocated for the plans, Projects or programmes of the Panchayat;

  (d) Identification of beneficiaries.

(6) Such social audit measures may also be appropriately institutionalized at the Block and District level.

[English]

Joint Venture of RBC between NTPC and Indian Railway

1529. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways is setting up of Power plants in the joint venture with the NTPC;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways has set up 'Rail Bijilee' Company' to look after the power related work;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Railways do not have management control of the joint venture power plants;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(g) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Public Investment Board (PIB) has in its meeting held on 13.02.2004 recommended submission of this project for approval to the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs after obtaining the environmental clearance.

Environmental clearance has since been received on 03.08.2004.

Cabinet Note is being finalized in consultation with Ministry of Power.

(c) Not yet, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Railways will have 51% equity in the proposed joint Venture Company.

(f) and (g) Do not arise.

[English]

Amendment in Panchayati System

1530. SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether many States have been demanding Constitution Amendment in Panchayat System;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the Government is likely to bring such Constitution Amendment?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) A Conference of Chief Ministers and State Ministers in charge of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj on "Poverty Alleviation and Rural Prosperity through Panchayati Raj" was organized at New Delhi on 29-30 June, 2004, jointly by the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. During the Conference, some representatives of the states/UTs demanded Constitution Amendment in Panchayati Raj System requesting for two tier Panchayati Raj System and devolution of certain funds, functions and functionaries mandatorily to the Panchayats. Having considered all aspects of the proposals, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has decided to facilitate and secure implementation of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 by States/UTs, in letter and spirit by encouraging States/UTs to adopt carefully drawn up plans of action to implement the existing provisions of the Constitution.

Functioning of Disability Centre in Srinagar

1531. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Disability Centre in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir has started functioning; and

(b) if so, the number of patients who have been given aids during the last three years and the nature of these aids?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) Yes, Madam the Composite Regional Centre for Persons with Disabilities has started functioning in Srinagar w.e.f. June 2000.

(b) The number of persons with disabilities who have been provided aids and appliances alongwith the nature of aids during the last three years is given in statement enclosed.

Statement

Year	T/C	W/C	A/C	H/A	E/M	V/A	PRO	ORTH	W/S	SHOE	Splint	B/S	Total
2001-02	600	684	879	985	576	40	507	348	-	-	65	-	4684
2002-03	209	261	464	287	181	57	69	81	5	30	-	-	1644
2003-04	212	256	186	660	30	10	136	135	41	-	20	13	1699
Total	1021	1201	1529	1932	787	107	712	564	46	30	85	13	8007
	T/C Tricycle	W/C Wheel Chair	A/C Auxiliary Crutches	H/A Hearing Aids	E/M Ear Mould	V/A Visually aids	Prosthesis	Orthosis	W/S Walking sticks			Blind Sticks	

Movement of Flights during Foggy Season

1532. SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:
SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated any plan for making some special arrangements to ensure safe and timely movement of flights during foggy season;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the said plan is likely to be implemented; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Ministry of Civil Aviation has reviewed Fog Preparedness for the ensuing winter with the representatives of all concerned agencies. A Coordination Committee shall monitor the start up clearances to manage and prioritize the movement of flights during fog. Meteorological Department shall be providing timely forecast of fog and the trend on the forecast regarding visibility so as to make it available on the internet site., Indian Airlines has set up a Central Coordination cell to monitor fog situation on all India basis and a system of Flight Information Dissemination through the call centre is operational at Delhi, Chennai and Bangalore. SMS service and broad casts through TV/FM Channel are being introduced on all India basis for giving information regarding delays, rescheduling, cancellation. Air India has prepared a Contingency Plan for ensuring timely movement of flights during winter Season. Private Airlines are also taking measures to manage operations during fog to mitigate any inconvenience to passengers.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Purchasing of Air Buses and Boeing for I.A./A.I.

1533. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to purchase Air Buses and Boeings for the Indian Airlines and the Air India;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether no plane was purchased till date after 1991 and only the planes taken on lease are being used; and

(d) if so, the rational behind spending crores of rupees on the purchase of planes instead of taking them on lease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Indian Airlines proposal for 43 aircraft comprising 19 A-319, 4 A-321 manufactured by Airbus Industries with engines from CGM International was considered by the PIB in its meeting held on 10.11.2004. The net project cost is Rs. 10089 crores. In its meeting held on 24.11.2004, Air India Board has approved a revised fleet plan as per which the fleet size on Air India would be enhanced from present level of 34 aircraft to 74 aircraft by the year 2012/13. Air India project report in this regard has, however, not been received by the Government.

(c) and (d) Indian Airlines had inducted Airbus A-320 in December, 1994 whereas Air India had inducted 6 B 747-4-00 aircraft in a phased manner from 1993 to 1996. Both the airlines need to purchase aircraft to meet their expansion and are not essentially a cheaper option in the long run. A dry lease transaction would be for a few years. whereas a purchased aircraft can be used till it gets sold or phased out.

Use of bogies of Broad Gauge Trains in Metre Gauge trains

1534. SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to use the bogies of broad gauge trains in metre gauge trains;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to hire technology from Japan with regard thereto;

(c) if so, whether the Government has taken any action in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons, therefor?

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

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Disrepair condition of Small Railway Stations

1535. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:
SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways is aware of the disrepaired condition of small stations in Delhi as reported in the *Times of India* dated November 18, 2004;

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

(c) the plans of the Railways to provide basic amenities/repair etc. of smaller railway stations in the capital?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Railway is aware of the conditions of small stations in Delhi and is also aware of the report published in the Times of India dated 18.11.2004. Small stations are not in condition of disrepair as reported in the Newspaper. Requisite repairs are regularly done.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Provision/augmentation & repair of passenger amenities at railway stations is a continuous process, which is undertaken as per laid down norms, traffic needs and availability of funds.

Connection of more Destination with Bhubaneshwar Airport

1536. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a proposal to connect Bhubaneshwar by Air more destinations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-Eastern region. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines issued by the Government.

[Translation]

Allocation of Kerosene to States

1537. SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:
SHRI P. RAJENDRAN:

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

(a) whether kerosene is allocated to states by the Government on the basis of per Capita consumption every month;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of kerosene allocated to various states every month in the year 2004-2005;

(d) whether the allocation of kerosene to many States has been reduced by Central Governement during the last 3 years;

(e) if so, the name of the States and the reasons for reduced allocation;

(f) whether Kerala has requested for enhancing the allotment of kerosene; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Kerosene allocation to various States/Union Territories is made as per the allocation policy which involves several factors including past allocations and domestic LPG connections released in the respective States every year.

(c) PDS Kerosene is allocated to the States/Union Territories on a quarterly basis. Details of the allocations made during the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarters of the year 2004-05 are given in the enclosed Statement.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Kerosene allocation has been reduced taking into account the number of new LPG connections released during the year in each of the States since both LPG and SKO are subsidized products and substitutable for cooking purposes.

(f) and (g) Yes, Sir. Similar requests for increase of SKO allocation have been received from various State Governments/Union Territories. A holistic view is required to be taken in the matter.

Statement

State/UT-wise quarterly SKO Allocation during 2004-2005

State/UT	Allocation [in Metric Tonnes (MT)]		
	1ST Quarter (April to June, 2004)	2nd Quarter (July to September, 2004)	3rd Quarter (October to December, 2004)
1	2	3	4
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1431	1431	1431
Andhra Pradesh	122406	121014	121014
Arunachal Pradesh	2314	2314	2314
Assam	62928	62928	62929
Bihar	157909	157910	157910
Chandigarh	3266	3267	3267
Chhattisgarh	35838	35838	35839
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	695	695	696
Daman & Diu	529	529	530
Delhi	42121	42121	42121
Goa	4803	4803	4803
Gujarat	185939	185939	185940
Haryana	35517	35517	35517
Himachal Pradesh	12634	12634	12634
Jammu & Kashmir*	14378	14377	21566
Jharkhand	52793	52794	52794
Karnataka	115369	115369	115370
Kerala	52758	52758	52758
Lakshadweep**		397	199
Madhya Pradesh	119172	119173	119173
Maharashtra	313381	313383	313383
Manipur	4976	4977	4977
Meghalaya	5100	5100	5100
Mizoram	1554	1554	1554
Nagaland	3178	3178	3178
Orissa	76823	76824	76824

1	2	3	4
Pondicherry	30114	3014	3015
Punjab	58203	58203	58203
Rajasthan	99125	99125	99125
Sikkim	1320	1321	1321
Tamil Nadu	136324	136324	136324
Tripura	7523	7523	7523
Uttar Pradesh	302871	302871	302871
Uttaranchal	21489	21490	21490
West Bengal	187057	187057	187057

*Does not include Annual allocation of 3600 MT for Ladakh region.
**Half yearly allocation during 1st and 2nd quarters.

[English]

Connection of Hajara Port

1538. SHRI BHARATSINH MADHAVSINH SOLANKI:
SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:
SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:
SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a plan to connect the Hajira Port to it's hinterland;

(b) if so, whether the Government has also a plan to extend the siding track of KRIBHCO up to Hajira; and

(c) if so, the proposed time frame for completion of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The proposed connection to Hajira Port is a part of National Rail Vikas Yojana.

(b) As per the techno-economic feasibility survey, the new lime is proposed parallel to the existing KRIBHCO siding.

(c) the construction will be taken up on completion of the project development, agreement of strategic partners in financial participation and sanction of the project. At present project development is in progress.

[Translation]

Utilisation of Vacant Railways Land

1539. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

Will the Minister or RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether large area of land of different Railway Zones including those of western Railways are lying unutilised;

(b) if so, the details of the unutilised Railway land as on date alongwith reasons therefor, zone-wise;

(c) whether the Government has formulated any plan for better utilisation of the above land and propose to allocate the above land on lease to the people belonging to the SCs and STs;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Railway have about 4,23,000 hectares (ha) of land out of which only 42,846 ha of land is lying vacant in mostly longitudinal strips along the track.

(b) Zone-wise details of vacant Railway land are as under:—

Railway	Vacant Land (in ha.)
Central	2479
East Central	4454
East Coast	188
Eastern	1518
Northern	2899
North Central	713
North Eastern	5875
Northeast Frontier	3466
North Western	375
Southern	2287
South Central	3902
South Eastern	85
South East Central	3260
South Western	2854
Western	7460
West Central	1031
Total	42846

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. Setting up of a separate Authority by name Rail Land Development Authority has been envisaged for commercial development of vacant land. There is however no proposal to allocate the vacant land to the people belonging to the SCs and STs.

[English]

Accessing of Conversations of Transistor between ATC and Pilots

1540. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether conversations between the Air Traffic Control (ATC) Tower and pilots of aircraft landing at and taking off from Varanasi Airport were being accessed on transistor sets across the city in September, 2004;

(b) if so, the reasons for this bizarre and serious incident; and

(c) the outcome of the investigation launched in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir. No such incident has been recorded and reported by Airports Authority of India which administers the Air Traffic Control.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Laying of Pipeline in Dahej

1541. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian oil Corporation has decided to lay its own pipeline from Petronet LNG terminal in Dahej (Gujarat) to Uron in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details of the expenditure likely to be incurred on the laying of said pipeline;

(c) whether Gail (India) Ltd. is already a 475 k.m. long pipeline between Dahej to Uron; and

(d) if so, the reasons for laying its own pipeline by Indian Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

[English]

Introduction of Fire Proof Coaches

1542. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Railways has introduced fire proof coaches in some trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the target fixed for making all the coaches fire-proof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) All coaches are manufactured making use of material which are fire retardent to the extent feasible. One prototype General Second class coach has been manufactured in Rail Coach Factory (RCF) and three coaches have been manufactured by Integral Coach Factory (ICF) by using improved fire retardant material as a trial measure. These coaches are under service trial. Based on the feedback from Railways and standardization of fire retardant material by Research, Design and Standards Organization (RDSO), in future also coaches will be manufactured using latest fire retardant material.

[Translation]

Manufacturing of Weapons Locating Radars

1543. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is planning to manufacture weapon Locating Radars ANTPQ-37 with the help of DRDO on the lines of American weapon-locating radar as reported in *Hindustan* dated October 29, 2004;

(b) whether a new jammer has been developed by Bharat Electronics Ltd. to contain remote triggered explosions;

(c) if so, the time by which it is likely to be developed;

(d) the amount earmarked by the Government to be spent on the manufacturing of such radars and jammers;

(e) whether the Government is contemplating to make this technology available to other countries also; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Indigenous Weapon Locating Radar (WLR) similar to AN/TPQ-37 has been developed by DRDO in partnership with Bharat Electronics Ltd. Bangalore.

(b) and (c) Yes. Sir. The equipment will be ready for field trials by 31st December, 2004.

(d) The development cost of project on WLR is Rs. 26 cr. The unit cost of manufacturing of radar would depend upon quantum of order, the ground equipment and spares projected. Cost of jammer for remotely triggered explosive devices is Rs. 1.4 cr.

(e) and (f) Government is not contemplating to make this technology available to other countries.

FDI In Civil Aviation Sector

1544. SHRI MOHAN SINGH:
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:
SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE:
SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has finally approved the Foreign Direct Investment from 40% to 49% for the modernisation, expansion and development of airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the extent of FDI secured;

(c) whether this hike in FDI is only meant for domestic airlines and foreign civil aviation companies and Airlines are not permitted to take up equity participation;

(d) if so, whether the Government has reviewed all the security aspects of aviation sectors of Air force;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether increasing FDI in the aviation sector is likely to put stiff competition for state owned Indian Airlines and Air India; and

(g) if so, the steps taken or being taken by the Government fight competition in the aviation sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The Government of India has increased the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limits in Air Transport services (Domestic Airlines) from 40 to 49%. The policy on airport

infrastructure provides for foreign equity participation upto 74% with automatic approvals and upto 100% with special permission. However, in respect of restructuring of Delhi and Mumbai airports, foreign equity participation is restricted to 49%.

(c) No direct or indirect equity participation by foreign airlines is allowed in Air transport services (Domestic Airlines)

(d) and (e) Since foreign airlines have not been permitted equity participation in the domestic airlines, no fresh security issues arise.

(f) No, Sir. Indian Airlines and Air India are already operating in a highly competitive environment.

(g) Does not arise.

Food Plazas, Shopping Malls and Entertainment Facilities at Railway Stations

1545. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has planned to provide Food plazas, shopping Malls and the latest facilities of entertainment at several railway stations of the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of such stations where these facilities has already been provided and to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Indian Railways have only planned to provide Food Plazas at 50 railway stations. At present, the following Food Plazas are operational at the following stations:-

1. Pune
2. Nagpur
3. Agra
4. Allahabad
5. Patna-Ground Floor
6. Patna-First Floor
7. Rajendra Nagar (Patna)
8. Howrah
9. Nizammudin
10. Delhi
11. Visakhapatnam
12. Kurseong (DHR)
13. Chennai Central
14. Madurai
15. Trichur
16. Trichy
17. Shoranur
18. Vijaywada
19. Tirupati
20. Ranchi
21. Tatanagar
22. Bilaspur
23. Bengalore City
24. Mumbai Central
25. Ernakulam (South)
26. Chennai Egmore
27. Chennai Beach

The stations idetified for setting up of food plazas on zonal railways on which the work is in progress are as follows:—

1. Allahabad (City side)
2. Trivandrum
3. Chennai Park
4. Ernakulam (North)
5. Coimbatore
6. Secunderabad
7. Rajamundry
8. Raipur
9. Churchgate (Chinese Food)
10. Churchgate
11. Habibganj

Suitable locations at remaining stations are being identified for setting up to food plazas.

[English]

Eviction of Railway Hawkers

1546. SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that Railway hawkers are prevented from carrying their normal activities by the authorities;

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

(c) whether the Government has received any representation from the MPs and concerned trade unions in this regard; and

(d) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Unauthorised hawking in the railway premises and on trains is not permissible and is a punishable offence under Section 144 of the Railways Act, 1989 and Railways (Second Amendment) Act 2003. As such unauthorised hawkers are liable for prosecution by Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police. Their presence causes inconvenience to the travelling passengers. Regular checks are conducted to apprehend the unauthorised hawkers to enable passengers to have free movement on railway platforms and comfortable journey.

(c) and (d) Certain representations for the issuance of licences and identity cards to sell foodstuffs have been received which have been examined and replied. No hawking/vending is permitted on running trains by unauthorised hawkers except in long distance trains in which case these services are provided by the pantry car staff managed either departmentally or through the contractors

ROB/RUB at Junagarh

1547. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of ROBs/RUBs project at Junagarh in Gujarat;

(b) the funds allocated and expenditure incurred thereon so far; and

(c) the target fixed for completion of said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Railways construct Road Over/Under Bridges in lieu of existing Level Crossings on cost sharing basis if the traffic density is one lakh or more TVUs (TVU—A unit obtained by multiplying the number of trains with the number of road vehicles passing over the level crossing in 24 hours); otherwise on deposit terms. Proposals in both cases have to be sponsored by the State Government duly fulfilling certain preliminary pre-requisites required under extant rules. There is no sanctioned work for construction of Rail Over Bridge (ROB) on cost sharing basis at Janagarh in Gujarat.

[Translation]

Nagaon-Silghat and Nagaon-Moirabari Railway lines in Assam

1548. SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the foundation stone for the Nagaon-Silghat and Nagaon-Moirabari Railway lines have been laid down in Assam; and

(b) if so, the present status of the implementation of these two railway lines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The foundation stone have been laid for gauge conversion of Halbargaon to Mairabari and Senchoa Jn. to Silghat Town as part of Lumding-Dibrugarh gauge conversion project.

(b) The final location survey has been completed and detailed estimate is under process of sanction.

[English]

Railway Projects in NER

1549. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) The status of 10 PC budgetary provisions made for implementation of Railways projects in the NER in terms of the Prime Minister 's announcement under special initiative for the North East region 1996;

(b) the percentage of such allocation made each year in terms of total Railway Budget showing actual share allocated from each of the special Railway safety fund, internal generation, CRF and budgetary support from general exchequer; and

(c) the present status of the projects declared under the above special initiative?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The budgetary support for Railways, budget provision made for North Eastern (NE) region and actual expenditure incurred so far by the Railways since 1996 onwards is as under:-

Year	Budgetary Support to the Railways	Allotment made for NE region	Expenditure incurred
1	2	3	4
1996-97	1269	151	197
1997-98	1831	338	236
1998-99	2200	206	207
1999-00	2540	258	264
2000-01	3191	288	291
2001-02	3440	218	272*
2002-03	4040	385	441
2003-04	3814	365	483(RE**)
2004-05	3649	367	

** *Revised Estimate*

* Apart from this expenditure of Rs. 40 cr was incurred against project specific allotment given during the year.

From 2000-01 onwards, the Budgetary Support is excluding the specific allocation Project, Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd., externally projects, contribution to Special Railway Safety Fund, inflows from diesel cess etc.

(b) As per the decision of the Government, the Minister have to set apart 10% funds from the Budgetary support of their respective annual Budgets for the development of North Eastern region. Other funds which are generated by the Railways from their internal resources do not come under this purview as they are need based as per Railway's operational requirements and therefore are work specific.

(c) The details of ongoing projects lying partly/fully in the North Eastern region are given as under:—

Sl. No.	Name of the Projects	Anticip-ated Cost	Expenditure upto March 2004	Outlay during 2004-05	Present position of the project/action taken
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Bogibeel Bridge with linking lines between Dibrugarh and North Bank line (new line) (46 Km)	1767.36	156.31	60.00	Final location survey has been completed. Land acquisition, work on major bridges, minor bridges and earthwork for rail line on south bank and boulder collection are in progress.
2.	Harmuti-Itanagar (New line) (33 Km)	156.00	0.04	2.00	State Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh requested on 16.12.2000 to keep the alignment from Bedeti to Intanagar from Bedeti to Itanagar (45 Km) instead of Harmuti-Itanagar & Halem-Itanagar. Survey for this changed alignment is in progress.
3.	Dudhnoi-Depa (new line) (15.5 Km)	22.33	0.50	0.01	Land acquisition papers were submitted to state Government in July, 97 However, Meghalaya Government has not made available the land so far due to resistance from local people

1	2	3	4	5	6
					regarding Depa Station site. Work on this project would be taken up only after the land becomes available.
4.	New Mayanaguri-Jogighopa (new line-245 km)	733.00	33.97	42.00	Final location survey from new Maynaguri to Jogighopa has been completed. Earthwork for widening of bank for gauge conversion portion from Maynaguri Road to Changrabandha (19 Km) is in progress.
5.	Katakhal-Bairabhi (gauge conversion)-(84 km)	88.70	0	1.00	The work would be taken up once Lumding-Silchar is in advance stage of completion.
6.	Lumding-Dibrugarh with linked fingers, Haibargaon-Mairabaari (44.8 Kms) and Senchoa Jn.-Silghat Town (61.85 Kms.)-(gauge conversion)- (734.65 Kms)	882.11	746.04	1.00	Lumding-Dibrugarh with linked fingers completed and commissioned. Gauge conversion of Haibargaon to Mairabari (44.8 Km) and Senchoa Jn. to Silghat Town (61.85 Km) have been included in the scope of Lumding-Dibrugarh gauge conversion project. Detailed estimate is under process.
7.	Lumding-Silchar including alignment between Migrendisa-Dittockchera and extension from Badarpur to Bhariagram-(gauge conversion)-(292 Km)	1496.42	264.74	70.00	Final location survey completed Earthwork and bridgeworks are in progress in 163.4 Km between Lumding and Silchar.
8.	New Jalpaigiri-Siliguri-New Bongaigaon including Linked Branch line (gauge conversion) 419.48 Km)	820.00	596.49	30.00	The section from New Jalpaiguti to Samaktula Road (198 Km) has been completed and commissioned for passenger traffic on 20.11.03. Section from Samaktula Road-Jorai (18 Km) has also been completed. the section upto Bongaigaon is targeted for completion during 2004-05. On branch lines from Alipurduar to Bamanhat and Fakiragram, to Dhubri, are in progress.
9.	Rangia-Murkongselek alongwith Linked fingers (gauge conversion)-(510.33 Kms)	915.70	0.01	3.00	New work included in the supplementary budget 2003-04. Preparation of plant and estimates has been taken up.
10.	Kumarghat-Agartala	700.00	343.89	80.00	Kumarghar-Manu (21 Km) section Completed and commissioned on 27.12.2000. earthwork, bridge works, tunneling in remaining length is in progress.
11.	Jiribam-Imphal	725.56	0	3.00	Final Location Survey is being taken up.

Scholarships to Students by LOC

1550. SHRI G.KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Oil Corporation Limited has announced scholarships for students all over the country;

(b) if so, the details of this scholarship scheme;

(c) the number of students are likely to be benefited this year; and

(d) the selection criteria for such students by IOCL?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) is operating a scholarship scheme for student belonging to the weaker sections of society, as part of its corporate social responsibility programme. In September, 2004, LOC announced 350 such scholarships on an all-India merit basis for the academic year 2004-05.

(b) While 100 scholarships are awarded on an all-India merit basis to students pursuing graduation and post-graduation courses, 250 scholarships are awarded to students pursuing studies under the 10+ scheme and courses undertaken at Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).

(c) 350 students are expected to benefit in the current year, i.e., 2004-05,

(d) The selection criteria for these scholars are as under:-

(1) Minimum eligibility marks in the qualifying examination is 65% for candidates belonging to the general category, 60% for those belonging to the Scheduled Caste (SC)/ Scheduled Tribe (ST)/ Other Backward Class (OBC)/ Girls categories, and 50% in respect of the physically-challenged candidates.

(2) Students studying in the 11th standard or in the first year of 2-year ITI course, in the first year of the Engineering Degree course, and the courses leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) and Master in Business Administration (MBA), in the academic year 2004-05 are eligible to apply.

(3) Joint income of the family from all sources during the financial year 2003-04 should not more than Rs. 60,000/-

(4) The marks obtained by the students in the examination, which make them eligible to seek admission in the first year of the respective course. will be considered for selection.

(5) The age limit for selection is minimum 15 years and maximum 30 years as on 1.9.2004, i.e. persons born between 1.9.1974 and 1.9.1989 (both days inclusive).

(6) There is relaxation in the upper age limit by 3 years for OBC candidates. 5 years for SC/ST candidates and 10 years for Physically candidates.

(7) Wards of the employees of IOC, its joint ventures and subsidiary companies are not eligible to apply.

[Translation]

Shortage of staff and funds for drug De-Addiction centres

1551. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of existing drug de-addiction centers run be the Government in the country, State-wise;

(b) the details of the funds allocated and released to these centers during each of the last three years and the current years, centre-wise;

(c) whether the Government is aware that due to shortage of staff and funds several de-addiction centres are on the verge of closure as they are not able to do their work effectively; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the details of the efforts undertaken by the Government to achieve their objectives by these centres?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment does not run any De-addiction Center. However, the Ministry gives grant-in-aid to NGOs to run de-addiction Centres. The state-wise

number of de-addiction centres assisted by the Ministry is given in the statement enclosed.

(b) The details of grants released to NGO during the last three years and the current year is available on Ministry's website www.socialjustice.nic.in.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) To achieve the objectives of the De-addiction Centres supported by it, the Minister is implementing e-payments/telegraphic transfer of grant-in-aid directly to the bank accounts of the NGOs, e-submission of progress reports, periodic inspections by officers of the Ministry for timely disbursement of grant. In addition, the Ministry is also imparting training to the staff working in the de-addiction Centres for effective delivery of services through Regional Resource and Training Centres (RRTCs) and National Institute of Social Defence (NISD). The Ministry has also institutionalized the Drug abuse Monitoring System (DAMS) to monitor the trends of drugs abuse in the country.

Statement

State-wise Details of Drug De-Addiction Centres

S.No.	Name of the state/UT	No. of De-addiction centres
1	2	3
1.	Andhra pradesh	17
2.	Assam	8
3.	Bihar	15
4.	Chhattisgarh	2
5.	Goa	1
6.	Gujarat	10
7.	Haryana	19
8.	Himachal Pradesh	3
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	2
10.	Jharkhand	2
11.	Karnataka	17
12.	Kerala	22
13.	Madhya Pradesh	9
14.	Maharashtra	58
15.	Manipur	19
16.	Meghalaya	2
17.	Mizoram	8
18.	Nagaland	6
19.	Orissa	28
20.	Punjab	15
21.	Rajasthan	9
22.	Sikkim	-
23.	Tamil Nadu	18
24.	Tripura	2
25.	Uttar Pradesh	46
26.	Uttaranchal	3
27.	West Bengal	12
28.	Chandigarh	-
29.	Delhi	7
30.	Pondicherry	1
	Total	361

[English]

Withdrawal of Amritsar-Kalka Mail

1552. SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Government is aware that various cities of Punjab i.e. Amritsar. Gurdaspur etc. have no direct rail link with Chandigarh at present;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a train named Amritsar-Kalka mail used to run earlier was withdrawn;

(d) if so, the reasons for withdrawing that train; and

(e) the steps taken to provide rail linking of punjab's cities with Chandigarh by restoring the withdrawn train?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There

is no direct train available between Amritsar/Gurdaspur and Chandigarh at present.

(c) to (e) a 4535/4536 Amritsar-Kalka Express was withdrawn due to poor patronisation. Restoration of the said train is not commercially justified.

[Translation]

Training to Pilots Abroad

1553. SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KUSHAWAHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Air Force has formulated any scheme in regard to get training in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the names of those countries from where the training is likely to be taken;

(c) whether the Government propose to purchase 66 Hawk and Mk-128 jet aircraft from Britain for training purpose;

(d) if so, whether any agreement has been signed in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the amount likely to be spent on purchase of these aircraft?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) United Kingdom.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Government have approved acquisition of 66 Hawk Advance Jet Trainer (AJT) aircraft. However, there is no proposal under consideration for purchase of MK-128 Jet aircraft.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) It would not be desirable to disclose the details regarding the purchase of aircraft, in the national interest.

[English]

Acquisition of Land for Airport at Kannur, Kerala

1554. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a three member committee has been constituted by the Government to prepare a report on the proposed airport at Kannur, Kerala;

(b) if so, the salient features of the submitted by the Committee;

(c) whether Kerala Government had acquired 192-18 acres of land and also notified another 1092-91 acres of land for acquisition for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the decision of the Union Government about building the airport at Kannur?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The salient features of the report are as under:

(1) Runway and associated facilities at Kannur can be developed initially for ATR-72/B-737 type of aircraft.

(2) The proposed airport may reduce traffic as well as revenue at surrounding airports viz. Calicut, Mangalore and Cochin, However, the Committee felt that North Malabar being a very popular beach destination with the onset of mega Bekal tourism Project; the construction of an airport at Kannur will give impetus to the promotion of tourism in Kerala.

(3) Cost of ultimate development of new airport is more than Rs. 560 crores and is not economically viable. Therefore, the Committee recommended for the construction of airport in phases, commercial exploitation of real estate and marketing of airport through tourism package.

(4) The equipments for CNS, ATM, Security and Safety services should be provided by owner of the airport

(c) Information is being collected from the state Government.

(d) Inter-Ministerial consultations have been taken up on the proposal.

People's Liberation Army Headquarters in Manipur

1555. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Army has busted the temporary general headquarters of the People's Liberation Army in Manipur;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the material seized therefrom; and

(d) the number of militants arrested,. injured and died during the operation?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) a Search and Distroy' operation was conducted by the Army on the night of 6/7th November 2004, in general Area of Theigotang (RM 1402), Churachandpur District, Manipur during which a militant camp was raided. However, there is no conclusive evidence to confirm that it was a temporary General Headquarters of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

(c) The material recovered during the operation include (1) Improvised Explosive Device (IED) material i.e. 50 Kgs of explosive, 15 litres of potassium, 13 litres of Poison Pyro, circuits and kenwood battery for manufacture of improvised explosive devices (2) five magazines of Carbine, five magazines of AK-47, 10 magazines of MI 16 and RPG muzzle cover, and (3) A collapsible boat, lifejackets, large quantity of lifesaving drugs, 150 Uniform sets, sports items, fuel and camp requisites like ration and cooking utensils etc.

(d) No militant was reported to have been killed, apprehended or wounded during the operation.

New Commission for Minorities

1556. SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN:
SHRI P.K. VASUDEVEN NAIR:
YOGI ADITYA NATH:
SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:
SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to refer to the reply given to the Unstarred Question No. 3183 regarding New Commission for Welfare of Minorities dated August, 19, 2004 and state;

(a) whether the said Commissions have since been constituted;

(b) whether the Government also propose to set up a National Commission to examine the reservation in educational institutions for socially and economically backward sections amongst religious and linguistic minorities in the country;

(c) if so, the complete details of each Commission separately including their composition terms of reference, salient features and objectives; and

(d) the time by which the said Commissions are likely to submit their report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Terms of Reference of the National Commission for welfare of socially and economically backward sections among religious and linguistic Minorities (NCRLM) inter-alia includes the issue of reservation in educational institutions. Therefore, there is no proposal for a separate Commission.

(c) and (d) The details in respect of NCRLM have been notified vide Resolution No. 1-11/2004-MC (D) dated 29.10.2004. The details in respect of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions have been notified vide No. F. 11-2/2004-MC (P) dated 16.11.2004.

Commercial Autonomy to Profit Making PSUs

1557. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government announced to grant more functional and commercial autonomy to profit making PSUs;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to empower Navratnas and Mini Ratnas to invest upto 10% and 15% respectively;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government has examined financial and other strength of such companies before allowing such power; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and time by which a final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes Sir. The

Government have pledged to devolve full managerial and commercial autonomy to successful profit making companies operating in a competitive environment;

(b) to (e) Various suggestions, including delegation of greater powers for investment, are being considered by the Government keeping in view the critical assessment of comparative strengths of the PSUs, the finalisation of which is expected shortly before the close of the current financial year.

Reconstitution of Procurement Board

1558. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has reconstituted the procurement board to give representation to watchdog organisations to make procurement process faster and more transparent as reported in the *Hindu* dated September 8, 2004;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the extent to which this new procurement policy is different to the previous one; and

(d) the extent to which the new procurement system will help to reduce the time taken to getting arms deals vetted?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Do not arise.

(c) and (d) The Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP)-2002 (Version June 2003) provides for review after two years. The DPP is being reviewed in the Ministry of Defence to streamline and make it more transparent in the light of experience gained in the implementation of the procedure.

Applications for Dealerships/retail outlets in Rajasthan

1559. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:
SHRI M. APPADURAI:

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

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. Jaipur, Rajasthan had recently invited applications for allotment of dealership for retail outlets in Rajasthan in February-March 2004 for allotment of retail outlets in Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the number of dealerships reserved for Scheduled Caste category out of them and the number of applications received against each reserved dealership, if any; and

(c) the time by which the whole process would be completed for allotment of these dealerships?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 47 locations reserved for Scheduled Castes categories were advertised by Indian Oil Corporation Limited during February-March, 2004, for allotment of retail outlet dealerships. The total number of applications received for these 47 locations was 1,207.

(c) It is not possible to indicate the time-frame for allotment of retail outlets to all the applicants as the exercise involves various steps like scrutiny of applications and documents, conduct of interviews of the eligible candidates for selection of dealers, release of merit panel, field investigation in respect of the selected candidate, etc.

[Translation]

Resettlement of Jhuggis Removed from Railway Land

1560. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has allocated funds to remove Jhuggis from its land and to rehabilitate the people residing in these Jhuggis;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of people residing in Jhuggis on the Railway land for whose rehabilitation funds have been allocated as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In the National Capital Territory of Delhi, as per the resettlement and rehabilitation policy of the State Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, adopted by the Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, Railway is required to share the cost of resettlement and rehabilitation of the encroachers of Railway land. As per this policy, Railway has paid Rs. 11,25,87,000 (Rupees Eleven Crore, Twenty Five Lakh Eighty seven Thousand) to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi for the resettlement and rehabilitation of 4359 number of jhuggis. Data regarding number of people is not maintained by the Railways.

In Mumbai for the Mumbai Urban Transport Project, Railways are sharing the cost of resettlement and rehabilitation (R&R) of the project affected households (PAHs) with the State Government of Maharashtra. The total expenditure on rail component of R&R incurred so far is Rs. 327 crore (Rupees Three Hundred Twenty Seven crore). The total number of PAHs is 15,857.

[English]

Special Trains on Festivals

1561. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to run more trains during important occasions and festivals in order to avoid heavy rush of passengers which was resulted in stampede in New Delhi Railway Station recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Indian Railways traditionally run special trains during festivals, holidays and other important occasions to clear the extra rush of traffic subject to traffic pattern, operational feasibility and availability of resources.

Renovation of Tuticorin Airport

1562. SHRI M. APPADURAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to renovate the Tuticorin Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the total fund allocated for the renovation of the said airport; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Tuticorin airport is operational and suitable for 50 Seater type of aircraft. At present, there are no Scheduled operations to this airport. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has at present no plan for renovation/ upgradation of this airport due to non-receipt of commitments from any scheduled airline operators to commence their services from this airport.

Guidelines for uplinking of Programmes

1563. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has prepared guidelines for uplinking of news and current affairs TV channels from India;

(b) if so, by what time these guidelines are to be revived further

(c) whether it has been reported that some news channels which have foreign institutional investment had sort revision of uplinking guidelines as per current norms;

(d) if so, whether at present new channel is permitted to have up to 26% of forcing direct investment;

(e) whether October 31, 2004 was the deadline by which all news channels must conform to the guidelines;

(f) whether some of the firms had violated the rule;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) the action taken against those firms?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) the Guidelines for uplinking of News & Current Affairs TV Channels were notified on 26.03.2003 which were revised further in respect of its eligibility criteria on 28.08.2003.

(b) No time frame can be indicated.

(c) Yes, Sir

(d) In respect of news channel companies, the Foreign Direct Investment is permitted up to 26% of the Paid up Equity.

(e) to (h) The Government had fixed the deadline for 31st October 2004 to conform to the revised guidelines Further extension is being considered since the review of the uplinking policy is under consideration.

Private Players to lay Gas pipeline for consumers

1564. SHRI K.S. RAO:
SHRI JUAL ORAM:

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

(a) whether the Government propose to allow private players to lay gas pipeline for consumers;

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

(c) whether GAIL has opposed the move;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(f) the impact on the Gail as a result of entry of private players?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, So far only M/s Gas Transportation and Infrastructure Company Limited (GTICL), a company promoted by M/s Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), has been given permission for laying natural gas pipelines along Kakinada-Hyderabed-Uran-Ahmedabad-Goa and Jamnagar-Bhopal-Cuttak.

(c) to (f) GAIL has expressed reservations regarding the entry of private sector in gas transmission business, as it would hamper smooth operation of pipelines and growth opportunities for GAIL in the sector. Gail has therefore, submitted for granting monopoly for laying all the natural gas interstate transmission pipelines in the country..

Based on the feedback received from various stake holders, including the major domestic and international oil and gas companies, different chambers of Commerce and Industries, State Governments etc, and after inter-ministerial consultations, it is envisaged to invite the participation of both public sector and private sector in the development of pipeline infrastructure in the country. This will encourage competition and larger investment in this sector which will ultimately benefit the consumer.

Handing over of Routes to Private Operators in West Bengal

1565. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to connect the district headquarters with Kolkata, State capital through air route in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether these routes are likely to be handed over to private operators to be run by the State owned airlines; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) No, Sir, Government has laid down Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-Eastern. It is however upto the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines.

(d) No proposal to hand over any routes to private operators is under consideration of the Government.

(e) Does not arise.

IOC & IBP's Addition 1500 Outlets to existing Network

1566. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation and its subsidiary IBP have targetted an addition of 1500 outlets to their existing network during the coming year;

(b) whether the recent volatility in crude prices will have any impact on the IOC/IBP retails outlet expansion plans;

(c) whether private players are also entering oil retailing in a big way; and

(d) if so, whether IOC/IBP will curtail their outlet expansion targets for time being?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) While Indian Oil Corporation Limited has tentatively planned to set up 828 retail outlets (petrol pumps) in the country during 2005-06, IBP Co. Ltd. plans to set up 650 such outlets during that year.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Companies in the private sector, viz., Reliance Industries Limited, Essar Oil Limited and Shell India Marketing Private Limited, have also been authorized to market transportation fuels through their own outlets.

(d) No, Sir.

Training to Disabled

1567. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment has brought out in their First Report (2004-05) that inadequate number of professionals for giving training to 18.49 million disabled persons in the country;

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

(c) whether there is any proposal to avail the services of large number of dress design and cutting diploma holders from privately run women' s polytechnic of Delhi for imparting training to the disabled; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The report of Standing Committee of Social Justice & Empowerment has been laid on the Table of the House on 18.8.2004. The report states "that for giving training top about 18.49 million disabled persons in the country only 20,000 professionals (out of the total 24,000 professionals) are engaged in teaching/training of persons with disabilities. The requirement of the professionals who give training to the disabled for their rehabilitation, as per 1996 RCI report was assessed to be 3,62,300 for only 10% of the total disabled population in the 9th Plan" The shortage of professionals in rehabilitation has been due to this being an emerging area of education.

(c) and (d) No such proposal has been received.

Radio Station in Tamil Nadu

1568. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR; Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be please to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that a 10 KW capacity radio station with a range of about 65 KM was set up in Dharmapuri in Tamil Nadu with a cost of Rs. 4 crore but till date it has not started functioning due to shortage of staff;

(b) if so, the time likely to be taken in manning and commissioning this radio station;

(c) whether the Government propose to introduce FM channel in this radio station in the interest of local people;

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be introduced; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) A full fledged Station (10 KW FM Transmitter with Studio) at Dharmapuri is technically ready. It has not been possible to commission the Station due to shortage of Staff.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The Station will start broadcast after the sanction of staff for operation and maintenance. No definite time frame can be prescribed at this stage.

Overall Growth of Civil Aviation Sector

1569. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Civil Aviation Sector is poised for overall growth over the next three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Airports Authority of India had decided to upgrade about 30 Airports upto global standards by year 2007-2008;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government is considering to bring in a new comprehensive Civil Aviation Policy in view of the Naresh Chandra Committee report; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. However, the overall growth of civil aviation sector over the next three years will depend upon various factors like GDP growth, trade and tourism potential etc.

(c) and (d) Airport Authority of India (AAI) has decided to modernise twenty five non-metro airports to world class standards in phases with focus on air side and city side development and enhancement of non-aeronautical revenues. In the first phase, approximately ten airports would be taken up and the remaining in the second phase. The selection of airports will be made keeping in view their commercial and traffic growth potential. AAI is in the process of appointing Indian Financial Consultant (IFC) and Global Technical Advisor (GTA) who will assist AAI in conducting techno-economic Feasibility study of identified airport to evolve an appropriate model based on viability of the project.

(e) and (f) The recommendations of the Naresh Chandra Committee are being examined so as to formulate a comprehensive National Civil Aviation Policy.

[Translation]

Gas pipeline between India and China

1570. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to lay a gas pipeline between India and China;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the talks held between the two countries and the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Rail link between Shegaon and Jalana

1571. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no rail link between Shegaon and Jalana to connect the people of Vidarbha region;

(b) if so, the number of times survey has been conducted to connect shegaon/Khamgaon with Jalana directly;

(c) the result of each survey and the reasons for not initiating the construction work of railway line between Shegaon and Jalana;

(d) the time by which the Government propose to construct the above rail line; and

(e) the number of on-going rail line projects which are unremunerative alongwith the details reasons/ compulsion for their construction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Shegaon and Jalna are connected by rail links via Purna-Akola and via Manmad-Bhusawal.

(b) Survey for new line to provide direct connection between Khamgaon and Jalana (155 km) have been conducted twice, first time in 1994 and updating in 2001.

(c) and (d) The results of surveys were as under:

Year	Approx. Cost	Rate of return
1994	228.15 Cr.	(-) 1.56%
2001	465 Cr.	(-) 2.01%

Keeping in view constraint of resources and heavy throwforward of ongoing projects, it has not been found feasible to consider sanctioning of the proposed line.

(e) A total of 73 unremunerative new line projects are in progress. Government have approved these projects

mainly on socio-economic considerations with an aim to provide rail connectivity to backward, remote, hilly and other underdeveloped areas.

Ban on Supply of Diesel by Road

1572. SHRI B. VINOD KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have banned the inter-State supply of diesel by road;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government have provided railway wagons in sufficient number to ensure supply of diesel by rail;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether complaints have been received from States; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. There is no ban on free movement of diesel on intra and interstate basis by road.

(c) and (d) As of now, the North-East has inadequate capacity for movement, The Railways have initiated an Action plan to improve the infrastructure in North-East for enhanced rail loading.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Nomination for NFDC/CBFC

1573. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons have been nominated in various bodies e.g. NFDC, CBFC, etc. of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting since June, 2004 so far;

(b) whether the Government has removed any person from his office since June, 2004; and

(c) if so, the reasons behind that action?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) while a new chairperson of CBFC was nominated on 13th October, 2004, the new Society of Satyajit ray Film & Television Institute, Kolkata, an autonomous body under this Ministry was reconstituted on 18.08.2004 nominating 12 members both ex-officio and non-official members.

(c) Appointments made by the Government are reviewed from time to time as and when necessary.

Drilling Contracts in Bombay High

1574. SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is the fact that ONGC has given higher day rates in foreign currency to Indian Drilling companies for their offshore exploration drilling contracts in Bombay High in this year;

(b) the day rates in last three years for offshore drilling contractors in exploration contracts in Bombay High for jack-up Rigs;

(c) whether there are irregularities in ONGC in these contracts;

(d) whether private offshore drilling contractors are operating their rigs on 100% capacity and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) have apprised Government that contracts have been awarded to Indian drilling companies for offshore exploration drilling in Mumbai High this year as per rates received against open International Competitive Bidding (ICB) in accordance with the guidelines and tender conditions. The details of the day rates in the last three years for offshore drilling contractors in exploration contracts in Mumbai High for Jack-up Rigs are enclosed as statement.

(d) and (e) Private companies/Joint Ventures operating under Production Sharing Contracts do not own any rig for drilling/workover operation. Private offshore drilling contractors are operating rigs as per the scope of work

and the terms and conditions of the contracts. The contractors are carrying out the jobs assigned to conditions of the contracts. The contractors are carrying out the jobs assigned to them within the rig capacity and as per the Scope of work in the contract.

Statement

The contracts for charter hire of offshore Rigs (Jack up Rigs) during last three years in exploration contracts in Mumbai offshore.

Sr. No	Name of the Firm	Contract No. & date/Rig	Operating Day Rate	Effective day Rate
	Year 2002			
1.	M/S GESCO Mumbai	OT-1008/Dy 8 DF 208 Dt. 25.3.02 Rig: Kedarnath	US$ 39,600	US$ 37,684.78
2.	M/S RBF Rig Corpn.,USA	OT-1008/Dy KDF 209 dt.25.3.04 Rig: CE Thornton	US$ 45,000	US$ 45,219.45
	Year 2003			
1.	M/S Jagson Intl.Ltd.. New Delhi.	OT-1021/DY8DF 0248 dt. 11.4.2003 Rig: Deepsea Matdrill	US$ 21,366	US$ 21,275.39
	Year 2004			
1.	M/s Great Eastern Shipping Co.Ltd. Mumbai	OT-1041/P46JCO4001/DY8DF O310 dt. 16.9.2004 Rig: Kedarnath	US$ 46,994	US$ 44,721.23
2.	M/s. Transocean Offshore Intl. Ventures Ltd., Cayman Islands	OT-1041 P46JCO4001/DYKDFO311 dt. 16.9.2004 Rig: CE Thornton	US$ 45,000	US$ 44,721.23

Culture Centre Near Tripunithura

1575. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal for setting up of an Education and Entertainment Center for promotion of Culture, Tourism and Education near Tripunithura (Thiruvankulam), Kerala, is pending with the Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the stage for approval?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A RAJA): (a) and (b) No such proposal has been received by the Ministry of Culture.

[Translation]

Unauthorised Vendors at Stations/Trains

1576. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether unathorised vendors create difficulties for passengers at platforms and in trains and incidents of theft also take place due to presence of unauthorised vendors in trains and at platforms;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to check unauthorised vendors at platforms and in trains; and

(c) the extent of success achieved by the Government in its efforts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes. Sir. It is a fact that unauthorised vendors crate difficulties for passengers However, incidents of theft by unauthorized vendors have not come to notice.

(b) Unauthorised vending/hawking is an offence under the provision of Section 144 of the Railways Act, 1989. To eradicate the nuisance of unauthorised vending/ hawking causing inconvenience to the passengers, regular drives are being conducted against them in co-ordination with Commercial Staff and Government Railway Police personnel.

(c) During the year 2004, upto September, 65,331 persons were prosecuted under section 144 of the Railways Act, 1989 and 60,739 persons were convicted for unauthorised vending and an amount of Rs. 1,58,04,537/- was realised as fine.

[English]

Setting up of Libraries as an Institute of National Importance

1577. SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal before the Government for declaration of some age old, having priceless collections of libraries as an Institute of National Importance;

(b) if so, the number of proposal have been received by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether any proposal from the Government of West Bengal has been received for declaration of the Uttarpura Joykrishna Public Library as an Institute of National Importance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. We have received a proposal for declaration of the Uttarpura Joykrishna Public Library as an Institute of National Importance.

(c) and (d) No such proposal has been received from the Government of West Bengal in the recent past.

Rail Projects in Kerala

1578. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new rail lines, doubling, gauge conversion electrification railway bridges foot over bridges platform arrangements modernization conversion of mater gauge to broad gauge being undertaken/proposed to be undertaken in Kerala;

(b) if so, the amount allocated for each during the current financial year; and

(c) the estimated period of completion of the each project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The details of ongoing new lines, gauge conversion, doubling and electrification project falling partly/fully in the State of Kerala along with the estimated cost, outlay provided during 2004-05. expenditute incurred till 31-03-04 and the target, wherever fixed are as under:-

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Estimated Cost	Exp. upto, March 04	Outlay 04-05	Status
1	2	3	4	5	6
	New line				
1.	Tanur(Kuttipuram)-Guruvayur	137.71	6.72	3	Survey work has stopped due to local agitations, The matter is being pursued with the State Government for land acquisition, No land is made available to the Railways.

1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Angamali-Sabarimala	550	5.40	2	The matter is being pursued with the State Government for land acquisition. No land is made available to the Railways.
3.	Kottayam-Erumeli	200	0.14	2	Survey work has Stopped due to local agitations. The matter is being pursued with the State Government for land acquisition. No land is made available to the Railways.
	Gauge Conversion				
1.	Quilon-Tirunelveli Tiruchendur and Tenkasi-Virudhunagar	462.61	137.70	21.06	Virudhunagar Tenkasi converted line has been commissioned. On Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur and Quilon-Punalur section, works are in various stages of progress. Final location survey report on the Ghat section between Section between Sengottai and Punalur is being finalized.
	Doublings				
1.	Calicut-Mangalore (221 kms)	583.74	502.28	15	Work has been completed except at Naitravati bridge where works are in progress.
2.	Shoranur-Calicut (86 km)	178.23	82.92	30	Land acquisition, earthwork and bridges are in progress. 30 km doubling is targeted for completion during 2003-04.
3.	Ernakulam-Mulanturutti (17.37 km)	53.23	16.70	8	Earthwork, bridgeworks and other works are in progress. The work is likely to be completed by 2005-06.
4.	Kayankulam-Mavelikkara (7.89 km)	21.84	3.83	2.34	Land acquisition papers submitted to State Government. Work on major bridge has started.
5.	Kayankulam Cheppad (7.76 km)	21.48	3.34	2	Final location survey completed. Land acquisition papers submitted to State Government.
6.	Mavelikkara-Chengannur (12.3 km)	33.65	0	2	New work included in Supplementary Demand for Grants 03-04, Preliminary works taken up.
7.	Cheppad-Haripad (5.28 km)	14.39	0	2	New work included in Supplementary Demand for Grants 03-04. Preliminary works taken up.

1	2	3	4	5	6
	Railway Electrification				
1.	Ernkulam-Trivandrum (320 km)	162.32	106.71	37.92	102 route km has already been electrified upto March 2004 and balance by December, 2005.

A survey for doubling of Trivandrum-Kanniyakumari and updating surveys for doubling of balance section of Kayankulam-Ernakulam via Kottayam/Alleppey and construction of new rail line from Erumeli to Trivandrum via Punalur are in progress. Further consideration of these proposals could be possible once the survey reports become available.

Status of bridges is maintained Railway-wise not State-wise. There are total 354 bridges sanctioned as on 1.4.2004 on Southern Railway which serves the Kerala State also. In the current financial year Rs. 39.21 crores has been allotted in the budget estimate for execution of ongoing works over Southern Railway. Out of 354 bridges. 62 bridges are targeted for completion in the current financial year. Remaining bridges are in the various stages planning and execution and planned to complete upto 2006-07.

Indian Railways have more than 8000 stations. The works of provision of Foot over bridges platforms arrangements and modernization of stations are taken up as per norms based on actual passenger traffic needs at the station, inter-se priorities and availability of funds. State-wise position is not maintained. Kerala falls in Southern Railway and the details of Foot over Bridge/ platform arrangements/modernization of railway stations sanctioned on Southern Railway are included in the "Works Machinery and Rolling Stock Programme, Part-2" presented to the Parliament along with the Railway Budget Documents.

[Translation]

Expansion of Ground Handling Facilities to Foreign Airlines

1579. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether apart from passenger and freight carriage Indian Airlines is now engaged in expanding its business by providing ground handling facilities to foreign airlines operating in India.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the estimated year-wise return Indian Airlines is likely to get as a result of providing ground handling facilities to foreign airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Airlines is providing Ground Handling services of 16 scheduled airlines at 14 Indian Airports.

(c) The year-wise ground handling revenue earned by Indian Airlines during the last 3 years is given below;

Year	Revenue
2001-02	117.74
2002-03	128.71
2003-04	180.83

[English]

Gauge conversion project of Samkhayali-Palanpur

1580. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway intent to take Samkhayali-Palanpur gauge conversion project on priority basis;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal; and

(c) the time by which the work of this project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) (a) Yes, Sir. The work is already in progress.

(b) This work has been taken up on cost sharing basis with the Government of Gujarat and other beneficiaries. A special purpose vehicle named "Kutch

Railway Company Ltd." has been formed for realization of funds, proper monitoring and speedy execution of work on the project.

(c) The project is likely to be completed in about two years subject to availability of resources.

Growth of Passenger Traffic

1581. SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways draw up a comprehensive perspective plan projecting growth of passenger traffic and capacity for the next three years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) 10th Five Year Plan (2002-2007) includes Railways comprehensive perspective plan, projected growth of passenger traffic and capacity enhancement for the period 2002-2007.

A mid-term appraisal of the 10th Five Year Plan has been undertaken by the Planning Commission in order to reassess the projected growth of traffic, capacity augmentation and other requirements.

Indian Railways have indicated 3% growth of passenger traffic during the remaining three years of the 10th Five Year Plan. Capacity augmentation to take care of the projected growth of traffic has also been accordingly planned.

Resumption of International Air Links from Kolkata

1582. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) whether the Government of West Bengal forwarded proposal to the Minister for resumption of International air links from Kolkata;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether proposal for resumption of KLM flight from Kolkata to Amsterdam and rerouting of existing flight for connecting Kolkata with Frankfurt have also been sent by the Government of West Bengal; and

(d) if so, details of action taken/proposed to be taken by the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Proposal has been received to link West Bengal with China, Japan, neighboring Countries of Bangladesh, Nepal & Bhutan as well as for starting a flight from Kolkata to Singapore/Hong Kong. Request has also been received for resumption of KLM flights from Kolkata to Amsterdam and rerouting of any existing flight for connecting Kolkata with Frankfurt.

(d) With regard to air linking of Kolkata with foreign countries, the designated airlines of Bangladesh, UK, Bhutan, Malaysia, Jordan, Singapore and Thailand are operating international services out of Kolkata. Besides, Kolkata is available as point of call to several countries under our Air Services Agreements. In recent times, Singapore, Malaysia Thailand have enhanced their services out of Kolkata. Indian Airlines has also decided to introduce 3 more direct flights to Bangkok from. Besides this, Air India has also plan to link Kolkata with Bangkok and Singapore on the network of Air India Express. Air India also plans to commence operation between Kolkata and London subject to availability of airport slots at London and aircraft capacity.

Construction of Airport for Commonwealth Games, 2010

1583. SHRI PRAKASHBAPU V. PATIL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has drawn any action plan for construction of new airports and other arrangements in the country particularly in view of Commonwealth Games, 2010;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise particularly with regard to Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh;

(c) whether target dates of these new airports have been fixed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof airport-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No decision has been taken for construction of any new airport in view of Commonwealth Games 2010. However, earlier a proposal for construction Games 2010. However, earlier a proposal for construction of a Greenfield submitted by Government of Uttar Pradesh.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Privatisation of Refineries

1584. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether oil refineries were earlier proposed to be privatised;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has now decided not to privatize any Oil Refinery;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) In terms of the Prevalent policy, the previous Government had decided in January, 2003 to disinvest 34.01% of shares through strategic sale in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and 35.2% shares through offer for sale in domestic/foreign markets in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL). The process was stopped in September, 2003 following the judgement of the Supreme Court in the case of Centre for Public Interest Litigation Vs. Union of India & Others.

The policy of the present Government in regard to disinvestment in PSUs is laid down in the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP). The NCMP, inter-alia, envisages that the existing Navaratna Companies will be retained in the public sector and that profit-making PSUs will not generally be privatized. There is no separate policy for disinvestment of Oil Refineries.

Panel on Oil sector

1585. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

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

(a) whether Government has decided to set up a six member committee to suggest a roadmap to recast the oil sector;

(b) if so, whether the proposal of merging State-owned oil firms on the lines of global majors to create one or two super corporate in the public sectors;

(c) if so, the other main reasons for setting up this panel;

(d) if so, by what time the panel has been asked to submit its recommendations; and

(e) whether the aim of the panel will be to suggest ways to synergise of oil companies to fulfil the objectives stated in the Government's common minimum programme of creating a strong and efficient public sector unit?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) while there is a proposal to set up a six member Committee to advise the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for synergy in Energy, Indicating issues relating to oil sector PSUs no formal decision in this regard has been taken so far.

(b) to (e) Do not arise view of (a) above.

Posts vacant in RPF

1586. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a shortage of Jawans in Railway Protection Force;

(b) if so, the number of various posts vacant in RPF as on date;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to fill up the vacant posts; and

(d) the time by which these posts are likely to be filled up by the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) There are 10751 vacancies of Constables in Railways Protection Force (RPF) as on date.

(c) and (d) Recruitment is being made by the RPF Department. Vacancies are filled on a State-wise and Railway-wise basis. 8 Recruitment Committees have been set up to conduct the recruitment in different States and recruitment has already commenced and is likely to be complete in all respects, by end of May 2005. After completion of pre-appointment formalities such as Medical Examination and verification of character and antecedent, which shall be taken up concurrently, all the candidates will be in position by end 2006.

[Translation]

Electricity to Panchayats

1587. SHRI MUNSHI RAM: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to assign the work of electricity distribution to the panchayat in the States in order to strengthen the panchayati raj system as reported in the *Rashtriya Sahara* dated October 13, 2004;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to make available the funds and the resources to the panchayats for the generations of electricity through the conventional and non-conventional energy resources;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by when this scheme is likely to be prepared?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) A Conference of Chief Ministers and State Minister in charge of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj on Poverty Alleviation and Rural Prosperity through Panchayati Raj was organized in New Delhi on 29-30 June, 2004, jointly by the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Panchayati Raj, The Prime Minister in his inaugural address at this Conference emphasized the need to learn from the Chinese Model of Rural Business Hubs that add value to agricultural produce within the rural areas. The Conference decided to hold seven Round Table Conferences to formulate a draft action plan for achieving the objectives of strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions to enable them to become true institutions of self-government for planning and implementation of programmes of economic development and social justice as envisioned in the Constitution. Round Table-II was held on 28-29 August, 2004 at Mysore where the subject "Panchayati Raj: Planning and implementation and Rural Business Hubs" was discussed Certain presentations were made in regard to Agriculture/Horticulture, bio-diesel through the plant *Jatropha,* exploiting isolated gas wells for Panchayats by the experts in the field. The ministers incharge of Panchayati Raj, thereafter, requested the Minister of Panchayati Raj to hold a national presentations on Rural Business Hubs with the theme 'Economic Empowerment through Panchayats' was held on 5th November, 2004 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIS) from the States and Union Territories. The members of the CII also participated in the presentation. Presentations were made on several subjects including Power through Bio-mass, Exploiting isolated gas wells for Panchayats and Power Generation for Panchayats. Through this National Presentation, and awakening has been sought to be generated among the Panchayats about optimal utilization of control over their local resources. Further action in regard to Generation of electricity through the Conventional and Non-conventional energy resouces, which find place in the XI Schedule may be, taken by the State Governments in the light of the presentations made during National Presentation on 5th November, 2004.

[English]

International Film Festival of India

1588. SHRI ALEMAO CHURCHILL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State of Goa will be the permanent venue of the IFFI in the years to come

(b) whether Goa is certified to possess necessary infrastructure for the same;

(c) if so, the fund earmarked by the Union Government and the State Government of Goa for the purpose; and

(d) if not, the steps taken by the Government to provide necessary infrastructure for the same?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) the Government of India has signed an MoU with the Government of Goa to hold the International Film Festival of India in Goa in 2004. The infrastructure has been built by the Government of Goa and its expenditure has been not met by the Government of Goa.

Dispose off Centaur Lake View Hotel Srinagar (J&K)

1589. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) whether there is any proposal to dispose off Centaur Lake View Hotel Srinagar (J&K) to any private party to hand over the premises and the building to the Government of Jammu & Kashmir; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) As per the policy decision taken by the Government on the recommendations of the Disinvestment Commission regarding Hotel Corporation of India, the Ministry of Civil Aviation had made a reference to the State Government of J&K to take over the Hotel property at Srinagar alongwith the staff on 'as is where is' basis. The State Government of J&K has shown its willingness to take over the property.

Registrar of Newspaper

1590. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be Pleased to State:

(a) the average number of names issued per month by the Registrar of India Newspapers;

(b) whether it is a fact that requests for names are received from all parts of the country;

(c) whether the Government had issued clear instructions about the names to be issued and banned; and

(d) if so, the details of directions issued by Registrar of Indian Newspapers in regard to the names of newspapers and magazines issued by Registrar of Indian Newspapers?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) On an average, 975 titles are verified every month by the Registrar of Newspapers for India.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) As per section 6 of the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, the title should not be the same as, or similar to. that of any other newspaper published either in the same language or in the same State.

[Translation]

Leakage Incidents in Mumbai

1591. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware about that frequent gas leakage incidents in Mumbai Maharashtra;

(b) the number of gas leakage incidents occurred in last year as well as this year till date, year-wise, place-wise;

(c) whether this type of incident occurred due to faulty and unscientific laying of pipelines;

(d) if so, the amount of loss suffered by the Government due to the leakage and the casualties; and

(e) the precautions taken by the Government to check this type of incident?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) There have been some incidents of minor leakagess in natural gas pipeline network of Mahanagar Gas limited (MGL) and GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL) in Mumbai. During the year-2003, 44 and in the year 2004, 25 gas leakage incidents in MGL s pipeline network had occurred. In GAIL's Trombay, Mumbai due to a pilferage attempt by miscreants who had drilled a hole in the over-ground section of the pipeline.

(c) The leakages have occurred not due to any faulty or unscientific laying of pipelines but due to damages while working by contractors of other utilities and pilferage attempts.

(d) The amount of gas loss has been negligible and there has been no casualty.

(e) To check the gas leakage incidents, Government and Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, in consultation with MGL have enhanced coordination with other utilities and mapping of underground utilities for the city of Mumbai. GAIL is also providing additional thickness of pipe wall within populated city limits, Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) for online monitoring of pressure, temperature and flow rate conditions, besides foot patrolling along the pipeline.

Less Gauge Tanks of HPCL in Delhi

1592. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL:
SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA:

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

(a) whether in the petrol pumps of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation in Delhi, the tanks of diesel and petrol are of less gauge;

(b) if so, the action taken against the officers entrusted with the job of supervision of these tanks;

(c) whether amount have been recovered from the contractors after completion of this work; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) During random inspection by officers of the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL), thickness of some tanks in a few petrol pumps in Delhi was found to be less than the specifications.

(b) Delivery of these was taken on the basis of inspection carried out by an approved third party inspection agency as per the terms of the purchase order. However, HPCL has been advised to conduct a departmental inquiry to fix resposibility for this lapse.

(c) and (d) An amount of Rs. 1,83,233/- has been deducted from the pending bills of the defaulting contractor.

Registration of Newspaper

1593. SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications received in the office of the Registrar of Newpapers of India. New Delhi during the last two years for title registration, year-wise and State-wise; and

(b) the number of applications received from Kota district of Rajasthan alongwith number of those allotted titles during the aforesaid period?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The number of applications received for title registration during the last two years State-wise/ Year-wise are given in the Statement-I enclosed.

(b) The number of applications received from Kota District of Rajashan alongwith the number of those allotted titles during last two years are given in the enclosed statement II.

Statement I

Details of applications received for title registration during last two years (State/year-wise)

State	Number of Applications Received in 2002	Number of Applications Received in 2003
1	2	3
Andaman and Nicobar	8	4
Andhra Pradesh	411	442
Arunachal Pradesh	0	2
Assam	36	54
Bihar	69	46
Chandigarh	25	27
Chhattisgarh	87	65
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	2	0
Daman & Diu	4	0
Delhi	1091	952
Goa	24	5
Gujarat	476	385
Haryana	86	47
Himachal Pradesh	13	17
Jammu and Kashmir	46	57
Jharkhand	29	27
Karnataka	405	432
Kerala	195	229
Lakshadweep	0	1

1	2	3
Madhya pradesh	455	414
Maharashtra	942	851
Manipur	9	6
Meghalaya	5	3
Mizoram	14	11
Nagaland	1	1
Orissa	131	126
Pondicherry	10	8
Punjab	90	46
Rajasthan	276	366
Sikkim	3	3
Tamil Nadu	272	269
Tripura	9	9
Uttaranchal	80	179
Uttar Pradesh	793	843
West Bengal	234	204
Total	6331	6131

Statement II

Details of applications received for verification of titles from Kota District of Rajasthan during 2002 and 2003.

Year	Number of applications received for title verification	Number of titles verified
2002	67	29
2003	79	41

[English]

Release of Funds for Construction of Chamaraja Nagar-Mysore Broad Gauge line

1594. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Budget allocation of Rs. 44 crores for the construction of Chamraja Nagar-Mysore broad gauge line has not been released till date;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the amount is likely to be made available?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. An outlay of Rs. 44.29 crore has been provided for the project during the current year. The funds are fully available and are being utilised as per the progress of various works on the project.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Complaints against Release of tenders for Staff

1595. SHRI RAM CHANDRA PASWAN:
SHRI SURAJ SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government has received several complaints from public Representatives regarding the release of tenders for the construction of 94 staff quarters for ONGC at Hazira (Assam);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this tender has been cancelled;

(d) whether there is a move to place the orders for the work by brushing aside the matter after receiving the complaints;

(e) whether the Government has issued orders to the ONGC management to inquire into the matter; and

(f) if so, the present position of this work after the complaints?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (f) Some communications have been received from Public Representatives alleging irregularities in tendering of work for the construction of staff quarters at Jorhat. Assam. It has been alleged that there were violations of the norms of tendering and contract award procedures. According to ONGC, the tender for the construction of 'C' type quarters at Cinmara Complex. Jorhat, Assam was invited under the two (technical and price) bid system, Nine parties had purchased the tender document and four offers received for the work. The technical bids were opened on 12.8.2004 and the price bids on 11.9.2004. ONGC was in the process of evaluting the price bids. but on receipt of the communications of Public Representatives, the Government have sought the views of ONGC in the matter.

[Translation]

Replacement of outdated Engines in Trains

1596. PROF. CHANDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the outdated Railway engines which have outlived utility are being used in Passenger or Goods trains on the Pathankot-Joginder Nagar Railway line which causes troubles in the midway and the Passenger Trains are not reaching on the stations in time.

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to replace them in a phase manner;

(c) if so, the action plan therefor; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which these Engines are likely to be replaced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Locomotives deployed in the section are not due for replacement,

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Funds to Social Welfare Institutions

1597. SHRI SITA RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds allocated/released to social Welfare institutions during 2004-05;

(b) whether the Government has received details of the expenditure incurred out of the allocated funds to aforesaid institutions; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, institution-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has allocated Rs. 241.28 crores and released grant-in-aid assistance of Rs. 99.66 crores as Ist Installment under 10 Schemes to 1783 voluntary organizations in 2004-05.

(b) and (c) The funds released in 2004-05 will be utilized in the current year and utilization certificates for the same will be due in 2005-06.

Decline in Advertisements

1598. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the wake of policy of liberalisation there has been a decline in the number of advertisements given by the Union Government through the Directorate of Audio-Visual Publicity (DAVP);

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the extent of the decline;

(c) whether the advertisement of DAVP are not thematic to the requisite standard owing to which various departments of the Union Government have to hire the services of the private advertisement agencies;

(d) if so, whether this is happening due to the shortage of employees devoid of skill and expertise in the art of advertisement posted in the Directorate; and

(e) if so, the sanctioned strength of the employees working in all the categories in the Directorate and the number of those presently employed in it alongwith the details of the steps being taken by the Government to make advertisements more appealing and thematic and to do way with the shortcoming of the employees?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) The Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) has qualified artists, well versed in advertising and has a Studio with Desk Top Publishing (DTP) facilities. Most of the advertisement released are designed and prepared in-house, However Ministries/ Departments are free to get their advertisements designed from outside and released through DAVP. DAVP endeavours to improve the advertisement designs, which is a continuous process.

The sanctioned staff strength and those in position are 854 and 665, respectively.

Leakage of Question Papers

1599. SHRI UDAY SINGH:
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether CBI has busted a racket involving leak of question papers of the Matric Entry Requirment (MER) 2005 exams of the Indian Nevy, as reported in the *Statesman* dated October 7, 2004;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the officials of the Indian Nevy have been booked in this connection; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The office of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) at Ranchi reportedly unearthed a racket in which some questions of the Question Paper of the Matric Entry Requirement (MER), 2005 examination of the Indian Navy, were found in the possession of some civilian personnel. The matter is still under investigation by the CBI and the Navy's Board of Inquiry.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Storage of Petrol and Diesel

1600. SHRI KAMLA PRASAD RAWAT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that certain oil companies are storing petrol and diesel;

(b) if so, the names thereof;

(c) whether dumping/storage of petrol and diesel by these companies is creating problems for common man;

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government against these companies; and

(e) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (e) Public sector oil companies (IOC, BPC, HPC & IBP) have setup their storge points at various locations in the country for distribution of petroleum products, including petrol and diesel. These storage points are setup following the conditions laid down by Government/Statutory bodies such as the Oil Industry Safety Directorate (OISD), the Chief Controller of Explosives (CCOE), the Pollution Control Board, the Factory Inspectorate, Local Administration, etc.

[English]

Disability Centres

1601. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had started construction of six disability centres in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any of these centres have been completed; and

(d) if so, the details of said centres which have started working and the number patients who have received treatment in each such center so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Government had approved up of five Composite Regional Centres (CRCS) for Persons with Disabilities in February. 2000, The construction of the Buildings for these CRCs have started after suitable land was allotted by the respective State Governmets. As of today CRC Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh is functioning from the newly constructed building while constructions is going on in the remaining four CRCs at Lucknow in UP, Guwahati in Assam, Sundernager in Himachal and Srinagar in J&K,

(c) and (d) All the five CRCs were made functional from accomodation provided by the respective State Governments from the year 2000 onwards. The number of persons who have received various types of rehab-services. center-wise, is given below:-

	CRC at	No. of beneficiaries (as on 30-11-2004)
1.	Bhopal, MP	20687
2.	Guwahati, Assam	56048
3.	Lucknow, UP	37526
4.	Srinagar, J&K	10835
5.	Sundarnagar, HP	5556

Tatkal Reservation Facility in Rajdhani/ Shatabdi Express

1602. SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has started Tatkal Reservation Facility in Rajdhani and Shatabdi trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of berths to be kept for tatkal reservation in each of these trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) and (b) The new Tatkal Scheme is being introduced in various trains including Rajdhani/Shatabdi phase-wise starting from 14th November 2004.

(c) The number of berths to be earmarked as Tatkal accommodation in various classes in trains including Rajdhani/Shatabdi Express trains would depend upon the number of coaches running on those trains.

[Translation]

Implementation of Reservation Policy by NGOs

1603. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI:
SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:
SHRI BALESHWAR YADAV:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has directed the Government aided Non-Governmental Organisations (N.G.Os.) to implement the provision of reservation in jobs for the S.C., S.Ts. Backward Class and Physically Handicapped while making appointments in their respective organizations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of the organizations along with the number of persons who have been provided jobs therein under the provision, NGO-wise; and

(d) the action taken/being taken against the N.G.Os violating the provisions of reservation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): (a) and (b) All the Schemes, under which grant-in-aid is released by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment to Voluntary Organisations, (VOs) require that the voluntary organizations will follow the reservation policy for filling the posts under their control on the lines indicated by the Government of India. Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has reiterated these instructions and the sanction letters for release of grant-in-aid also incorporate this condition.

(c) The details regarding persons employed against the reserved posts is maintained by the VOs at their level.

(d) No instances of violation of the provisions of reservation have come to notice and the NGOs are also being given sufficient time to implement the policy.

[English]

Vacant Posts

1604. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of posts of various categories are lying vacant with Railways:

(b) if so, the vacant position as on date, zone-wise;

(c) whether the Government is aware of the inordinate delay in clearing the backlog of SC/ST vacancies:

(d) if so, the reasons for not clearing the backlog; and

(e) the steps taken to fill up these vacancies at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Approximately number of vacant posts in Group 'C' and 'D' on Zonal Railways as on 31.10.04 are:

Zonal Railway	Vacant Posts
1	2
Central	12459
Eastern	13405
Northern	13633

1	2
North Eastern	4703
Northeast Frontier	10824
Southern	9674
South Central	9457
South Eastern	13733
Western	16177
East Coast	7677
East Central	12114
North Central	4347
North Western	8940
South East Central	7165
South Western	4697
West Central	5613

(c) to (e) In pursuance of Minister of Railways Budget announcement 2004-2005 and subsequently as per directives received from the Department of Personnel and Training as a part of the Government's Common Minimum Programme, a Special Recruitment Drive has been launched w.e.f. 23.7.2004 to clear the backlog vacancies of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in recruitment categories in group 'C' ad 'D' existing as on 31.3.2004 so as to clear the same in a time bound manner by the target date of 30.6.2005.

Likewise, a Special Promotion Drive has also been launched w.e.f. 15.10.2004 to wipe out the backlog vacancies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in all the groups- A, B, C and D—in promotion categories existing as on 1.7.2004 so as to complete the same by 1.4.2005.

[Translation]

Theft of Remains of Bomb

1605. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the facts that the remains of the exploded bombs are being stolen from the bombs explosion centres;

(b) whether the Government has suffered loss of crores of rupees on account of some incidents of theft from the said centers during the last three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the number of persons who have lost their lives in such activities; and

(e) the steps taken or being taken to check such theft?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There has been no report of theft of remains of exploded bombs from the demolition grounds of the Ammunition Depots.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Does not arise.

[English]

Regularisation of Services of Air Alliance Employees

1606. SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to reply to the Unstarred Question No. 2310 dated July 23, 2004 regarding 'Regularisation of services of Air Alliance Employees' and to state:-

(a) whether the company has reviewed the matter;

(b) if so, the details alongwith steps taken to consider their demand; and

(c) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Company has since revised the remuneration of the employees on contract in general category which include ground supports staff w.e.f. 1st October, 2004.

[Translation]

Amount Spent on Advertisements by IOC

1607. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount spent by Indian Oil Corporation on advertisements between March, 2002 to March, 2004;

(b) whether the total amount spent were for the publication of advertisements in print media;

(c) if not, the total amount spent on advertisements on television and print media, separately; and

(d) the total amount proposed to be spent on advertisements during the period from April, 2004 to March, 2005?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) During the period between March, 2002 and March, 2004, the total amount spent by the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) on advertisements and communication activities was Rs. 14,304.30 lakh. Out of this, an amount of Rs. 4,962.76 lakh was spent on Television.

(d) During the period from April, 2004 to March, 2005, IOC proposes to spend an amount of Rs. 12,320 lakh on advertisements.

Development of Rail Lines of North Bihar

1608. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a proposal to develop the railway lines of North Bihar on the line of Konkan;

(b) if so, the details of the programme formulated by the Government;

(c) whether the Government are aware that the work of gauge conversion between Katihar-Jogbani and Mansi-Saharsa is behind the time schedule; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to speed-up the work of gauge conversion?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The works of gauge conversion of Mansi-Saharsa and Barsoi-Radhikapur of Katihar-Jogbani, Katihar-Radhikapur projects are targeted for completion during 2004-05. The progress of various activities on the projects have been expedited so as to complete the same as per the schedule.

Shortage of Skilled Technician

1609. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether efficiency of the Indian Navy is affected due to shortage of personnel having technical skill at present as reported in the 'Hindustan' dated October 29, 2004;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to recruit Marine soldiers for deployment on the new ships; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir. The operational efficiency of the Navy is being maintained with stringent management of available manpower.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Those who want to go may please go. Please do not disturb the House. Let there be no cross talk.

...(*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI (Bhagalpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, about tainted Ministers..... (*Interruptions*)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, papers to be laid.

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Mr. Speaker, Sir. I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy of the Notification No. S.O. 1098 (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 11th October, 2004 investing the Railway Board with all powers of the Central Government under clause (b) of sub-section (2) of section 87 of the Railway Act, 1989, issued under section 2 of the Indian Railway Board Act, 1905.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1003/04]

(2) A copy of the Railways (Punitive charges for overloading of wagon) Rules, 2004 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. S.O. 1147(E) in Gazette of India dated the 18th October, 2004 under section 199 of the Railways Act, 1989.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1004/04]

(3) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:-

(a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Railtel Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004.

(ii) Annual Report of the Railtel Croporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller ad Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1005/04]

(b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Konkan Railway Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004.

(iii) Annaul Report of the Konkan Railway Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1006/04]

(c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the RITES Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004.

(ii) Annual Report of the RITES Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts and coments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1007/04]

(d) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Container Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004.

(ii) Annual Report of the Container Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comtroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1008/04]

(4) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indian Railway Welfare Organisation, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Indian Railway Welfare Organisation, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1009/04]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:

(1) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Scooters India Limited and the Department of Heavy Industry. Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises for the year 2004-2005.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1009A/04]

(2) A copy of the statement (Hindi and English versions) explaining reasons for not laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Bharat Brakes and Valves Limited (BBVL) and

the Weighbird India Limited (WIL), for the year 2002-2003 within the stipulated period of nine months after the close of the accounting year.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1010/04]

(3) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act. 1956:-

(a) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Scooters India Limited, Lucknow, for the year 2003-2004.

(ii) Annual Report of the Scooters Indian Limited, for the year 2003-2004, Lucknow, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1011/04]

(b) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Tyre Corporation of India Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2003-2004.

(ii) Annual Report of the Tyre Corporation of India Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1012/04]

(c) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2003-2004.

(ii) Annual Report of the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1013/04]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:

(1) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Chief Commissioner for Railway Safety, Lucknow, for the year 2002-2003, under section 10 of the Railways Act, 1989.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1014/04]

(2) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Indian Airlines Limited and the Ministry of Civil Aviation for the year 2004-2005.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1015/04]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JEGADEESAN): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:

(1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (3) of section 73 of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995:-

(i) S.O. 1183(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 26th October, 2004 exempting the posts of Sub-Inspector and Constables in the Railway Protection Force and Railway Protection Special Force under the Ministry of Railways.

(ii) S.O. 1184(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 26th October, 2004 exempting the posts of Sub-Inspector and Constables in the Railway Protection Force and Railway Protection Special Force from the provisions of section 33 of the said Act.

(iii) S.O. 946(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 23rd August, 2004 exempting all categories of posts of "combatant personnel" only of the Special Service Bureau (SSB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs from the provisions of section 33 of the said Act.

(iv) S.O. 947(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 23rd August, 2004 exempting all categories of posts of "combatant personnel" only of the Special Service Bureau (SSB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs from the provisions of section 47 of the said Act.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 1016/04]

12.02 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

First to Third Reports

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to present the follwing Reports (Hindi

and English Versions) of the Public Accounts Committee (2004-2005):-

(1) First Report of the Public Accounts Committee (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Twenty Second Report of the Public Accounts Committee (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on "Delay in operational deployment of imported systems and delay in development-cum-production of a system."

(2) Second Report of Public Accounts Committee (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Twenty Seventh Report of the Public Accounts Committee (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on "Purchase of residence for Consulate General of India at Frankfurt."

(3) Third Report of Public Accounts Committee (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) on Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Thirty Sixth Report of the Public Accounts Committee (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on "Avoidable import of high capacity diesel powered breakdown cranes."

12.03 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

Action Taken Statements

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA (Ujjain): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to present the statements (Hindi and English versions) showing Final Action Taken replies by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in Chapter-I of the following Action Taken Reports of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes:-

(i) Fifty Second Report (Tenth Lok Sabha)- Reservation for and employment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Life Insurance Corporation Limited and appointment of Scheduled Castes ad Scheduled Tribes in the panel of advocates; and

(ii) Fifty Fourth Report (Tenth Lok Sabha)- Reservation for and employment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited.

12.04 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Action-taken Statements

[English]

SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH (Karol Bagh): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table four Statements (Hindi and English versions) showing Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the following Reports (13th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women:-

(1) Eleventh Report of the Committee on 'Women in Detension';

(2) Fourteenth Report of the Committee on 'Education Programmes for Women';

(3) Sixteenth Report of the Committee on 'Training and Empowerment of Women in Local Bodies'; and

(4) Seventeenth Report of the Committee on 'Violence Against Women During Riots'.

12.05 hrs.

RE: POSTPONEMENT OF CALLING ATTENTION

Hardship faced by the Opium Cultivators

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, a Calling Attention notice given by Shri Dushyant Singh on the hardship being faced by Opium cultivators is listed at Sl. No. 9 in today's Order Paper. Hon. Minister of Finance has requested that the Calling Attention notice may be postponed for being taken up tomorrow. Shri Dushyant Singh has agreed to this postponement. If the House agrees, the Calling Attention may be taken up tomorrow.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes,

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Item No. 10, Calling Attention. Shri P. Mohan.

....(Interruptions)

SHRI P. MOHAN (Madurai): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Coal to the situation arising out of reported move to privatise the Neyveli Lignite Corporation and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto.

....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, before you take up Calling Attension Motion, I would like to draw the attension towards the question that was raised yesterday *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Malhotra, I will call you. You know the system. That is the procedure.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Immediately after this I will take it up.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: There is no question of any such procedure. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Malhotra, I will hear you. After the Calling Attention I will call you. That is the procedure. You know very well that that is the procedure.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is only after the Calling Attention. You know that is the procedure.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will call you after the Calling Attention. That is the procedure.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: There can be only Calling Attention for today. How can there be two? *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: There are two. You see the list.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Coal.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Where is the Minister?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Very well.

I will hear him. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is very wrong. The Minister should have been present.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please speak one by one Shri Raghunath Jha (Bettiah): I will also speak.

MR. SPEAKER: You will also skeak?

12.06 hrs.

RE: ALLEGED LEVELLING OF CORRUPTION CHARGES BY TWO UNION CABINET MINISTERS AGAINST EACH OTHER

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker. Sir, yesterday, this question was raised in the House that the hon. Prime Minister should speak regarding the serious charges levelled against each other by Shri Lalu ji and Shri Ramvilas Paswan. Shri Lalu Prasad Ji made a statement in the House yesterday, wherein he denied having level on any charges against Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. It was a very ridiculous statement. All the TV Channels repeated those charges leveled by them against each other. All the newspapers published that they misled the House. The newspapers also specified the days on which the lebelled charges against each other *...(Interruptions)* Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am saying *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is not proper. You have not even given the Notice.

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*Not recorded.

[English]

Just now you sent a slip. Even then I called you.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: There is no question of giving notice. I have raised it previously also ...(*Interuptions*) It is a matter of privilege and the Prime Minister has to reply *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want the Prime Minister to make a statement?

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Government respond. I have nothing to do.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): The Ministers concerned want to clear their positions *...(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: It should not be Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, the Prime Minister should reply. ...(*Interuptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Here is the Minister. Let us hear the Minister.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Both the Ministers want to say something *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Have you got anything to say? You hear him. What is this?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Only Shri Ram Vilas Paswan's statement will be recorded.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us hear him. A Minister wants to speak. You have mentioned his name. He wants to speak.

...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: What is this going on?

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You have mentioned his name in the House. You have taken his name in the House. He wants to reply. He is present here.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let us hear the Minister if he has anything to say.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): The hon. Prime Minister should give reply in this case *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You take the name of the Minister. He is willing to speak. And if you will not hear him, this is strange.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Shri Vajpayeeji should be called to speak in Mr. Advanlji's case. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I earnestly appeal all of you. Please do not bring down the name of Parliament. What are we doing here?

...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it theway you want to maintain the decency and decorum in this House? All of you are shouting together.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed you to speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have taken the name of a Minister in the House.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I am on my legs, and nobody is listening to me. There is no respect for the Chair in this House. You have only given lip service. Your assurances are only lip service. This is very strange.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, I am only requesting the hon. Prime Minister to come to the House, and reply on this issue. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot dictate the hon. Prime Minister to come to the House. You keep on repeating it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing else will be recorded.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. Why are you shouting? Please do not shout. I would not permit this.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The situation is becoming intolerable. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing? How are you behaving? What is this?

...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: How can I compel the hon. Prime Minister? It is entirely for them to call the hon. Prime Minister.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have taken the name of a Minister, and made allegations against him. The concerned Minister wants to reply, and you are not giving him the opportunity. What is all this going on in the House? I would not allow this.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: There is no use of speaking because nothing is going on the record.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Only the statement made by Shri Ram Vilas Paswan should be recorded.

*...(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): Please listen to me first. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Sir, an allegation has been levelled against me that by levelling a charge against Cabinet Minister I have not follwed the principle of collective responsibility of the Cabinet.

Sir, I would like to tell that I have not said anything against any Union Minister. Whatever I had said, was regarding Bihar. U.P.A. Government is in power at the Centre. Whole of the country knows that Dr. Manmohan is a very honest person. Smt. Sonia Gandhi has made supreme sacrifice for the country. That is why, a wrong allegation has been levelled against me that I have levelled charges against a Union Minister. I have not done so.

Sir, there are many political parties in Bihar and each party presents its own viewpoint. Whatever I had said was regarding the Government of Bihar and not against the Union Government. Therefore, I categorically state

that I have not violated any principle of collective responsibility of the Union Cabinet. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had said that he will not achieve his purpose. His efforts will be of no avail. Nothing is going to happen. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 12.45 p.m.

12.17 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till fourty five minutes past twelve of the Clock.

12.45 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at forty-five minutes past Twelve of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

CALLING ATTENTION TO THE MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Situation arising out of reported move to privatise Neyveli Lignite Corporation and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Item No.9—Calling Attention.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Just wait and hear what I say.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please allow me to conduct the House. You are dictating terms to the Speaker every time. Wait for what I say.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, it was very unfortunate that you were not present when the matter was called on. Therefore, in future please attend to the matters in time.

[Translation]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI (Bhagalpur): Mr. Speaker Sir, he is a tainted Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What are you talking?

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Sir, the Prime Minister should come and reply.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister you may please speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What is going on. What are you doing here. I am requesting you.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI P. MOHAN (Madurai): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Coal to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The reported move to privatise the Neyveli Lignite Corporation and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto."

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker Sir, Hon. Prime Minister is being asked to make statement for three days. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Only the Minister's statement will be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)**

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*Not recorded.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI SHIBU SOREN): Mr. Speaker. Sir, There is no proposal or move to private Neyveli Lignite Corporation. I would like to assure honourable Members that Neyveli Lignite Corporation is a performing PSU and we have no intention to privatise it.

NLC is a profit making Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) and during the last 3 years it has continuously earned profits.

S.No.	Financial Year	Profit before tax (in crore rupees)
1.	2001-02	1198.53
2.	2002-03	1687.83
3.	2003-04	1413.08

In addition, as per the National Common Minimum Programme, profit making PSUs would not be privatised. Therefore, there is no intension to privatise Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC)

*SHRI P. MOHAN (Madurai): Sir, hon. Minister is now stating that they are not going in for privatising Neyveli Lignite Corporation which is making huge profits for the past 3 years in a row. He say there is no such policy. Let me thank the hon. Minister for this. But at the same time I would like to ask of him as to why certain jobs in a new mine are to be handed over to private contractors when NLC itself can handle the job. My very question is based on this factual information only. When you are making impressive gains as one among the Navaratna PSU companies why should you rope in private sector for certain operations. Precisely that is what I want to ask of him. As part of the second mining work at the site called northern flank, a private company named as Ranjit Constructions of Gujarat has been handed over with the overburden process work. The NLC Administration says that it may have to incur an expenditure of Rs. 80 crore and hence they have handed it over to that private contractor for Rs. 62 crore at a time when workers there say that it can be completed at a cost of a mere Rs. 12 crore.

MR. SPEAKER: What is this? The Minister himself has stated that they are not privatising NLC.

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

SHRI P. MOHAN: When NLC has made a profit of Rs. 1413 crore last year alone, an amount of Rs. 80 crore cannot be a discouraging one to that organisation and they are giving work contract to a private contractor. I do not think it is financial prudence. It is not a mere money matter. It is a policy matter. I would like to point out and express my apprehension that this could be a step towards privatisation in days to come. Hence I urge upon you to take up the over-burden work yourself. Let is not be entrusted with private contractors. Will the Government pay heed?

MR. SPEAKER: Shri C. Kuppusami—not present.

SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN (Coimbatore): Sir, in Tamil Nadu, NLC is considered to be a leading public sector undertaking unit. It is a pity that such a company is in bad shape due to discrepancies in the administration and privatisation also.

You are aware that in the Second Thermal Plant, there are seven units but five units had ceased to function due to shortage of lignite. ...*(Interruptions)* I would like to bring to the notice of the Hose that lignite is available in the Second mines, but not been dug out. Instead, lignite is being transported from the First mines to the Thermal Plant thereby increasing the cost of production. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is being recorded.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN: The House should also note the following serious points. ...*(Interruptions)* The Chairman and the Director of Mines do not possess the technical knowledge of mining. ...*(Interruptions)* Now, the NLC Printing Press has been closed down. ...*(Interruptions)* About 100 workers have become unemployed. The work is given to a private printing press with the sole motive of getting commission. ...*(Interruptions)* Another important point to ponder over is the 'over burden' in the Northern Flanker area is given to a Gujarat-based company, named, Ranjit Construction for an amount of Rs. 62 crore. ...*(Interruptions)* In general, all the NLC maintenance work has been privatised.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down, Shri Subbarayan. Your Calling Attention is with regard to the privatisation of NLC. The Minister has said that there is no proposal for privatisation of NLC. What are you asking?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. M. Ramadass—not present.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): Sir, the Calling Attention is whether there is a move to privatise NLC. *...(Interruptions)* The hon. Cabinet Minister has categorically said that there is no such move to privatise NLC. *...(Interruptions)* The hon. Member has asked about outsourcing. *...(Interruptions)* We know that outsourcing is necessary for us because we cannot invest huge amounts for purchasing the latest machinery because it is only for three years. If we invest in a big way, the company would face losses. This is a temporary arrangement made by the company after a lot of discussions. With the approval of the Board, this decision was taken. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Item No.11-Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad.

12.51 hrs.

MOTION RE: FIFTH REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Sir, I beg to move the following:

"That this House do agree with the Fifth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 8th December, 2004."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Fifth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 8th December, 2004."

The motion was adopted.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned till 2 p.m.

12.52 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.

14.02 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at two minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

RE: QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (MUVATTUPUZHA): Sir, I have given a notice for moving a motion of privilege against Shri Lalu Prasad for his statement in the House yesterday which is contradictory to the statements which have been given to the Press all over regarding the issue with Shri Paswan. It is regarding the gross allegation of Rs. 800 crore which has been made against Shri Paswan. It has been denied yesterday. It is a grave matter of privilege. So, I have given a notice.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is under the consideration of the hon. Speaker. He will decide and then I will let you know in the House. I have some problem with my throat. Please accommodate me also.

Now we shall take up Matters under Rule 377.

14.03 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(I) Need to Release Funds for Construction of a Tunnel at Rohtang with a view to link Lahaul Valley with Leh

[Translation]

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH (Mandi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to inform the Defence Minister that it was the dream of Ex-Prime Minister late Shrimati Indira Gandhiji that a tunnel should be constructed beneath the Rohtang pass near Manali, the tourist place of Himachal Pradesh, for joining Lahaul valley with Leh. The Government of India accorded its approval in May, 2002 for construction of nine kilometer tunnel under this scheme in view of its strategic importance. The construction of 1630 km. Manali by-pass on National Highway No. 21 is essential to initiate work for construction of tunnel. For this purpose Chief Engineer (National Highways), the Government of Himachal Pradesh had requested on 23rd July, 2003 to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Government of India to make an allocation of Rs. 448.35 lakh.

I request the hon. Minister to provide adequate allocation of funds for construction of Manali by-pass so as to initiate construction of strategically important Rohtang tunnel in view of national security as well as promotion of tourism.

(ii) Need to increase the minimum support price for cotton and ensure that the cotton purchases of Cotton Corporation of India are made at the support price fixed

[English]

SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO (Guntur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, in the State of Andhra Pradesh, there has been an increase of area in cotton sales/production during the year 2003-04 and 2004-05. The production in Andhra Pradesh State has been increased from 26.62 lakh bales to 30.50 lakh bales, and in Guntur District alone, there is an increase from 11.72 lakh bales to 15 lakh bales.

The minimum support price as fixed by the Price Fixation Committee for the popular varieties like Bunny Brahma @ Rs. 2,010 and MCU-5 @ Rs. 2,035 per quintal whereas the local market price prevailing in the market is Rs. 1,200 to Rs. 1,600 depending on the variety and quality.

The Cotton Corporation of India has entered the market, but it has entered in some districts like Adilabad and are only paying a rate of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 1,900 per quintal on the pretext that the count, strength, staple length, moisture and micronare are not as per the standards.

Therefore, I request the Government of India to take the following steps to mitigate hardships being faced by cotton growers of Andhra Pradesh:

1. To increase the minimum support price for cotton to Rs. 2,500 per quintal;
2. The Government of India should ensure that the Cotton Corporation of India purchases the cotton at minimum support price without resorting to cuts on the pretext of standards; and
3. To explore possibility of increasing the exports to various countries.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to kindly consider these steps at an early date to avoid hardships that may be faced by the cotton growers of Andhra Pradesh.

(iii) Need to set up the Panjthirthi Hydroelectric Power Project on Ujh river in Jammu and Kashmir

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Sir, it is a matter of concern that even after 57 years of our Independence, we could not fulfil the basic requirement of a common man of providing him electricity and drinking water as electrification work could not be completed in most of the States of our country, particularly, in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. From the existing power stations, the requirement of electrification could not be met in the State of Jammu and Kashmir as a whole.

Most of the areas of the State are surrounded by mountains and hills, and the same could not even be connected with roads because of the natural difficulties. I, therefore, draw the attention and demand from the Government of India to set up the Panjthirthi Hydroelectric Power Project at Ujh river in the State of Jammu and Kashmir so as to provide relief to the affected population of the State particularly, Kathua district.

(iv) Need to develop Surat railway station in Gujarat as a model railway station

[Translation]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA (Surat): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Surat railway station is the highest revenue earning station in western railways. Approval had been accorded to declare this station as a model station but no initiative has been taken so far to renovate this railway station as a model station. Surat is an industrial area where lakhs of labourer come from different part of the country to earn their livelihood so as to sustain their families. They move to their home stations from this railway station itself but inspite of heavy congestion, there are no adequate amenities here. All sections of society including the traders, the industrialists and the workers make use of Surat railway station but due to lack of facilities passengers feel annoyed.

I request the Central Government through the House to initiate the work for making Surat railway station as a model station with immediate effect.

(v) Need to include Tarkhan community of Himachal Pradesh in the list of Scheduled Castes

SHRI SURESH CHANDEL (Hamirpur, H.P.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government through you that in Himachal Pradesh

the people who earn livelihood by making tools of Iron are called blacksmiths and people who earn their livelihood through wooden work are called tarkhan or carpenter and both communities have been living there since ancient period. Prior to constitution of Himachal Pradesh both castes were listed as Scheduled Castes but after the reorganisation in the year of 1966 when some hilly areas of Punjab were annexed with Himachal Pradesh, the carpenter community living there which had social practices customs, food habits, education and financial condition similar to that of the blacksmith community was not enlisted as scheduled castes. Their population in the entire state is approximately fifty three thousand. Their density in Mandi, Kangra, Una, Hamirpur, Bilaspur, Solan and Sirmour districts is high.

I request the hon'ble Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment that this is an anomaly which needs urgent removal.

(vi) Need to extend financial assistance to the Government of Orissa to set up a Special Care Unit for treatment of burn injury cases in the district hospital at Balasore

[English]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, Balasore, a prominent district headquarters of Orissa also accommodates the Interim Test Range from where the missiles like Agni, Trishul are test-fired. Thus, it is a very fast growing township, but the district hospital does not have the facilities for treating burn injuries. Due to lack of proper treatment, many a people die every year of burn injuries. The State Government lacks funds to build a separate Special Care Unit in the hospital to treat such patients.

The Central Government should come forward with financial assistance to build a Special Care Unit for the treatment of burn injuries at Balasore.

(vii) Need to extend the proposed four-lane road between Mokama and Monghyr upto Bhagalpur in Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI (Bhagalpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Surface Transport Minister had made an announcement on June, 2004 regarding conversion of 800 Km. Long National Highway in Patna in four lanes and starting the work thereon from the month of September. The announcement covered the stretch of National Highway between Mokama and Monhyr but the stretch from monghyr to Bhagalpur has been left out.

Bhagalpur is the commercial capital of Bihar as well as the headquarters of the most prominent Commissionary of Eastern Bihar. Therefore, the stretch of the National Highway from Monghyr to Bhagalpur should also be included in this scheme.

(viii) Need to extend assistance to the Government of Kerala for protecting the interests of workers engaged in traditional industries

[English]

SHRI P. RAJENDRAN (Quilon): Sir, the splight of about one crore people who are depending on the traditional industries for their livelihood all over Kerala is very pathetic and pitiable. The lives of these workers, mainly in the handloom, coir cashew industries fisheries and construction sector, are being thrown to doldrums following the crisis in agriculture and allied sectors. Amongst these workers, around two million are either completely unemployed or partly employed.

The crisis of cashew industry due to fall in the price of cashew kernels has indeed caused a negative impact on our foreign exchange earnings apart from rendering workers jobless. Coir products worth crores of rupees are accumulated in the godowns for long as the export has shown a diminishing trend, and workers are denied of employment for the last one year.

Application of modern technology, infusion of capital investment and modern marketing are the dire needs of these traditional industries.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Government of India to extend all possible assistance to the State of Kerala so as to save the millions from starvation.

(ix) Need for doubling the rail track on Chhapra-Gonda route and electrification of railway line between Chhapra and Barabanki

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Eastern Railways is the largest link of the Railways connecting Northern Bihar and the North Eastern part of Uttar Pradesh to the National Capital as well as the north western part of India. The lines in most of the areas lying under it have neither been doubled nor

electrified. I request the Government of India that a stretch of Railway track from Chhapra to Gonda should be doubled. Apart from it, the tracks from Chhapra to Barabanki should be electrified. Then only development can take place in these areas.

(x) Need to ensure proper repair and maintenance of National Highway No. 110 between Arbal and Bihar Sharif via Jahanabad and Akangar Sarai

SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister of Road Transport and Highways through this House that the National Highway No. 110 between Arbal and Bihar Sharif via Jahanabad and Akangar Sarai in my Constituency is in a dilapidated condition. It is a very important National Highway in the backward areas of Bihar affected by extremism.

Therefore, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to ensure proper repair and maintenance of the above National Highway with immediate effect.

(xi) Need to execute the work under 'Sam Vikas Yojna' in district Unnao, Uttar Pradesh through Central Agencies.

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Unnao district of Uttar Pradesh has been covered under the 'National Sam Vikas Yojna' and central funds have also been allocated for the district Unnao under the above scheme.

A report from the district level was sent regarding undertaking of the work under the 'National Sam Vikas' that works will be executed through the Public Works Department and other Government agencies. But, 5 N.G.O.'s have been selected to undertake the work at the district level under this scheme. If the work is undertaken through the above 5 N.G.O.'s local people will not properly be benefited.

I would, therefore, like to request the Union Government through the House to immediately cancel the allocation of the Central funds if it has already been allocated to the above five N.G.O.'s at the district level for undertaking the work in the district of Unnao of Uttar Pradesh under the said scheme and direct the Government agencies to complete this work.

(xii) Need to shift the Loco-Shed at Nanded and re-establish it at Purna in Maharashtra

SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL (Parbhani): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, seven years ago the railway loco-shed situated at Purna in my Constituency was shifted to Nanded due to which the Railways have been incurring great losses and the performance of the Loco-shed is also not satisfactory. The engines for the Meter Gauge and the coaches cannot be moved to this loco-Sheds. Besides this I would like to inform the House that the structure of the Loco-Shed at Purna is very good and the repair work etc. of the Railway engines being used in the Rail services of this area and the Railway coaches can be done in a very good way.

I request the Union Government through the House to re-establish the Nanded Loco-Shed at Purna so that the Railways do not have to incur any more losses and the purpose of the Loco-Shed is also fulfilled.

(xiii) Need to check the leakage of hazardous ammonia gas from Oswal Fertilizer Plant at Paradeep Port, Orissa

[English]

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK (Kendrapara): I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Environment and Forest to the newspaper reports about the frequent leakage of hazardous Ammonia gas from Oswal Fertilizer Plant at Paradeep Port, Orissa. The leakage had occurred in September last year and this year in June. The District Collector's (Kendrapara) enquiry report has confirmed this. The people of Kharnasi, Ram Nagar, Bhakud villages of Mahakalapada block are living in a state of panic. I visited the area recently and found myself that the hazardous gas has caused health problems like burning of eyes, throat pain and breathing problem. The vegetation like paddy crops, coconut and banana plantation of the area have been adversely affected by the polluted air. The people of the area are living in a state of fear due to potentially killer gas. There is a fear among the people that a Bhopal gas tragedy like situation is imminent at Paradeep Port. It has been reported that the plant has installed sub-standard machinery at vital installations. I request the hon. Prime Minister to intervene in this matter so that a Bhopal gas tragedy like situation could be averted in the near future at Paradeep Port.

(xiv) Need to provide financial assistance to the Government of Bihar for desiltation of canals in Begusarai district

[Translation]

SHRI SURAJ SINGH (Balia, Bihar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the famous Kavar lake is situated between

[Shri Suraj Singh]

the Manjhaul and Bakhri sub-divisions of Begusarai. In 1952 itself a canal was dug which is spread over an area of 7 kilometres starting from Jaimanglagarh near Manjhaul to Bagras gate. In the absence of proper maintenance and repair of this canal during the last 20-25 years, the 14 'chaurs' of the Kavar Lake are affected with water stagnation. As a result, the agricultural land of this area is submerged under water, the agricultural production has come to a halt. The farmers are bereft of their livelihood as most of them are rendered landless and are on the verge of starvation. The prosperity of the region has turned to adversity. This water logged area is hundred per cent cultivable and it is predominantly rural and extremely backward. Agricultural production is the mainstay of people's livelihood in this area. Due to Government's failure in undertaking of drainage works in the rural areas, the region has lagged behind in rural development besides agricultural production. I through this House, request the Government to issue instructions for undertaking the desilting and cleanliness works on Canal/ Chaurs around the Kavar area and divert water to the adjacent river (within 4 kilometres) by constructing double gates so as to make this land cultivable and develop the area. Apart from it I, further, request the Government to make sufficient funds available to the State Government for this purpose.

(xv) Need to allocate the required amount of Rupees 96 crore for doubling the Madurai-Dindigul railway line

[English]

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul): Madurai-Chennai track in the Southern Railway is the much-patronised route on which the railway gets more passenger revenue. At present, every day Express trains are running on this route apart from weekly trains and passenger trains. All the trains are running to their full capacity even though there is much demand for more trains on this route because of the over utilisation of this track which is said to be 160 per cent. This is the shortest route to North India destinations from Kerala instead of *via* West Coast.

Initially, a stretch of about 60 kms. between Madurai and Dindigul has been decided to be doubled at a cost of Rupees 96 crores. But only a paltry amount has been allocated so far to keep the project alive. There has been repeated demand in Parliament by us and various organisations to give top priority to this project. By completing this project earnestly the Railway will be able to get sufficient returns on the investment on this project.

I urge upon the hon. Minister for Railways to allocate the needed Rs. 96 crore in the ensuing Budget with a commitment to complete the project before 31st March, 2006.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up Item No. 13, that is, Discussion under Rule 193. The time allotted for this discussion is four hours. Shri Basu Deb Acharia is to initiate the discussion.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, I have got a pint of order.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Under what rule are you raising the point of order?

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, I am raising the point of order under Rule 376(1) It says:

> "A point of order shall relate to the interpretation of enforcement of these rules or such Articles of the Constitution as..."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Under what rule are you raising the point of order?

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Under Rule 376(1). Sir, you first listen to me what I wish to say. You can say that there is no point of order but at least listen to me.

> "A point of order shall relate to the interpretation of enforcement of these rules or such Articles of the Constitution as regulate the business of the House."

Sir, since the beginning of the 14th Lok Sabha, it seems that all the discussions under Rule 193 have been started by one particular group of Members belonging to the left. When more than one member gives notice on the same subject, how and who selects the name of the member in whose name the discussion stands? A message is being sent outside as if only one group of members is interested in the discussion and other members just come to sit and watch the proceedings.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, I would just like to know the rule. In the rule regarding Short Duration Discussion, nowhere it has been mentioned as to how

the name of the initiator, if more than one Member have given notice, will be selected. It is very strange. If you start from the beginning of this Lok Sabha, almost all the discussions have been started by the Left Party Member. We have also given notice. A number of notices have been given by us.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, he should be educated on the procedure for selection of names

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Will they educate us all the time?

They are the most educated people. But how do we know? You please give your ruling on this. I would just like to know from you as to how it is selected. There are so many Members who had given notice on the same subject.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is no point of order on this.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, you can reject my point of order, but I would like to know as to how it is selected. They want to give out a message that they are the people who only are interested on issues like poverty and every other such problem in this country and not us. I want your ruling on this.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can meet the hon. Speaker and he would explain to you everything.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can meet the hon. Speaker and he would explain to you everything.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*...(Interruptions)**

14.27 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Price Rise

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will now take up discussion under Rule 193 regarding price rise. Shri Basu Deb Acharia to initiate the discussion.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, the issue of price rise is an important matter. The lives of poor people and that of the lower middle class people are being affected owing to rise in prices of essential commodities. The rate of inflation today is 7.35 per cent.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Sir, they are responsible for it

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No running commentary please. He should be allowed to initiate the discussion. I will not accept this.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, there has been a sharp increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) because of the rise in prices of essential commodities. There is also a wide variation between the Wholesale Price Index and the Consumer Price Index. This has happened primarily because only some commodities were included for calculating the rate of inflation in case of the Consumer Price Index. But the impact of price has been on a large number of commodities like vegetables, food grains, etc. This rise has not happened since the day this Government has come to power. What did we find during the NDA regime? The prices of foodgrains supplied through the Public Distribution System in respect of both BPL and APL were increased enormously. As a result of that, the poor people of this country and the people belonging to the lower middle class who used to get foodgrains at cheaper and affordable prices had suffered. Owing to this policy of the earlier Government, the Public Distribution System had virtually been on the verge of a collapse. That is why, the UPA Government, in its National Common Minimum Programme, has mentioned about strengthening of the Public Distribution System. Unless the Public Distribution System is universalised and unless more items are included in the list—our demand is that 14 essential commodities should be supplied through the PDS — the livelihood of the poorer sections of our society and that of the people belonging to the lower middle class, which is already threatened, cannot be saved. Sir their livelihood which is now threatened cannot be saved.

There is another adverse effect on the livelihood of the people of our country. Their real wage is getting eroded because of the increase in the input cost when there is an increase in the prices of essential commodities. As a result of this their real income is reduced. But, they

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*Not recorded.

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

are not compensated, neither in the case of private sector nor in the case of public sector, nor in the unorganised sector. There is no such system to compensate the people whose livelihood is being affected because of the increase in the prices of essential commodities. Some methodology should be evolved so that larger sections whose livelihood is affected due to the increase in the prices of essential commodities are compensated.

Sir, we have the Payment of Wages Act and there is a proposal to amend that Act. My suggestion is that this should be incorporated in the Payment of Wages Act if the real wage or earning or income of the people is eroded due to the increase in prices of inputs. There should be some provision for compensation Otherwise, the livelihood of people is affected.

We are seeing that there is an increase in inflation for the last four months although there has been deceleration. But inflation is increasing continuously mainly because of the increase in the prices of petroleum products.

Sir, during the NDA regime, the Administered Price Mechanism was dismantled. It was dismantled during their regime. Though the decision to dismantle APM was taken in 1997, it was implemented in 2001-02. When the decision was taken by the United Front Government in 1997, though we used to support that Government from outside, we opposed the decision of the Government to dismantle the Administered Price Mechanism. What is happening today? Because of import parity in the prices of petroleum products, whenever there is an increase in the international price of crude oil, the domestic price of petroleum products is required to be increased. This was increased during the NDA regime. The prices of all the petroleum products including kerosene were increased. Kerosene oil is used by the poorest section of our society.

They increased the price of petrol. It was doubled. The price of diesel was doubled. The price of LPG was increased from Rs. 141 to Rs. 235. It was increased by almost Rs. 100 during their regime. Kerosene which was available at Rs. 2.75, was increased to Rs. 9. Why were the prices of petroleum products required to be increased? That is because the Administered Pricing Mechanism was dismantled completely and totally by the earlier Government. Why are we opposing the increase in the price of petroleum products? We should see whether it is required or whether there is any other alternative route available which we can follow without increasing the price and without increasing the burden on the common people. Already, during six years of their regime, they have put burden on the common people to the extent of about Rs. 35,000 crore. The UPA Government has to reduce the burden on the common people. Instead of reducing, if they increase the burden on the common people, we cannot support this action of this Government.

Dismantling Administered Pricing Mechanism went against the major objective of self-reliance, which was meant to protect the larger sections of the Indian poor and lower middle class who use kerosene, LPG and public transport. What has happened today? It is because of the increase in the prices of petroleum products on 4th of November, that the Ministry of Railways had to increase the freight rates by 7.5 per cent. When there is an increase in the price of petroleum products, there is a cascading effect on other commodities and services, particularly on the transport which is being used by the common people. I would like to know whether there was a need to dismantle the Administrated Pricing Mechanism or not. What we have seen is that in the year it was dismantled, when the import parity was adopted in the year 2001-02, we have seen that the public sector oil companies made huge profits. In the month of July and again in the month of August, 2004, when the Government reduced excise duty and customs duty, we have seen that the Government's revenue has not reduced; rather the Government's revenue has increased by 1.1 billion dollars.

Whenever there is an increase in the price, the Government also gets more revenue. Today, the Government of India is getting revenue more than Rupees one lakh crore. So, if there is a reduction in the taxes, reduction in the cess, what should be done? It was recommended by the Standing Committee not once but a number of times that the cess levied on the petroleum products should be reduced when such the decision to abolish APM was taken. When the decision to abolish the APM was taken, it was also decided to have restructuring of taxes. The APM was dismantled but the restructuring of taxes was not done. For that, it was stated that a Committee would be constituted for recommending restructuring of cess and duties. Neither the Committee was constituted nor has any action been taken in regard to restructuring of taxes and duties. It was to be reduced by 0.5 percent.

The NDA Government did not initiate any steps towards cushioning the adverse impact on the people after the dismantling of APM. They have not done it. When there was an adverse effect on the consumers,

adverse effect on the people of our country, they did nothing to protect the people from the adverse impact of increase in the petroleum prices.

About indigenous production, I would say that our requirement of last year was 91 million tones. We could produce only 30 percent of our requirement in terms of crude. Gradually, we are depending on the import. About 30 years back, we used to import only 30 percent of our requirements. Today, we are importing 70 per cent of our requirement. But we refine hundred per cent in our country. Because of the import parity, what is happening? 30 percent crude we are producing here. Although the production cost is much cheaper than the import price or international price, although the refining cost is much cheaper - it is only 50 paise per litre - we cannot give relief to the people. In the case of public sector companies and in the case of one giant private sector company, it is only 33 paise. Because of this policy, I mean the import parity policy, we cannot give the people relief because our production cost of 30 percent crude which we are producing in our country is much less than the international price or import price. But because of that policy, we cannot give relief to the people. We cannot supply the petroleum products at a cheaper cost. As a result of this, the companies are earning huge profits.

If the profit is shared equally with the common people of our country, the Government is not required to increase the price of petroleum products. But because of the import parity system being followed, the indigenous production of 30 percent is also being sold at international price.

During the previous Government's regime, the ONGC increased the cess on crude from Rs. 900 per tonne to Rs. 1,800 per tonne and this was done under the Oil Industry Development Act, 1974. The money collected from the cess is meant for the development of the oil industry. What percentage of the money collected out of the cess is being utilised for the development of the oil industry now?

Sir, the Standing Committee on Petroleum very categorically recommended that the cess should not be enhanced because the imposition of cess, taxes and duties have a direct impact on the price of petroleum products and this puts a burden on the people of our country. On 16th June, soon after this Government assumed office, they reduced the *ad valorem* excise duty rate on petrol from 30 percent to 26 percent, on diesel they reduced it from 14 percent to 11 percent and on LPG they reduced it from 16 percent to eight percent. This was done to neutralise the effect of price increase by oil marketing companies on the consumer price of these products. Again, on 18th August, the customs duty on both petrol and diesel was brought down from 20 percent to 15 percent, excise duty on petrol was reduced from 26 percent to 23 percent and on diesel it was brought down from 11 percent to eight percent. The net result of that is that the average duty payable now stands at the rate of 30 percent over the year as a whole. This should put the revenue received by the Government at US $9.9 billion or US $1.1 billion more, that is, Rs. 5,000 crore, more than what was originally expected.

There is already an increase in the price of petroleum products and then there is an increase in the non-fuel component also. This puts a burden on the people of our country. So, if the Government again reduces the quantum of cess and duty, as they twice in the month of July and August, the increase in the price of petroleum products can also be neutralised.

But that was not done. There was enough scope in order to give relief to the people, in order to reduce the burden on the common people of our country because people of our country are already overburdened. It has impact on all the essential commodities. It has affected the livelihood of the people of our country. The increase in the price of petroleum products directly hits the people so the Government could have considered not increasing the prices, rather reducing the taxes and duties.

There is an urgent need for review of the dismantling of the administered price mechanism. It was decided in 1996. Prior to the policy of liberalisation, which the Government of India adopted in 90s, neither any multinational company nor any private company started exploration of oil in our country. When they started it, their demand was to abolish administered price mechanism and their demand was to have import parity. The Government considered their demand. Now, there is a need that the Government should review the decision which was taken in 1997 and which was implemented during the NDA regime. We should come back to our earlier position to have administered price mechanism.

The import parity policy has adversely affected the common people of our country. This has eroded the real income of our people because of increase in the prices of all essential commodities. The mandate of the people of our country in the last Lok Sabha election was clear

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

and unambiguous. The people of our country rejected their policies, rejected their anti people, anti farmer, anti working class policy. The mandate of the people of our country was that there should be an alternate policy, a pro people policy, and a pro farmer policy.

Today, what is the plight of farmers of our country? You have seen the agitation of farmers in Rajasthan. Six farmers were brutally killed by police and State Administration. Farmers are committing suicide in every state.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad): What about West Bengal?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Not in West Bengal. Not a single farmer committed suicide in West Bengal.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South): But people are dying of hunger.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: There is no hunger, no starvation death. Farmers are committing suicide in Kerala, in Maharashtra, in every state. We have to think for the people of our country.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basudeb Acharya, first of all you address the Chair. Moreover, we have 30 Members yet to speak. So, I would request you to wind up.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): Sir, I am on a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Under which rule?

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Under Rule 376. The Petroleum Minister should also come and sit here. All the Ministers should be here. Of course, we are very happy that the Finance Minister is here. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I will not allow it. Shri Acharya, please continue.

...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): The Leader of the Opposition should take some more interest in the proceedings of this House ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, they try to disturb the proceedings of the House all the time. The whole House will oppose it if no action in taken by the Chair against such people....*(Interruptions)*

How the proceedings of the House can be conducted in such a situation? ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, this is being done in your presence ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: If I may say so, this is a very important debate, and many of our Ministers are here. The Finance Minister in fact, is listening very intently. But, I wish the Opposition were to give it the same importance. The Leader of the Opposition seems to be absent on all important Debates in this House. This ought to be noticed.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Leader of the House and the Prime Minister are both absent....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is not to be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: The Leader of the Opposition is a past master at walk outs. He has made no constructive efforts in carrying the country forward. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: UPA Chairperson is absent and the Prime Minister is absent....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Not to be recorded. Whatever has been said, should not be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: In an interview the Petroleum Minister, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar has said, the question was ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please conclude.

...*(Interruptions)*

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*Not recorded.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: I am the mover of the Motion. I should get more time.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Your party Members are yet to speak.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: They have taken my time.

The question was this. Should the profit of the oil companies be at the cost of the consumer? The Minister replied. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have a point of order under rule 195. I myself have had given a notice under rule 193 and the notice which has been published today contains the names of 32 hon. Members. I and the 32 other hon. Members, who have given the notice should get an opportunity, the rule says so. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It does not fall under Rule 195.

[Translation]

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Sir, please let me complete. The rule says that we should get an opportunity. You decide how you will give opportunity to 32 Members in two hours, otherwise, tell us whether we will get an opportunity or not. If one person takes so much time then we would like to know if we would get time or not. We want your ruling on this.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Firstly, it is not a point of order. Secondly, we have four hours at our disposal for it. Thirdly, your party members will certainly speak on this important issue.

[Translation]

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, how I have not a point of order? Please go through the rule 195. I read it out for your information. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I am going to allot time according to the rules of this House.

[Translation]

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Sir, as per the rule two hours have already been spent on this. ...*(Interruptions)* Please allot time for it.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: The answer of the Petroleum Minister was:

> "The heart of my pricing policy is equitable burden and benefit sharing. There is a difference between a consumer and a citizen. The consumer has demands backed by money while the citizen has felt needs. The consumer will have occasionally taken a higher burden to protect the citizen. The other times the oil companies will have to reduce its profit, and also the Government, which earns enormous revenues from oil. We will have to take the hit by lowering its revenues".

15.00 hrs.

The next question was, why did the Government hike the prices instead of reducing the duties? He replied:

> "We had pointed out that it was illogical to impose excise duty on subsidised products like LPG and kerosene. We also suggested that import duty on crude be slashed. There should be a balance between increasing prices and absolute revenue. It should be adjusted. But our suggestion was not accepted by the Finance Ministry".

This is the argument. This is what our Petroleum Minister has said. This is what we are arguing. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have given you more than half an hour. Please conclude now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: This is the concern of millions and millions of people in our country, who are already overburdened with the increase in the prices of petroleum products, which has cascading effect on the prices of other commodities, and their livelihood has been affected.

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

Sir, we have been demanding the Government to roll back the prices of the petroleum products. If the prices of the petroleum products are rolled back, then it will have impact on the prices of other essential commodities. In order to protect the poor and lower middle class people, the public distribution system should be strengthened. Universalisation of public distribution system should be introduced. Also 14 essential commodities should be supplied through public distribution system in order to protect the poor and lower middle class people of our country.

The administrative price mechanism was dismantled in 2001-02. We demand that the Government should review and restore that mechanism in order to protect the interests of the people, in order to have the increased price neutralized and the burden on the common people is not increased.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I express my support to the discussions initiated by two of my close friends Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Ramji Lal Suman on the issue of price rise that is directly linked with the 90 percent general public of the country.

So far as Ramji Lal Suman is concerned, his policy as well as his intention both are right but I am sorry to say that neither the policy nor the intention of Shri Basudeb Acharia was right today. Today he was not speaking from his heart, otherwise it would have carried some weight. He used to reiterate the same point because such was the condition of his party after this election that they used to oppose the Government outside the Parliament by indulging in picketing and demonstration and support it in the Parliament. Hold rallies outside the House and talk about the poors and raise discussions under the rule 193 in the House.

Support the present Government which is ruining the common man with back breaking steep prices like. But I am not surprised with this. I do not want to go into these things. Some of our friends from Gujarat had stood up and intervened in between. Many a time they forget that this government has completed just six months you put on pictures of Nehruji, Indiraji and Rajivji on posters and ask for votes in their name, but say that only six months have elapsed of this government. Why do you forget that you have completed 45 years and 6 months in government. It is not that you have got just 6 months. You have got policies of past 45 years. You criticise us for our policies of only 6 years and for the conditions that prevailed during those six years and as a result we have faced the present situation. But if you remove the 18 months period of Morarji Bhai regime, out of the last 45 years, since 1947 to 1998, only your government have ruled this country.

I want to give the official data. No one had ever imagined about the current situation of the country and of the common man as has happened during the Congress regime and the present government. At the time of freedom struggle, we had thought that the country will become affluent after freedom. Employment for livelihood will be available to the common man, the farmer and the poor. But the common man has been ruined during the 45 years of Congress rule and under the present government. The poor has became poorer. But slogans are raised, governments are formed on such slogans and assurances. I had seen a film wherein there was a song "Kasme Vade Pyar Vafa Sab Vaden Hain Vadon Ka Kya". Go on making promises. One assurance had emerged on posters during the elections, "Congress Ka Haath, Aam Aadmi Ke Saath". Now people have begun to say that "Congress Ka Haath aam aadmi Ke Saath Viswasghat".

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir during the last six months, there was a burden of more than 90 thousand crore rupees or say Rs. 95 thousand crores on the general public. I am ready to furnish full details in this regard. Mr. Basu Deb Achariaji, it seems you don't go through the rule 193. The topical issue of urgent public importance and not the NDA is discussed under the rule 193.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Harin Pathak, you should address the Chair and not the individual.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: He has addressed to the NDA. So, I though that being a good friend of mine, I should at least let him know.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is no doubt he will be your friend, but you will have to address the Chair.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Whatever discussions take place, it is on the present government. There is nothing new in it. The general pubic have had a burden of

Rs. 95 thousand crores rupees over them during the rule of the Congress and UPA Government in the last six months. Ninety percent people in the country are poor which were effected by this burden. Your government have increased three times the prices of petrol and diesel and two times that of LPG. I do not want to give details in this regard. It resulted a burden of Rs. 50 thousand crores on the general public. You compare your six months rule to our six years rule. Your government have increased the excise duty on steel from 8 percent to 12 percent. But your government have reduced the custom duty from 12 percent to 8 percent on the imported new steel, that has resulted a burden of more fifteen thousand crores and ten thousand crores on the general public. Now this burden has been increased from 50 thousand crores to 60 thousand crores. Your government have increased the coal price by 16.7 percent in June, 2004, that has caused an increased burden of 15 thousand crores to the general public. The total burden on these accounts over the general pubic is to the tune of Rs. 75 thousand crores. But when such type of burden goes on increasing, it results into chain-reaction. Being an economist the Finance Minister must be aware of this aspect. If the price of diesel goes up, the freight of goods carriers too would go up. If it is added to the prices of the goods, the prices of vegetable and fruits have also gone by Rs. 40 per kg. from 10 to 15 Rs. Per kg. The price of edible oil was Rs. 600-650 per canister, which has now increased to more than Rs. 800. The price of a cement bag was Rs. 110, but now it is available @ Rs. 160 per bag. The price of steel has increased from rupees 22-24 per kg. to rupees 36 per kg. The prices of all the goods have been increased. Compare the life standard of the general public in these six months to our six years rule. But there is nothing new in it. I would like to tell the Hon'ble Finance Minister that it's for this reason that I have talked of 45 years. This trend has been in practice since 1950s. The time the Congress continued to from the Government. This was why I happened to remark that this is nothing but slogans is the key-stone of this Government. It was in the year 1950 that a solgan was all the rage, read as follows:—"Let the Congress come into power, there would be socialism" "The widening gap between the rich and the poor will be bridged, landless farm-labourers will get the land, poverty will be eradicated. Price-rise will be a thing of the past. Unemployment and anarchy will be removed. On the other hand, the State of affairs post 1952—1998 era is before us. According to the official data in the year 1950,

[English]

21 crore people were living below the poverty line and in the year 1998 when the Congress party lost the power the figure went up to 36 crore.

[Translation]

As many as 36 crore people came under BPL (Below poverty line) category. This is the outcome offer 45 years of regime. These days, people have become poorer than ever before. Shri Basu Deb Acharia rightly said, "the situation is such that students are committing suicide. The farmer commits suicide, poor commit suicide, the unemployed commit suicide". As I said there is nothing new about it. Just cast a look on the years gone by. In the 70s. 80s and 90s your government was in absolute majority. Toady your Government has been formed with the support of the Communists. They try to rein in a bit. They are to go for the polls in the West Bengal. They don't raise any issue at heart, just do so for the sake of doing. But I am sad at the History of the Congress Party. Through you, I would like to request this Government with folded hands to think of the common man. The common man is made to suffer in your regime. The price-hike is on the steep rise. Common man's survival is difficult. You see, what the situation was in 1970. I refer to the period when you were the Minister. you asked we where do I quote the figures from. I would like to quote a few facts on the basis of the figures published in the Economic Survey in July, 2004. I don't want to make a political speech. Whether there was a mandate is yet to be ensured. Having registered win over 145 seats out of 543 you claim to have got mandate. I don't know what sort of calculation it is. I posed a question to a student as to how much marks is required to be obtained to pass out of 543. In response he said that one was required to obtain 148 marks, let a distinction. Having won 145 seats out of 543 you claim to have got mandate. Contesting elections against each other you claim to have got mandate. I don't want to discuss this issued, I want to spotlight the common man's sufferings in the House. On behalf of the common man I have risen to voice my protest against the policies of the Congress party. In the 70s when Smt. Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister,

[English]

The average inflation rate was 7.4 percent. In early 1980, when late Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, the inflation rate was 9.1 percent. From 1990-98 during the regime of Dr. Manmohan Singh and my esteemed learned friend, the present hon. Minister of Finance, Shri P. Chidambaram, it reached up to 9.5 percent. I regret to say that when inflation rate was going down in all the countries of the world, during 1970 to 1990 in Europe, America and Japan where the inflation rate was going down from 8 percent to 3.4 percent, it was India under the regime of Congress, under the regime of late Shrimati Indiara Gandhi, late Shri Rajiv Gandhi and Dr. Manmohan Singh, in the month of August, 1991 it went up to 17 percent.

[Shri Harin Pathak]

[Translation]

The rate of inflation recorded in 1991 was 17%. Things are going the same way. Prices of Petroleum products, coal and steel have gone up. Prices of remaining commodities have been increased in the Budget. I would give reasons for all these. Today, you swear by all the good works done which you attribute to yourselves. If the reserves of foreign exchange grows you yourselves take the credit. If anythings good happens, you attribute it to your 40 years in power. If the machinery does not function properly, if there is an increase in poverty and unemployment, our six years rule is held responsible for all these. You are only following the memorandum submitted to the I.M.F. when Dr. Manmohan Singh was Finance Minister of the country in 1991. I would like to request the left parties as well as all other parties to see what kind of situation has been created and what is going to be created in days to come. An agreement was signed in 1991 that subsidies was be withdrawn being paid to poor and farmers. It is precisely because of this that subsides are now being withdrawn.

As per the agreement you had promised that service Tax would be imposed on the middle class, public services would further be extended etc. You did all these things at that time. You are making reference to our N.D.A. but no service tax was imposed during the tenure of the N.D.A. Government. Where was the Service Tax was imposed?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Are you saying that the NDA did not impose service tax? *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: I am mentioning those items on which there was no service tax. *...(Interruptions)* Mr. Minister, let me complete.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you will have enough time to reply.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Mr. Deputy-Sepaker, Sir, the present Government have imposed a burden in form of service tax on all the people of our country. Service tax has been imposed in the fields of telephone services, mediclaim, Banking Services, Mandap, Tent House, Catering, Courier, Cable, Insurance, Tour operator, Barbers etc. There was no service tax on all of these service during our regime. *...(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI) : The prices of the B.JP have fallen. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: The prices of the B.J.P. have not fallen instead they are gong to increase. At least your have not increased after all. You have come here by chance. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The next speaker is from Congress. Please do not interrupt.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: I would like to submit only this much to you that such a pitiable situation has now been created in the country. It had led to a great resentment among the people in the country. Now a days you are in power. Equations and figures are in your favour. Nobody knows, how long the figures continues to remain in your favour as you do not have the absolute majority. This Government survives only because of the support lent by the C.P.I., the C.P.I. (M) and other Left Parties.

I would like to emphasise today that increase in inflation rate is continuing. The Common man is the worst affected lot. Prices of every commodity have gone up. Without taking much time of the House I would like to stress the fact that the Government should now wake up. You would like to convince the people of your good governance. I remain in touch with the common man. There are many like me sitting here who return to this House a number of time after winning elections. They are directly in touch with common people. When we were in power, we felt at times deep down our heart that there were somethings which the people did not approve of. But, you should not remain under any illusion. You should not be under the impression that the people are not affected with what you are doing now. Today, the people are suffering. The common man is in a miserable condition. The price rise has reached its extreme. This has made the life of the common man highly miserable.

Through you, I would like to reiterate this in the House and make a submission to the Government. I have nothing to do with the stand of the Left Parties as they have their own policy. They should oppose the

economic burden to tune of Rs. 90 thousand crores on 90 crore people and ask the Government to roll back all the anti-poor, anti-farmer and anti-labour steps if they sincerely feel that prices have risen during the regime of this Government and if they are sincere in holding rallies, taking out processions and sitting on 'dharnas' so that the common man can leave a sigh of relief. This is what I demand, and now I conclude.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Jai Prakash to speak now.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, hon. Minister Shri Kapil Sibal has left. He was listening for half-an-hour.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing is to be recorded except the speech of Shri Jai Prakesh.

*...(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI JAI PRAKASH (Hissar): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to extend my thanks to Shri Sumanji and Acharia ji for the discussion going on under rule 193 as the people from the opposition parties have been mooting this debate in the newspapers for the last two-three months. I am obliged to them for initiating the discussion on the subject. Seven months ago this year in 2004 we had the N.D.A. Government in the country. My friends were saying that the prices of diesel had gone up. I agree that the rise in the rates of petroleum products is bound to have a cascading effect on the prices of other commodities but this is not a new phenomenon.

I would like to remind my N.D.A. friends that in 1999 mandate of the people was consigned to the ballot boxes. By that time neither the results were declared nor the Government was formed.

But the prices were hiked by Rs. 4 per litre overnight and after that you sat here. You were in power and we were in the opposition. Now that our friends are in opposition that is why they complain that the prices of diesel and petrol have been hiked, prices of petrol have been hiked by Rs. 4.13 per litre during the six months. The prices of diesel have witnessed a hike by Rs. 4.54 per liter after our party has come to power. The prices of crude oil per dollar in the international market have gone up after we came to power. You can work out what was the per dollar price of crude oil in the international market during the N.D.A. regime. The N.D.A. Government always weakened the farmers of our predominantly agricultural country by raising the prices of oil and by lowering the prices of agricultural produces. I would like to tell my friends that there was none to purchase the paddy in Haryana to which I belong during the tenure of the N.D.A. Government. As the minimum prices had been determined no Government paid any attention to that. The paddy of farmers was being sold very cheaply. Had the Congress party not been in power in Punjab, the farmers of Haryana would have been put to great difficulty as the Congress Government of Punjab purchased the paddy of Farmers. But there was the I.N.L.D. and the B.J.P. alliance Government in Haryana. Our paddy would have been wasted and what is the situation now?

There has been reference to the price like of iron bars. The prices of steel have started increasing. This trend of price hike had started during their time. Our Government has been in power for six months. Prior to this, during whose tenure prices of cement had increased? Prices of cement went up by Rs. 30 per bag overnight during the term of that Government and now they talk of the C.P.I. and the C.P.M. as to why they are supporting the Government. I would like to remind Shri Pathak ji that in 1989 you were also sitting on these benches along with the C.P.I. and the C.P.I.(M) when Government was formed under the leadership of Shri V.P. Singhji.

In those days the Leftist parties were their liking. Now today your policies are so called secure, anti-poor and anti-farmers and if the CPM voice their protest against such policies they question as to why they voice in line with the NDA.

I want to refer to the existing state of affairs. Today price of crops have fallen in the states of Haryana, Rajasthan and Punjab, their prices are weakening day by day. Basmati rice is getting cheaper and cheaper day by day and the price of many other things has also escalated. However, the price of things of common man's usage is on the declining trend. I believe, the price of certain things has gone up thanks to the petroleum products. I would like to tell the Finance Minister that oil price goes on increasing but the overhead charges such as expenses on refining of petroleum products and crude oil can be reduced so as to regulate these prices.

*Not recorded.

[Shri Jai Prakash]

All the same, I am very much delighted at one thing that with the UPA Government coming into existence, the International Market registered increase as never before in the rates of crude oil. Despite that, the Central Government contained the oil prices by cutting Customs Duty. But, the states with their Governments, I would like to tell them that the states where our party is in Government, the states impose sales tax in the region of 11 percent to 30 percent. When the Central Government exercised reduction in the Customs Duty, the Sate Governments should also be inclined to reduce sales tax in order that the farmers of these states may get Diesel at affordable prices. You were saying that service tax has been imposed. I would like to tell my colleagues sitting in the front that one and a half year ago, the BJP and the Indian National Lok Dal was in power in Haryana. Service tax was levied on the poor barber, washerman and the shoe-makers. At that time I was an MLA in the Vidhan Sabha. We would protest. Over there, they impose heavy taxes on the poor there and in case of familiar to form the Government at the Centre, They are complaining about the service tax. This tradition is their brain child. This is not a new practice.

In so far as the employees are concerned, I would like to tell you as to how the then NDA Govt. had weakened the farmers of the country. For example, I would like to submit that D.D. Puri owns a Sugar Mill in Yamuna Nagar, there are more mills in Punjab. Don't you know how these private Sugar Mill owners bought the farmer's sugarcane at throw away prices, where were these people at that time? These people were in the Government when the farmers in Haryana were being Lathicharged. At that time you didn't take measures for the fixation of minimum support price. At that point of time you didn't say that farmer's produce is being sold at cheaper rates. When these people were in the Government at the Centre at what cheaper rates sugarcane and wheat were available. On this count I would suggest the UPA Government to ensure that farmers get higher or at least reasonable price of their produce and an ordinary man who buys the commodities against the Ration Card should be enabled to get them at an affordable prices. To this end in view, I would like to suggest that the farmers and the labourers should be given subsidy to that the farmers may get fair price for their produce and poor man, who is in the fractured state of economic health, would be made available the essential commodities like food and clothes at cheaper rates. In this regard i'd impress upon the Minister of Finance not to go the NDA way. Earlier when the Congress was in the Government, foodgrain were allotted for sale at cheaper rate through Public Distribution system say ration card. A common poor man possessed Ration Cards and used to get the foodgrain or it. What did this NDA Government do? Sir these people introduced rosy Card and the eligibility conditions for holding such card was set as one living in mud-walled houses without fans. Their thought, mind set and attitude created a milieu where the rich enabled to become archers and the poor the poorer. If Hon'ble Member Shri Harin Pathak talks of the poor, he ought to have registered his protest at that time sitting in these benches. In the present scenario, a poor man is deprived of getting grains from the Government shops or depots established under the Public Distribution System. Today, the poor man across the country having severe complaints against the NDA Government and this was why the mandate was against the then Government led by the NDA. One point of agreement that the Hon'ble Member was advancing that one is required to obtain 33% marks to pass on that count you've always embraced failure as you never obtained 33% marks.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: You claim to be in majority, we never did so.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH: In our Haryana, the system exists that a student becoming 20 years of age is debarred from taking the matriculation Exam, this is why, the people of the country never allowed the BJP and its supporting parties obtain pass marks. Even they don't have entitlement to take the exam anymore. As regards the Congress party, they say that these candidates have contested against each other, this is a competition look. We've dared to ensure our victory over you. Tour allied party that engineered firing over nine farmers of the country. In Haryana nine farmers were shot dead and Shri Vajpayeeji and Advanijee took it easy. The Congress party workers were fighting for the farmers on the roads in the night. At that time the people associated with the BJP were enjoying themselves the comforts of life. At that time, they didn't bother to think of the farmers. As many as nine farmers and three labourers were killed which fell to their deaf ears and now that the common people have placed them in the opposition by exercising their franchise against them, they talk of the farmers. One can witness what's happening in Rajasthan.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Please speak on the price-rise.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, what is happening in Rajasthan today. How the farmers in

Bikaner are being fired at. The BJP is in the Government there. If these people have a little bit of morality left in them and have sympathy with the farmers and labourer in their hearts, So there, stage Dharnas and topple down the Government. So, I would like to submit that the BJP has always been following dual policy.

When resolution was moved in the SYL case in the Punjab Vidhan, Sabha. They supported the Congress party and here they voice against that.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: What issue are you talking about the price-rise or the farmers?

SHRI JAI PRAKASH: I am talking about the price-rise only ...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: This is Lok Sabha not the Punjab or Haryana Vidhan Sabha. Therefore please focus on Centre.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH: I am referring to the mind set of your party. They speak one thing in the Lok Sabha and the other thing in the Vidhan Sabha and quite different outside the legislatures.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You speak on price-rise only.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, I am focussing on that only. The price of petroleum products has gone up. The Central Government had cut Central Excise duty in this House itself. All the same, they are staging demonstrations outside the House. ...*(Interruptions)*.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI JAI PRAKASH: I would like to tell Pathakji that price of several things have come down. The price of farmers produce are constantly coming down.

The price of cotton, paddy and sugarcane are coming down. When the NDA Government was there in the Centre, it imported sugar from Pakistan, which compelled the farmers of our country to burn their own crop of sugarcane. Because of such anti-farmer policies, these people were thrown out of power and my good friends over there are getting restless. I would like to tell the Union Government that the prime reason for inflation is the price-hike of petroleum products. So, there should be a control over the petroleum products. It would be better if their prices are reduced.

It is but natural that our Government has to increase the prices of these products when the prices of crude oil in the international market go up. When the NDA Government was in the Centre, they withdrew subsidy from the petroleum products. They said that the Government would not be in a position to incur loss involved in this, and the oil companies themselves would have to bear the same. But now the oil companies are not ready to bear the loss and want the general public to bear it. That's why oil prices are soaring. It means the then NDA Government is responsible for the same as they handed over oil trading to private companies by withdrawing the subsidy. Had oil trading been in the hands of the companies under the control of the Union Government, prices would not have soared like this because the Central Government would give subsidy to these companies. So, the system which was started by the then NDA Government is responsible for the hike in prices of certain commodities. This was not done by the UPA Government ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Why are you interrupting. ...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI JAI PRAKASH: The present Government is merely six months old, why are you worrying so much. I would be thankful to the Union Government if they implement some system in order to stop the soaring price. The prices of crops of farmers should be increased. The price of foodgrains, which the poor people take from the farmers, should be reduced. Therefore, the farmers and the poor should be given subsidy. Only then these two sections can progress. The parties sitting on the other side are the parties of money-lenders and are anti farmer and anti-poor parties. The UPA Government is the party of the farmers, the poor and the ordinary employees. So the Government should give subsidy to them for their progress.

•SHRI LONAPPAN NAMBADAN (Mukundapuram): Honourable Deputy-Speaker Sir, it is Kerala, which lies at the southernmost end of India that faces the most difficulties due to the price rise. Kerala is a consumerist state, which imports virtually everything like iron, steel, cement, metal, rice, sugar, wheat, stationary goods and

*Not recorded.

*Not recorded.

•English translation of the speech originally delivered in Malayalam.

[Shri Lonappan Nambadan]

vegetables. Due to the inordinate hike in railway freight charges and the prices of petroleum products the transport charges and the prices of consumer good have considerably increased in Kerala. The frequent hikes in prices of diesel, petrol and cooking gas have become combersome for the ordinary people.

15.37 hrs.

[SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL *in the Chair*]

The cash crops and the agricultural products of Kerala do not get reasonable prices due to the wrong import policy of the Central Government and the anti-farmer activities of the Kerala Government. More than 1200 farmers have committed suicide under the burden of debt. Every year the state faces the loss of hundreds of lives and crores of rupees due to floods, landslides and drought. The state government does not get the Central aid it deserves. The state government fails in reporting to the Central Government the actual figures of suicides and the loses due to natural calamities. The farmers as well as agricultural labourers in Kerala are in poverty. Due to the hike in the tariffs of power and water and the rise in the prices of fertilizers and pesticides farming has become hugely loss making. Farmers have to pay a higher price for the things they purchase and get a much lower price for the products they sell. The Public Distribution System of the government has collapsed. Fair price shops are being closed. Sufficient quantity of rice, sugar, wheat and kerosene are not available. Many ration shop owners have already committed suicide. In the open market the prices are escalating. Women are the only cheap things in Kerala. The main industry in Kerala is exploitation of women and trade of girls. And there is a special minister for that department.

In Kerala law and order and communal harmony are in trouble. Life has become unbearable for the public. There is no safety for the life and property of the people. Unemployment is too severe. Administration has come to a standstill in Kerala. All the traditional industries like coir, cashew nut, handloom, handicrafts, clay, toddy tapping and fishing are decaying. The workers of plantation estates like rubber, coffee, tea, and cardamom are all in poverty. Almost all industries have been locked up. No new industry is coming up. Even the existing employees are being dismissed. There are absolutely no new employment opportunities. Fishing has stopped in Kerala due to the paucity and price rise of kerosene. Lakhs of fishermen in the coastal area are in poverty. Due to the frequent hiking of the price of cooking gas the womenfolk are against the UPA government. The wrath of women is never good for a government.

The common people face difficulties in traveling as the fares of bus, auto rickshaws and taxies have gone up. Students are at the receiving end of the hike in the prices of petroleum products.

The hiked price of diesel has resulted in higher farming expenditure and higher losses. The expenses to reach the agricultural products to the market also have increased.

Legislations should be made and enacted for land reforms and educational reforms in every state of the country in the middle of Kerala. Welfare schemes and pension schemes should be formulated and implemented for farmers, workers and other weaker sections of the society. Urgent measures should be taken to curb unemployment and poverty. Unemployment wages, old age pensions and widow pensions should be given to the deserved.

It is very easy to raise funds by hiking the prices of petroleum products and by hiking railway freight charges. There is no need for special ministers at the Centre for that purpose. Even officials can do it. The government should think about raising funds by collecting the tax arrears from the rich people and industrialists and by imposing luxury tax on the rich class. There should be steps to curb the increasing corruption in our society. If UPA government follows the wrong path of BJP government it is bound to meet the same fate.

The rise in the prices of petroleum products has caused a lot of misery to the ordinary people of the country. In this respect the Central Government should adopt a humanitarian attitude. The government should save the people by reducing the prices of petroleum products and defeat the opposition.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Chairman Sir, we are discussing price rice under the rule 193. The purpose of this discussion is to impress upon the point that the Government have miserably failed to check inflation and the Government would make meaningful efforts to check it after taking into account the feelings of the entire House. Instead of levelling charges against each other it would be better that we think of common-man of the country who are presently in a miserable condition as their purchasing power has reduced and they can't purchase even essential commodities. I think the discussion would become meaningful if we give relief to the common men. Through this discussion the House desires to make efforts in this direction.

Sir, the hon'ble Minister of Finance is present here. This is not the difficulty of the political parties, rather it is the problem of crores of ordinary people of the country. It is such a problem that if it is not immediately controlled, it would worsen the law and order situation. We'll have to see this from that angle also. When the present Government came into power the Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singhji said that controlling price-hike was the top priority of the UPA Government, but what is most painful is that whatever statements were made during that period, were quite contradictory to one another. The hon'ble Prime Minister said during a meeting of trade and industry that India can't an exception to the rising prices of crude oil in the international market. On the other hand, the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas said that living taxes over petroleum products has caused the price-hike. He said that since we are in the Government both in Delhi and at the Centre, petrol should be sold at the rate of Rs. 17.42 but it is being sold at Rs. 37.84. The Minister of Finance said that there has been a burden on agricultural products due to scanty rains and the rising prices of petroleum products have caused the rise in inflation.

The Secretary, Finance says that there is no need to cut down the taxes in order to reduce the price-hike and the Prime Minister says that a provision of taxation has been made in the ensuing budget in line with other Asian countries. I mean to say that at least the Ministers and other responsible persons in the Government should show some uniformity in their statements. This Government has a mutually contradictory. Stand and attitude over the issue of price-hike. At this, I would like to quote a verse which says:

'Apni surat ka khud ahsaas nahin hai mujhko,
Maine gairon se suna hai ki main pareshaan
hoon".

Thus I fail to understand what meaningful efforts this Government would make with such an attitude and lack of direction in checking price-hike. It is a fact that the rate of inflation had risen upto 8.33 percent which was highest during the last four years. It is also possible, as the Government says, that the possibility of price hike of petrol and diesel would remain there because of turbulence in Iraq and the West Asia. Milton Freedman is an eminent economist. He says, "Price-hike is like a tax which is charged without giving any notice". It is serious and important issue. When the prices of petroleum products were increased it had a far reaching impact. Due to hike in prices of diesel, there has been an increase of Rs. 25 to 30 percent in the freight charges on other roadways and of 7 percent on the national highways. Since 1998, the prices of petroleum products have been increased nineteen times and were reduced eight times. It is said that when the prices of crude oil and petroleum products increase in the international market, then it becomes our compulsion to, increase the petroleum prices. The price of crude oil recently five or six days ago came down in the international market but the oil companies clearly refused to reduce the prices of petroleum products at any cost. The Government and the companies say that they are incurring a loss of Rs. 20,000 crore. The fact is that if there is any shortfall in the profit component, this shortfall is projected as their loss. It's very strange. Through you, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance that if they are incurring loss, then from where these datas are collected. The oil companies have registered profit in July, August and September. The Indian Oil Corporation has earned a profit of Rs. 1239 crores. The Bharat Petroleum Corporation of Rs. 321 crores and in case of the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited it is Rs. 294 crores. From where to these figures come? Oil Companies are continuously earning profits but the Government have always been saying that these companies and the Government also are incurring loss. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is far from truth. Through you, Sir, I would like to submit without reiterating these things. In 1989 the price of petrol was Rs. 8.50 and now it is Rs. 39 per litre. Similarly, the price of diesel was Rs. 3.50 and now it is Rs. 26.80. Similarly, the prices of other commodities also have increased. I have got the details regarding the Government's dividend in the profit of these companies.

Indian oil companies IOCL, HPCL and BPCL have paid Rs. 1105 crores, Rs. 370 crores and Rs. 350 crores respectively as dividend in the year 2003-2004. In the second quarter of the year IOC, HPCL and BPCL have earned a profit of Rs. 1229 crores, Rs. 294 crores and Rs. 321 crores respectively. While the Government is getting dividend from the oil companies, the honourable Finance Minister may, in his reply, state as to what statistics are with him on the basis of which he says that the oil companies are incurring losses and the Government is running in losses. Why is it that the Government is hell-bent upon destabilizing the common man while the Government is getting dividends from the oil companies and oil companies are earning projects?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Acharia has said it rightly that the APM, the Government had for price control has been done away with resulting in decontrol of oil

[Shri Ramji Lal Suman]

companies. Previously oil was imported through OCC but now the arrangement is that the oil companies can purchase oil from wherever they wish to; there is no control on them. Companies themselves decide the oil prices. I would like to say that there is a need to review it. We import crude oil which is sent to refineries Petrol, Benezene, Diesel and Naptha are made out of it. Even after all these processings in our country the cost is highest in the world. In Singapore it is one American Dollar per barrel while it is 6-7 dollars per barrel in India. In this way Singapore may show us the path. In the European countries also GRM, is one American dollar per barrel. I would like the Government to see to it as to how all this is happening. Immense wealth is flowing to the oil companies. In the beginning, they were given patronage and the profit margin of Rs. 8000 earlier given in the marketing has now been increased to Rs. 18000. In the present context, instead of reducing it they are increasing it. This is nothing if not extravagance.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we import oil mainly from Dubai and Malaysia. In October oil prices reached 50 dollars per barrel while we are getting it at 38 dollars per barrel from Dubai. Two third of crude oil comes from Dubai but it is propagated in the whole world that the oil rates have reached 50-55 dollars per barrel. Presently inflation is increasing while we are purchasing oil at low prices. When Indian rupee is strong in the international market, deamess should have increased accordingly but this did not happen. The Government decides oil prices as per its own convenience. After independence, effective protection to the tune of about 50 percent was given to the oil companies. After independence when these companies were established it was started to give protection to them. Now these companies are running in profit. All this out flowing money can be used in welfare schemes, but we are not doing that.

Mr. Chairman Sir, through you I would like to point out one thing and also want the Government to pay heed to it. With the available fuel, resources all the countries of the world are exploiting alternative fuels and research and pilot testing are being carried out on a war footing. In our country this research is limited only to the mixture of alcohol and bio-diesel. Oil companies are engaged in purchasing oil fields in foreign countries, but none of them has made efforts for alternative fuels like hydrogen energy or helium energy. In the developed countries of the world today people have made time bound plans for hydrogen energy. In Europe hydrogen run vehicles will be on roads by the end of this decade. As regards two wheelers China also has announced that hydrogen run two wheelers will shortly be on roads in the country. I would like to know whether, we ever gave a thought to the possibilities or undertaking research or making efforts in our country to prepare some alternative fuel in view of the growing fuel crisis. I would like to say that no efforts are being made in this direction. This is a very serious issue.

I would like to state that the tax components are hundred times more than the basic prices of petrol and diesel. I have got the statistics of all the states. I am proud to say that Uttar Pradesh is such a state where taxes on petrol and diesel are comparatively the lowest.

I heard Shri Mani Shanker the other day. He said that he had written letters to the States. I want to say that only writing letters will not serve any purpose. He had said that he would work on it. The taxes on petrol and diesel are the highest in the states where the Congress party is ruling. Won't you make any efforts to reduce the taxes there? Won't you set an ideal? I think we need to pay attention to this also.

At the end of it I would like to make a special request to the Finance Minister to discuss it with the Petroleum Minister. The Natural gas available in our country can be an alternative to all the petroleum products. But when we import them, we get them in liquid form. We cool it at mines 160 celsius and transport it through tankers. After that it goes to fertilizer factories and industrial units. If we get it in the form of gas instead of liquid form then certainly it will be comparatively much cheaper. The highest availability of natural gas in the world is in Iran, Quatar and Russia. If we get this gas from Iran by laying paiplines it will be cheaper than the available fuels and Pakistan and Iran are willing for this project. But unfortunately we are not making special efforts in this direction. When we talk of our relations with Pakistan than Kashmir not only issue. Business relations can also be an important basis for it. I think if our relations with Pakistan are improved then both Pakistan and India will be benefited. But we are not making any positive efforts in this direction.

In the end I would like to submit that Bhai Jai Prakash has just spoken from the Congress side and Shri Harin Pathak from the Bhartiya Janta Party side. But this is our experience and based on that experience we believe that there is not much basic difference in economic policies whether they are of the National Democratic Alliance Government or the UPA Government.

16.00 hrs.

This has been the opinion of the Samajwadi Party since its inception, and the way prices have shot our opinion has got stronger day-by-day. We want the Government to understand the present condition of the entire country. I do not intend to go in for comparative statements because the actual and basic question is that after the constitution of new Government, the common man must have the feeling, that this Government is working better as compared to the previous Government and I am sorry to say that if Mr. Chidambaram cannot convey this message, his joining and working in this Government has no meaning at all. Only this much I intend to submit.

SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Discussion is going on a very serious and important matter in the House under Rule 193 today. Through you, the hon. Members Shri Basudeb Acharia, Shri Ramji Lal Suman, Shri Harin Pathak and Shri jai Prakash have put forth their views before the Government. I think that price-rise adversely affects the common man of the country especially the poor and the people belonging to the weaker sections and that of middle class. Every Government make promises to control the price-rise. On the other hand, the Opposition say that price-rise is taking place and they will stage agitation against it. It is all right but how can the price-rise be checked? Price-rise is not a one day phenomenon. Recently, our friends belonging to the NDA told that this Government failed in checking price-rise. But, I would like to know from them as to what they had been doing during the last six years. What height inflation reached during their regime? The inflation rate was more than 7 per cent during their regime. But, they did not check the price-rise. When the UPA Government, under the leadership of the hon. Dr. Manmohan Singh ji, came to power it formulated a Common Minimum Programme. Under the Common Minimum Programme, the Government assured the people of the country that they would not go in for price-rise but they would check the price hike. During the last six months, it cannot be assessed that the Government have failed in checking the price-rise. I, through you, would like to say that the Government have continuously made efforts to control the price-rise. But. Due to unchecked increase in the prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the international market, increase in inflation and due to natural calamity such as drought and flood in some parts of the country price-rise could not be controlled fully. But, through you, I would like to submit that it is the duty and responsibility of the Government to protect the public from the burden of the price-rise.

I, through you, would like to frequent the hon. Finance Minister that the should take steps for checking the price-rise keeping in view the suggestions given by the hon. Members in the House. It is a serious problem and it had been witnessed in 1967, 1977 and 1989 when there was steep rise in the prices of commodities, the public also participated in the agitation staged by the Opposition and all efforts of the Government failed. The Members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) are with us. They have already warned that they will not tolerate price-rise of ration commodity, kerosene, cooking gas, diesel and petrol because due to increase in their prices, the prices of the commodities consumed by the common people are also increased and then no check remains thereon. Due to this price-rise, the prices of the commodities meant for the regular use and consumption of the general public also continuously rise and then no control remains over them.

Through you, I would again like to urge upon the Government and the hon'ble Finance Minister to check this steep price-rise so that we could fulfil the assurances that our UPA Government has made to the public. Many-many thanks for the opportunity you gave me for making a speech.

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Hon'ble Mr. Chairman, Sir, you have given me an opportunity to speak on the issue of steep price-rise. I would like to express my thanks.

Sir, today price-rise has reached its extreme point in India. The life of the common man has become difficult. The prices of petroleum is continuously rising. Steap rise in prices of all the commodities is being witnessed which are of daily use such as fertilizers, water, power, essential drugs and all other essential commodities. Whereas the national income has deceased to eight percent, inflation has risen to eight percent. The life of the common man has become difficult in face of the steep price-rise. We will have to think over this issue in this House with an open mind. It hardly matters whether we are in Government or in Opposition or related with the Bahujan Samaj Party or the Samajwadi party supporting from outside. We all shall have to hear the vice of the conscience. We have to take the soul and the mind in harmony. Thought will have to be given for the common man, about the farmers who comprise of the 75 percent population of India and are not having adequate housing facility available with them. We can deliver speeches sitting in magnificent buildings. In India, the politics is usually reduced to the game of figures. All the parties

[Shri Brajesh Pathak]

put forth their figures regarding rise in population, prices of various commodities and of petroleum in the ways that suit their strategy.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you I would like to submit that we should hear the voice of our own conscience and think over the dalits, the down trodden and the backward people of the Indian society today. Our ideal leader Dr. Baba Sahib Bhimrao Ambedkar had also contended that the common man of India would not have peace and prosperity until they are given their due share in the polity and are not entrusted with the responsibility of governance. Our sister Ms. Mayawati has also made a struggle for the sake of dalits. Our Bahjuan Samaj Party does not believe in submitting figures. Figures can be submitted better by the officials here. Studies will be carried out by them. But based on the voice of our conscience, message of our heart, we will have to think about that common man who resides thousands of Kilometers away from here without water and electricity and sleeps without any fans in his cottage. He does not get two squares meal, he has to starve for want of food. Sir, you may not believe it. You just pay a visit to a remote village. Fights take place there for a few pieces of loaves of bread and for some morsel of rice which we just leave over in the canteens here. We the feasts during the marriage ceremonies get over at night in the houses of the noble people of the villages, fightings take place among the poor dalits, the downtrodden and backward people for the rise and leftover vegetables at the after midnight hours of 2 O'clock and 3 O'clock. We will have to think over the causes behind this situation. The Government that took over the reins after independence, never ever made up their minds to think about the common man. Instead they are merely engrossed in manipulating to grab power. Shri Harin Pathak of the Bharatiya Janata party is like our elder brother. I respect him. It seemed to me from his speech that there is a pinch in his heart for not having obtained the qualifying marks of 33 percent in the electoral examination. I am pained and certainly we will have to think about the well-being of common man. Instead of thinking about grabbing power, we will have to think about the common man. We will have to hear the voice of the common man of the remote villages.

Sir, during the session I read in the newspaper in Delhi that the cost of water has been steeply hiked. In that Hindustan which had abundance of milk and was used to be called a (El Derado) the golden bird at the time when the Englishmen came here, no one could have ever imagined that milk would cost Rs. 10 or Rs. 12 per litre. There was more than enough milk available in India. Sir, I am sorry to say that in today's Hindustan let alone milk, we purchase water at the rate of Rs. 12 per litre and drink it happily with the expectation that it is pure. How is the travesty of fate, we will have to think about the makers of the Constitution, about the freedom fighters who scarificed themselves and their families for the sake of freedom. Our ideal people like Shri Chandra Shekhar Azad and Shri Bhagat Singh never hankered after power. They sacrified themselves at the altar of the freedom movement of the country. Until we get the issues of the common man of our country passed in this House, the problem will not get solved. With regard to the rise in the prices of the petroleum and other allied matters, I would like to know from the hon'ble Finance Minister as to what percentage the rise in prices of petroleum has contributed in the overall price-rise.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it will have to be ascertained as to why there is a steep rise in the prices of petrol and diesel at one hand and on the other hand the prices of the commodities produced by the farmers like paddy, pulse and other foodgrains are witnessing a steep decline. Why the prices of the commodities produced by the farmer are not witnessing any increase? You will have to ascertain whether the minimum prices of sugar and sugar products have been raised or not. No one talks here about raising the prices of sugarcane. The farmer toils hard to grow sugarcane and then puts his produce at the threshold of the mill-owners without getting immediately the cost and the he does not even know whether he would get it even in six months or not. For the sake of his money he suffers bullets as well. He does not get water for irrigation. The farmers are fired at in Rajasthan for holding agitation for enhancing the availability of water for irrigation.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, before I conclude my speech, I would like to submit that you would have to give due consideration for raising the minimum prices of these commodities which are being growth by the farmers. Today the farmer is suffering from the scourge of steep price-rise. The increase in the interest rates of banks has also led to inflation. I urge upon the House and the Government to think about the common man. The common people will have to be given a share in power then only India could move ahead at the path of progress. Today price-rise is at its extreme. To Check it crucial decisions and appropriate steps will have to be taken.

Sir, I would like to sum up my speech with these two lines:-

"Ho Chuki Peer Parvat Si, Ab Pighalani Chahiye.
Is Himalaya Se Ek Nai Ganga Nakalani Chahiye".

Mr. Chairman, Sir, many-many thanks for giving me an opportunity to speak here.

[English]

SHRIMATI V. RADHIKA SELVI (Tiruchendur): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I am representing Tiruchendur constituency which is in the southern tip of India, in which the famous Kanyakumari is located.

I thank you gore giving me this opportunity to participate in this discussion. I am very grateful to my DMK Party which has very good reputation of long standing under the able presidentship of our leader, Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi without whom I would not have been here.

I would like to bring this to the kind notice of the dignified Members of the Lok Sabha. The prices of essential commodities have attained galloping speed due to additional tax levied on petroleum products. Hon. Minister of Petroleum and National Gas, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar stated that fifteen States have charged heavy additional tax ranging from 15 percent to 34 per cent on petroleum products. This has led to the increase in transportation cost.

Since the prices of petroleum prices have gone up, transport costs have also increased. This has resulted in the increased prices of essential commodities, like vegetables, fruits, pulses and cooking oil, which we use daily. The Central Government should direct the State Governments, especially Tamil Nadu, to reduce the sales tax immediately, so that the prices of all essential commodities could also be reduced.

In my constituency, there are plenty of villages in which mostly fishermen live. They live only by fishing. They use kerosene for their boats. Now, since the price of kerosene is very high, they find it difficult to purchase it. Without kerosene they cannot go for fishing. This is very serious problem prevailing in my constituency.

I humbly request the Government to give subsidy for the purchase of kerosene to the fishermen for their boats. A speedy action is required for this. In my constituency, there is a place named Thovalai, which is renowned for flower cultivation. Quite often, there is price fluctuation. Since it is a perishable commodity, they are not able to store them for longer periods. So, they are forced to sell them at a throwaway price very often. It is high time the Central Government should set up cold storage for the benefit of marginal farmers so that price fluctuation does not occur in future. Cold storage is a must for all perishable products. If the Central Government could provide cold storage centres in all district headquarters, where they are required, the farmers could be benefited.

There are many cement manufacturers in Tamil Nadu Raw material for the production of cement is available around the factories itself.

In spite of these facilities that are available, the price of cement is Rs. 170 per bag. Due to high price of cement, construction work has suffered and in turn, the masons also suffered. So, suitable preventive measures have to be taken to bring down the price of cement. Only then the construction work will thrive.

The Central Government has given importance to manpower and given reduction of tax in respect of textile and match factories. I humbly request the Central Government to give subsidy to fishermen for the purchase of kerosene. Also, proper steps have to be taken to reduce the price of cement. Only then the construction work will thrive. I hope and trust that the above matters will be given due importance.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thanks. The House has taken up debate on price rise, under Rule 193. A big demonstration was organised by BJP in Delhi on 1st December, 2004, in which lakhs of people from all over the country had participated. An issue was raised by Newspapers thereon that NDA leader and Ex-Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had been court arrested during the demonstration after thirty years. It was also mentioned that we had been court arrested once during emergency. In fact, it seems that a period of hardship has came in present time and the UPA Government have bring misery to the common man due to price-rise of every commodity as a result of increase in the prices of petroleum products. Not only the medicines, edible oil, kerosene gas, vegetables and pulses have become costly but the prices of water had also increased to two rupees per kilo litre which used to be available in Delhi for thirty paise per

[Shri Bachi Singh Rawat 'Bachda']

litre. The price of Bisleri bottle is twelve to fourteen rupees per litres and that too is not safe. As a result there is an all round spirit in the prices of essential commodities, thereby creating a big problem to common man. The members of the treasury benches and Opposition, both accept that there has been price-rise everywhere. It was said that when NDA Government was in power, the price rise was to a certain extent but when we go through the reality, we wound find that prices will definitely increase in any developing country.

[English]

Creaping inflation will be there.

[Hindi]

By proper management and right politics inflation rate increase gradually and on account of it employment will also generate and the country will develop as well. If there is mismanagement and no proper policy is being implemented and no decision is taken at the right time then.

[English]

it may be a running inflation or it may be a jumping inflation.

[Translation]

Sir, the inflation rate remained around four percent for six and half years but now it has touched the level of eight percent. It is jumping inflation which requires to be checked. I remember that when it was quoted in the House that the NDA Government will bring eight percent growth rate, the Opposition which is now in ruling side said that it is impossible but that dream became reality. The dreams no longer remained dreams but were translated into reality and then we achieved 8.4 percent growth rate. The Planning Commission in its mid term review of the tenth Plan has remarked that we would not be ale to cross seven and half percent growth rate. It would be my submission that it is necessary to take initiative in this direction to control inflation either and to enhance growth rate. Remedial steps should be taken to solve this problem. Today, I had to ask my family members that what is the rate of gas cylinder and then I came to know that earlier it was two hundred rupees and now it is raised to two hundred Eighty Four rupees. I belong to such a Constituency where market is four hundred kilometer distant away and motor transport facility is available beyond hundred and fifty kilometers. Oil company used to provide subsidy and honourable Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas is sitting here and I would like to say that this benefit must be given to us. I belong to Uttaranchal.

Now new agencies are upcoming and these are adding up the freight charges in cylinder's rate thereby the rate of per cylinder accounts around 310-315 rupees and that too on road head where cylinder is being transported by truck. When cylinder will be transported by mule, headload ahead of twenty kilometers, it will not cost less than around 350 rupees per cylinder. It is not only for petroleum products but it applies to every commodity whether it is for building construction materials, brick, cement, iron, food materials or other commodity and either you give subsidy on petroleum products particularly because at least it is related to every housewife and every member of a house who has to face this problem. Special attention should be given as to how it could be solved. Shri Ramji Lal Suman had quoted what we are doing in the field of alternative energy sources. I am happy to say that our NDA Government had done well in this direction. It was decided that five to ten percent ethanol will be mixed in petrol and it also happened in many States and at that time it was mandatory and whether discount or mixture has been allowed or not. The whole job was carried out as a mission and now it seems that some hindrances have come in it. It is necessary to quote about bio diesel that on one hand price has been rising and it is being said that due to rise in prices of petroleum products there has been all round spurt. It is not the cause, but it may be one of the reason and it is not right to say that the spurt in the prices of petroleum products are responsible for all round price-rise. Stock of petroleum products is limited all over world. In coming years the entire stock would be exhausted and we have to explore alternative sources of energy for transport system and other things. So ethanol programme should be encouraged. The second thing is that 'Ratanjot is the main constituent of bio-diesel. The Bio diesel programme was started earlier but I came to know that no funds are being released for cultivation of Ratanjot. There was a need to plant the nursery of that plant and cultivation of that plant should be grown in entire country on surplus or wasteland. It will not only generate bio-diesel in the country but also become a means of employment for crores of people. So the bio diesel should be enhanced with special efforts. Not only this, we must also consider as to what extent can we expand the biogas sector for LPG in the country.

I have to give a special reference, since I have earlier mentioned that I hail from Uttaranchal. Recently during the election campaign in January-February at that time one of the opposition Member whose name I will not tell, said that in their native Uttaranchal dialect a saying goes that: "Tiso ka tel, beese ki bheli ke khali bwari, ke khali Cheli" meaning that the oil is Rs. 30 per kg and a jaggery lump is sold at Rs. 20. How much can daughter-in-law

can eat and how much the daughter can eat. Their prices have gone so high. Now the condition is that oil has risen to Rs. 60 per kg and jaggery lump costs more than Rs. 40 per lump. Now we ask them, 60 ka tel, 40 ki bheli, ke khali bwari, ke khali cheli". It means it has just doubled for a common man. It may be cheaper near the mandi, but there are remote. far-flung areas, adjoining deserts, coastal areas and in the whole of Himachal region, the condition is very bad. Hence, special attention needs to be paid to this area.

I suggest that in pubic distribution system we must consider supplying not only foodgrains but also quantity of essential commodities like pulses and other things. If the prices of petroleum are rising then the rise should be normal. Company can get a bit profit but the consumers should be given benefit by making it subsidized.

Thirdly, the poor labourers are being paid only Rs. 58 per day as their wages. I have enquired telephonically that the minimum wages have been fixed at rupees 73 per day, but in the fields they are not paying Rs. 73 per day. Attention should be paid to it immediately. Minimum wages should immediately, be fixed. Enough has been said about employment generation. The poor are suffering on two fronts. On the one hand there is price rise, on the other hand they are still getting their wages at the rate of 58 per day. A lot of talks has been held there for employment generation. Recently it has been heard that we are going to introduce the Rozgar Gurantee Yojana wherein employment for 100 days shall be ensured. Employment Assurance Scheme has been continuing for decades. The 100 days employment remains the same in the Employment Assurance Scheme. Only the enactment of already existing scheme for wage of labourers remains to be done. There is nothing new. But it has to be seen as to how much self employment and small enterprises can be promoted and extended.

Take the example of Central Government and State Government employees of Delhi. Everywhere it was in the air that DA will be fixed at the current price index. But the file moved two years back and the DA was fixed on the price index of that time and merged with the basic pay. It resulted in inadequate gain for employees. It was also said that the fifth pay commission is outdated now and we are bringingforth the sixth pay commission. But it is mentioned neither in the CMP nor any announcement was made in this regard. Even Central Government employees also bear the brunt of price hike. I request in this regard that the hike in DA should be at prevailing price index for Government employees. The recommendation of the Pay Commission should be enforced in toto and employees be given relief.

Now, I would like to say about the irresponsible job done. When Planning Commission appointed foreigners as advisers. It was opposed. One thing is opposed today and the very next day they support it. The difference is between appearance and reality. There is contradiction in their intention and speech. We can call it shedding crocodile tears by some leftist friends. But over all anti-people policies have come, price raising policies have come, corruption promoting policies appeared in the political arena. There are policies of confrontation and of appeasement; appeasement only for getting votes and confrontation with the opposition. Rising above all these petty things we have to think as to how can we can check the price rise. It is a matter of public interest and certainly the Government is supposed to get support from the entire opposition in this direction. But I doubt this will be possible under present circumstances.

Before I conclude, I would like to quote a couplet of a renowned poet:

"Barbad gulistan karne ko bas eik hi ulloo kafi hai
Anzam-e-gulistan kya hoga, har shakh pe ulloo baitha hai".

[English]

SHRI K.S. RAO (Eluru): Sir, I rise not to support price rise, but to support the steps that have been taken by the hon. Finance Minister as well as the hon. Minister of Petroleum.

Why I oppose the issue of price rise? It is because usually the price rise sufferers are poor, middle class and lower class people, particularly the unorganised people in the villages and the fixed income employees. It is certainly not the rich, industrialists and traders because whatever price rise is there, it is incorporated into the price of the product and the society is made to pay.

It is the duty of the Government to exhaust all means before raising the price of any commodity, that is, unless it becomes inevitable and affects the economy. In this particular case in regard to price increase of petroleum products. The hon. Minister of Petroleum has already explained that by virtue of 70 percent of oil that is being imported, which has become inevitable, and due to the abnormal increase in prices in international market, he has absorbed lot of price rise and only to the extent where it could not be possible, has increased the price to a minimum extent.

[Shri K.S. Rao]

Sometimes, even though there is a little increase, the traders and industrialists take a lot of benefit and in the guise of that, increase price by making extensive publicity in the society.

They will increase that price and will ultimately put the consumer at loss. In this context, I just want to mention some of the things that are going on the parties. I would like to mention about the manner in which the BJP-led NDA Government acted when it was in power; and now when the price has increased, how the Congress-led UPA Government is behaving. I do not mean to say only BJP, but generally all the political parties. When the party is in power, it does not try to restrain, or it does not try to do as much as it has to do. But at the same time. Those in the Opposition Benches, create so much havoc not only in arguments but also create panic in the House, and they stage dharnas etc. I saw the other day BJP Members staging a walk-out and staging a dharna there. If they were to recollect what they had done at the time they had increased the price, they would not have done that much. I will explain the difference between what they have done and what my Government has done.

A discussion went on 17th April, 2000 on an Adjournment Motion on the price rise. My leader, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi had participated in the discussion. Her Government today had increased the price but inevitable part of it only, that too on petroleum. By whom is petroleum being used? Petroleum or diesel is being used by the rich men. They may say the effect of that has gone to the common man. But, what is the percentage of the effect of that has gone to the common man. But, what is the percentage of the effect on the common man? Out of the expenditure that he makes in his regular life, what is the component of these products? What are the essential requirements of a common man? They are food shelter and clothing. But not petrol, air-conditioner or refrigerator. *...(Interruptions)* Now Road Transport Corporation (RTC) is using the diesel. The price will increase and naturally it will have an impact on the common man. There, the Government has to do something to see that the common man is not affected by the price rise by subsidising the road transport which is being utilised by the common man but not entirely. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rao, please address the Chair.

SHRI K.S. RAO: Now, the BHP-led NDA Government, in 2000, had increased the price of fertiliser by 51 percent. Fertiliser is for whom? It is for the farmers. Who are the farmers? It is the most unfortunate lot which constitutes 75 percent of the economy of the country. They never bothered about what would be the impact on the farmer by increase in the price of not only fertiliser, but also other imputes. While the prices of agro-products—food grains which they are producing in the farm— have not been increased, the increase in the price of fertiliser has led to a number of suicides by farmers in several parts of the country. Prices increased not in the case of farmers only. They went further. They increased the price of kerosene oil. Kerosene oil is used by whom? It is used by the common man. This Government has not increased the price of kerosene. How much price had they increased? During their regime, there was an increase of 151 percent in the prices of kerosene. Who were affected? The people living below the poverty line were affected. They went further. They increased the price of commodities like foodgrains, wheat, rice, sugar, which is being distributed through Public Distribution System. Who are using the Public Distribution System? It is not being used by the rich people or the middle-class people. It is only being used by the poor people. They say a number of things; they give long lectures in the shape of ethics and morale.

By their action in 2000, who had suffered? The poor people below the poverty line had suffered. I would have appreciated if they were to help the poor people by reducing the price of foodgrains which are supplied through the public distribution system. They did not do that. But my Government has not increased the price of foodgrains which are being supplied through the pubic distribution system. What right have they got to criticise my Government? What morale have they got? I do not understand that.

Simply because they are sitting in the Opposition now, they think that it is their duty to find fault with the Government which is in power, and because of that, they bite. I do agree that by virtue of their being in Opposition, they can criticise the Government wherever it went wrong, when it took a wrong step, and wherever its actions have affected the common man and poor people in particular. I have no objection to that. But today, their criticism appears to be only on the basis of their being in the Opposition. I can understand the Communists criticising this Government because they have taken a stand all the time. Though they are supporting this Government from outside, they are criticising the Government. When the NDA Government was in power, they criticised them. When we are in Government, they

are criticising us. I have no problem with them. I cannot criticise them for that but not the BJP. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: They can oppose. What about the people of India? Can they oppose? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K.S. RAO: I give another similar instance that when a discussion was going on under Rule 193 on 28th October, 1999, the then Government had increased the price of HSD by 35 percent and LPG by 30 percent. They had put a burden of Rs. 9,700 crore on the people. Today, my Government, having understood the impact of this, once again reconciled to stand the Finance Minister has come forward with several measure by which he has foregone Rs. 2,850 crore by giving reduction in the customs duty and excise duty.

I was patiently listening to what my friend, Shri Harin Pathak was saying. He said that the oil prices in the last six months have increased three times. Do you know, Sir, how many times they increased the oil prices in 2002 and 2003? In 2002, they increased the oil prices 13 times. ...*(Interruptions)*

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B. C. KHANDURI (Garhwal): In how many years?

SHRI K.S. RAO: In only one year, 2002, they increased the oil prices 13 times. You can see the record.

In 2003, they increased the oil prices 11 times. They are talking about this Government which has just come to power only six months back. The effect of the increase in the first six months was because of them, and not because of the present Government. I can understand if they criticise this Government next year but certainly not in the first six months of this Government.

Sir, his logic is surprising. He said that because of reduction in the customs duty and excise duty by the Finance Minister, the revenue has gone down by Rs. 15,000 crore. He says that this loss of Rs. 15,000 crore revenue has become a loss to the poor man. Suppose we were to increase it, he would have side that it is a burden on the poor man. And when we reduced it, then also he says that it is a burden on the poor man because of loss of revenue. What is to be done? Should we keep quiet? Do we not have to take any action? I can understand the reason. He says that by reducing the excise duty, there was a loss of revenue to the extent of Rs. 15,000 crore and it is a loss to the Government. I do not know where from he got the calculation. He said that by decreasing the price of coal, there is Rs 75,000 crore loss of revenue to the Government. And he says that because of the actions of the Government, there is Rs. 90,000 crore burden on the people. He talked about the Economic Survey and so many other things. While mentioning all these things, he said: "Mr. Finance Minister, remember that the mandate of the people is not in your favour". I ask now, is it in their favour? It is very clear. I do not dub that the mandate is in favour of Congress but the mandate is clearly against the BJP. There is no doubt about it. Remember, we have never craved to form the Government. If you recollect, in 1999 when the Congress Party had got more than 200 seats, we said, "We do not want to form the Government.

We left it to the Opposition. Did you have the capacity to do so? You did not but we have done it. We have proved it. It is not by just speaking and giving a lecture either in the House or outside. We have practically implemented it. ...*(Interruptions)* We had more than 200 seats at that time. When we got more than 200 seats. We did not from the Government. So, today, do not speak of any mandate for this Government at any time.

Similarly, in July 1998 when there was an inflation, the then hon. Finance Minister said that 86 percent of the growth in inflation was due to fruits, vegetables and edible oils. Today, once again may I say that he was harping very much on inflation? He says inflation is mainly because of vegetables, that means, the commodities which are being consumed by the poor man. I agree, today, you see. Inflation is more on whole sale price index, and not on consumer price index. So long as inflation is not on the commodities which are being used by the poor man, the common man, we do not need to bother so much. I do not support inflation, but sometimes inflation may not be bad as long as there is a growth in the economy. If the rate growth, if the rate of development is excellent, a little inflation will not affect the nation at all.

Now, for example, if the prices of the foodgrains being produced by farmer in the country, were to be increased, there will be no deaths. So, a wage earner, a coolie who is working in the village, will not be affected more by the increase in the prices of foodgrains than by the increase in the manufactured products outside. But they never increased the price of the food commodities

[Shri K.S. Rao]
which are being produced by the farmers. But they have gone to the extent of increasing the prices of all the articles which are produced by the manufacturers, by the rich people and by the industrialists. Who are the purchasers? If the purchasing power of the farmer were not to go up, how can the economy grow up in the country? They do not bother about this.

Now, if the prices of petrol were to go up, who will be affected? It is the rich man. Then, why are we talking so much? We do agree that all focus have to discuss the price rise, but not in the tone in which they are doing it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude, You also mention how much is the increase in the prices of food grains. The farmers can be benefited by the increase in the prices of agricultural products.

SHRI K.S. RAO: Today, we have increased the wheat price by Rs. 100. They had never done it in their tenure. Rs. 100 is certainly a substantial amount for the farmers. It is a benefit to the farmers. Except giving lecture and participating in the discussion, did they ever think of farmers?

In this context, I just want to mention some of the things that are happening in my State. I just wanted to say this. How do we control the prices of the commodities? It has to be only by increasing the production. How do we increase the production? It is by increasing the capacities and the skills of the citizens of this country. If whatever Bill or Act that we all make in Parliament were to motivate an individual, a citizen to work hard, put his sweat and produce wealth for this nation, automatically the prices will be controlled. But we are not doing thus. So, we must see that the maximum amount of budgetary allocation is to be made for the development of human resources, more particularly in giving vocational education, thereby the capacities of the people and the production will increase. Then we can even link up all those lakhs factories of rupees, which are lying in the banks, to all those trained people directly, make them work and produce the wealth, which we are not doing.

Also, there is another aspect. In Andhra Pradesh, today, my Chief Minister is planning to irrigate 65 lakh acres by taking up 26 projects.

In this way, the annual production will go up apart from value addition by Rs. 40,000 crore. The TDP, which is in Opposition there like the BJP here in Parliament, was creating problems. *...(Interruptions)* To begin with, they were saying that this Congress Government was not in interested in taking up these projects and most of the projects which they had promised before elections. *...(Interruptions)*

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagar Kurnool): We were not creating problems. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Rao, please conclude now.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Jagannath you are the next speaker. You are going to get the opportunity soon.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI K.S. RAO: In Andhra Pradesh, before elections, in the election campaign, both the Congress Party as well as the Telugu Desam Party were promising to the people that they would construct Polavaram, Pulichintala. Devadula and other projects. I am not saying that the TDP had not promised in the election campaign that they would not construct these projects.

Now, when our Government was elected and came to power, my Chief Minister initiated 26 projects to irrigate 65 lakh acres of land. They were questioning as to where they get the required money to construct these projects. When it became certain that this Government would procure money to execute them, then they were questioning as to where is the permission for constructing these projects. If that were to be so, how did they promise during their election campaign that they would also construct the same projects, knowing fully well that they do not have the permission for constructing these projects? It means, they wanted to cheat the people with false promises Now, when it has become certain that the Congress Party is going to construct all these things, they are doing everything possible to prevent the project to come up. *...(Interruptions)*

DR. M. JAGANNATH: What Shri K.S. Rao is saying is not correct. Please allow me to say something. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Only the speech of Shri Rao is going in the record and nothing else.

*...(Interruptions)**

*Not recorded.

SHRI K.S. RAO: I appreciate the BJP Government in constituting a Task Force to link the rivers in the country and to find out the cost of it. When my learned friend. Shri Suresh Prabhu had assessed in his report that Rs. 5.6 lakh crore are required for linking of rivers, then everybody got scared even to speak about that. But once again, my Government in Andhra Pradesh has taken the initiative for linking the Krishna and Godavari rivers by which not only Andhra Pradesh but even Karnataka and Maharashtra would also be benefited. ...*(Interruptions)*

Now, my State Government is constructing several power projects and has started giving free power to the farming community. The Andhra Pradesh Government has already decided to allot one lakh acres of irritable land to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the landless poor.

So, once again, I request the hon. Ministers of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the hon. Minister of Finance to ensure all restraints in raising the prices of any commodity unless it becomes highly unavoidable. It is because if they were to increase the price by rupee one, the traders will take advantage of it and give extensive publicity, create a type and increase the price by Rs. 4/- thereby filling their coffers and doing extensive damage to the common man.

Sir, with these few words, I support the actions taken by our hon. Ministers of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and Finance. But still I wish they must take some more steps to prevent the price rise.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we're discussing price hike under the Rule 193 in the House. My predecessor, the hon'ble Member from the Congress concluded his speech saying that he supported the Government. It means that he has supported the rising of prices. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI K.S. RAO: You did not hear. The very first sentence I said was I am opposing this price rise. ...*(Interruptions)* That is what I said.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But are you opposing this discussion under Rule 193?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyway, he has not interrupted you Please allow him speak.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Today, there is a concern about the price hike in the whole country. At every level the concern is being expressed regarding the rising prices and it is being discussed as well however, it is the common man of the country who has been affected the most by this price hike. Especially, the labour class living in the rural areas and the labourers living in the cities who have very meagre income, are bearing the brunt of price hike. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unorganised workers are also its victims.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Apart from this, there are agricultural labourers, small farmers living in the village or those who do not own any land are also its victims. Unfortunately, 70 percent population of our country is victim of the increasing cost of living today.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, if price hike is to be controlled, the foremost requirement is that the Government must have will power. There is a need to bring a change in mind-set as to what measures should be taken for curbing the price hike. I'd like to speak about the mind set of the Government and not go into the details. The data sometimes are deceptive and doctored and they are often different from ground reality. In the last five years, the prices have soared to a great extent. In this regard, several articles have been appeared in newspapers from time to time. What is the reason that during the last five months, after the change in power, prices have gone up unbridled. In this connection, not only regional language newspapers but the newspapers in English and Hindi languages also have published articles. Almost all the political parties have raised their concern over the dearness. I was going through an article in which the congress Party also raised its concern over higher cost of living. Today, all the political parties are affected by the price hike.

A big rally led by the Bhartiya Janta Party was held recently in Delhi. Lakhs of people participated in this rally. ...*(Interruptions)*. There were about lakhs of people.

[Shri Anant Gangaram Geete]

The rally against the price hike which may not have been taken out by the BJP's, it may have been taken out by some other party, but the price-hike is affecting all of us. The common man is afflicted with the scourge of higher cost of living and certainly their number is more than 70 percent, a fact which nobody can deny. The main reason is that the common man has to face the good or bad consequences of the policies which the Government in the states and at the centre chalk out. If the policy of the Government is good, it shows good results, and if the policy is bad, the people of the country and the common man have to face disbud consequences. I'm talking about this point here because since the change in Government and the coming of the UPA Government in Power, I don't know what priority this Government has fixed. On the basis of our experience at the ground level and at the village level, I would like to state that the priority of our previous NDA Government was to give more amenities to the rural areas and schemes for the development of rural areas and allocating more and more money for this purpose. I am not saying it for the praise of the previous Government but you must have witnessed its good results in the last five years. During the last five years in the rural areas, especially at the infrastructured level, be it the construction of roads or school buildings or drinking water schemes, the Government of India has spent crores of rupees in every state on separate schemes and these have reached the common man. I'm highlighting these schemes because when roads are constructed, labourers are engaged for the purpose and people get employment there. When we construct buildings, it also generates employment for the people. When drinking water schemes are implemented, these also provide employment to the people. These types of schemes provide employment to labourers at the rural level, by they agricultural labourers or common labourer. When they get employment the income of labourers living below the poverty line is certainly raised and they get a support for living. Unfortunately, I don't know the reason but we have been experiencing for the last five months that this Government has not allocated any money for almost all the schemes of the rural areas. All the schemes are running at a snail's pace. Except for the old schemes at the implementation phase, the new ones have almost been discontinued. What is going to be the future of these schemes. I cannot say.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I must mention here that in the event of price-rise a poor common man and the one who belongs to the backward classes or a labourer is faced with a lot of difficulties. They are badly affected. Ours is a developing country. This is an era of globalisation. We have adopted the policy of liberalisation. We need to catch the peace of competition, with which the whole world is marching ahead. It is necessary for the reason that we have to be in the competition.

17.00 hrs.

This sense of competition is necessary, however, our primary concern should be poverty as ours is a developing country and the population of our country is more than hundred crore out of which seventy percent population is living in rural area where the per capita income is either close to poverty line or is below poverty line. This is why we implement various plans to ensure the fulfillment of minimum basic needs of the poor. We are running a scheme under PDS. We make foodgrains available at affordable rates all over the country. Today a poor man gets foodgrains under this scheme. It's unfortunate that in many States and districts people do not have enough money to buy foodgrains under this scheme. Annapurna Yojana that has been in place for the past five years under which foodgrains are made available at cheaper rates to the people particularly, aged people belonging to the BPL group. Rice is priced Rs. 3 per a kilo and wheat is priced rupees 2 per kilo. Unfortunately, we see that in many States and districts people do not have even two or three rupees to buy foodgrains under Annapurana Yojana. In this situation, several factors can be attributed to the price rise. One important reason which was mentioned in everybody's speech is that the increase in the price of petroleum products has direct impact on the price of vital items, particularly the price of foodgrains, vegetables, oil that are necessary for survival are directly affected.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Geeteji, hon. Minister has some work after 7 o'clock and he has to go as well. He has some Cabinet business also. I think if we cooperate and let him finish his reply by 7. We can extend the time of the House right now. It will facilitate in regulating the proceedings of the House, it would be fair enough if you all agree. We will finish the business by 7. Then there won't be any objection. At six you would say that time of the House cannot be extended. The replies can be completed today itself. The hon. Members can made their Submissions freely in the House.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, two days earlier, the Minister for External Affairs said that he has something to do after seven. The same thing happened that day too. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is not an issue of work. This is the issue of Parliament.

[English]

The work of Parliament should definitely be given priority.

[Translation]

It is not that I am according less significance to the Parliamentary business. The value of hon. Minister's time is not above the Parliament. However, if the timing gets extended to seven, it would facilitate the Members to speak after proper planning. This is why I am saying so. The hon. Minister will continue in the House till ten if the House directs so. The Minister's personal engagement has no significance as compared to the Parliamentary business. But if told earlier the Members find it easier to plan their speeches. Right now, Geeteji said that he would take two minutes' time but took five to seven minutes. I have no objection to that.

[English]

The hon. Members can take their own time for the discussion. All the parties have already been allocated time for their participation on this discussion.

[Translation]

But once the time is fixed, some of the Members would like to listen to the hon. Minister, they also find it convenient. This is why I am fixing it with your consent.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: The opposition has to do nothing but to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am already giving you an opportunity to speak. Everyone does the same. The Congress did the same when it was in the opposition. Now, you are in the similar position.

[English]

DR. M. JAGANNATH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, if the discussion is not concluded today, then it can be taken up tomorrow. I am saying this because it is a very serious matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jagannath, kindly cooperate with the Chair. You can speak during your turn for participation in the discussion.

DR. M. JAGANNATH: Sir, my only submission is that if this discussion is not concluded today, then it can be completed tomorrow. ...*(Interruptions)*

17.05 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*]

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Jagannathji, you can speak after he finishes.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is the reason why we have tried to present the ground realities of our country, particularly pertaining to the rural areas before the House. In my speech, not even a single sentence is politically motivated. I have simply focussed on the ground reality. I would like to offer a few suggestions for it. If we cannot check the price-rise, at least we can take steps to provide Some relief to the common man.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to suggest two-three things to increase the annual and daily income of the common man. Having offered my suggestion to that end. I will conclude my speech.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I would like to suggest not to exercise any cut in the employment scheme launched by the previous Government particularly, for the people living in rural areas and allocation of funds be made in time for all those schemes.

Sir, secondly, I would like to suggest that the schemes launched for the welfare of 60-70 percent people living below poverty line or at this poverty line during the regime of the previous Government should be allowed to continue on priority basis. They should not be wound up. This is why I had asked the priorities of the Government and if the common man is the priority of the Government, we can surely overcome the price rise.

Sir, a short while ago, I referred to Public Distribution System. Through this system we were providing the poor section of every State of the country with foodgrains at two rupees per Kg. By citing an example, I would like to explain as to how we had managed to overcome price rise whether this Government would be able to rein in the price-rise or what would be form of the price-rise in future, time itself will tell. But the existing state of affairs is that common man is the victim of price-rise and so he is agitated. If the price rise continues to grow at the same pace I am afraid someday this may result in civil war.

[Shri Anant Gangaram Geete]

Sir, given the rise in the crime graph, there would be an alarming situation in the country. The reason behind is that the people living in rural areas can hardly manage two square meals per day and migrate to towns in search of bread and butter. There is no employment in the towns as a result of which they espouse the way of life easily available to them and somewhere down-the-line enters the crime zone. Therefore, our schemes running through the PDS should be allowed to continue. I would cite an example in this regard.

Sir, when the Shiv Sena and the BJP were in power in Maharashtra, steep price rise had been witnessed all over the country at that time. The whole country was suffering and was agonised due to price-rise. I am talking about the period between 1995 to 1999. Much discussion had been held on price-rise at that time. Our Government had taken a decision that up to five years, till the term of our Government, the prices of ten essential commodities will not be raised. These commodities such as wheat, rice, pulse, oil, jaggery etc. which had been selected and were essential for the common man's consumption. The rates of these commodities were maintained in 1999 at the level of those in 1995. The losses incurred due to this measure were being borne by the State Government. It is unfortunate, that today the financial condition of the State Governments of the country is not up to the mark. So, the State Governments are also not capable to bear this type of burden. I belong to Maharashtra. At this juncture, there is a loan to the tune of Rs. 1,000 crores approximately against the State Government of Maharashtra. Not only Maharashtra but almost all the State Governments are facing the same situation and their financial condition is bad. Therefore, I would like to urge upon the hon. Finance Minister to check the prices of essential commodities of common use to the poor and to check the affects of price rise on common man.

You plan it for five years. You take a decision that as long as you are in power prices of the essential commodities like wheat, rice or paddy being produced by whichever State, will not be allowed to go up. Pulse, oil, jaggery or sugar or oil-all these are essential for everybody. Let eight or ten commodities be identified and determine that we would not let their prices go up for the next five years in comparison to their present rates. It is not possible to stop price rise but it is essential to check it. ...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, through you, I would like to appeal to the Government to take the responsibility for five years to check the prices of those commodities which are essential for the survival of everybody and the resultant loss to the States may be borne by the Union Government in the form of subsidy. This decision would be similar to that of the erstwhile Maharashtra Government and it would not be a burden on the States as it could be borne in the form of subsidy being given by the Union Government for different schemes formulated by the States. If such a decision is taken by the Union Government, we would certainly be able to check steep price rise.

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I stand here to discuss the issue of price rise.

At the outset, I would congratulate my predecessor Shri Geete for giving very pertinent suggestions. He has not only been critical of the situation prevailing in the country but also, to ease the tension of the common man has given some suggestions. I think the hon. Minister of Finance will look into them and will respond while replying to the debate.

A lot of discussion has already been made for the last about two and a half hours. The situation in the country is alarming. It is pinching the common man. There is no doubt about that. We are not debating whether actually it is affecting the people or not. Reports have come out looking into the situation prevailing in the country.

I would like to quote some figures from some of these reports. These are Government reports. The Annual Report of RBI for the year 2003-04 has stated that inflation in India generally remained stable during 2003-04 although rising commodity prices led to episodes of pressures. Similarly, agricultural commodity prices were subdued due to favourable supply conditions. Yet, this year. The comparison is made in that report—the situation has gone from bad to worse.

The Half-Yearly Review, which was released two months back, states "Annual inflation measured by point-to-point variations in the Wholesale Price Index rose from 4.6 percent in end March to 8.3 percent in end August. In these circumstances, RBI is bound to revise the projected figures for 2004-05. So, the figure has gone beyond eight percent.

The RBI may attribute this inflationary trend to deficient monsoon, increase in international crude price

but the fact remains that within six months of the UPA Government, the Government has destructed the growth momentum of the nation generated by Shri Vajpayee-lead NDA Government. India's current inflation rate is the highest among the emerging economics of the world. Interest rates, which were normalised during the NDA rule, have risen due to selective manipulations. Sectors like housing, automobiles, construction and manufacturing are suffering today. There has been a deceleration in the performance of these key infrastructure sectors during September this year. Government data indicates growth in production of finished steel came down to three percent between April and September, 2004 as against 11.9 percent during the first half of the previous year. The cement sector also slowed down to 4.8 percent. These are all consumable goods.

Similarly, the foreign exchange, which had tripled during the last six years of NDA rule, has reached a stagnation point. These are indicators. The recent upward movement in Consumer Price Index about which the initiator of this discussion, Shri Basu Deb Acharia mentioned the Consumer Price Index for industrial workers, that is also an indicator, largely reflects rise in price of food articles. I would refer to Shri Rao's statement which he has made here. Let us see rise in price of food articles, particularly fruits and vegetables, tea and coffee. Who use these articles? You can delete fruit but who uses vegetables? Who uses tea? Who uses coffee? The rise in consumer prices in the rural areas has been stronger than that of the urban areas. Reports are there within the last 15 years. Umpteen number of reports have come out indicated that large consumer are there in rural areas in comparison to urban areas. At least, we should not live in a make belief world that it is the urban growth centres which has the largest market for consumable goods. That is not so today.

Higher inflation in the current fiscal year largely reflects rise in prices of fuel groups and manufactured groups. Manufactured goods recorded 6.6 percent year-on-year rise in wholesale Price Index during April-September, 2004 as compared to 5.1 percent in the same period of 2003. Basic metal alloys and metal products and textiles have been largely responsible for the upward rise in WPI of manufacturing goods in the current fiscal year.

Textile items are the second largest group of manufactured products whose prices have risen in the current fiscal year. Prices of manufactured food products have gone up by 5.5 percent during April-September, 2004 on top of the 8.5 percent during the corresponding period of 203. These are bare facts. This rise is mainly due to 16 percent increase in the prices of sugar, Khandsari and gur. Besides sugar, manufacture of common salt.

[Translation]

This is a question of the common man.

[English]

tea and coffee also saw double digit rises in prices.

I go to the market. Many Members of this House are also visiting the market and purchasing their consumable products. During the last six months, we have all been affected. We have cut down our consumption to meet the demand. We all know how much we are concerned about the *aam admi* during the last six months! We all know about the 'common man' as a reader of the Times of India. We find that 'common man' in Shri R.K Laxman's cartoon. What is his version? What has he been saying during the last one month or two months or since September last? I would request both the learned Ministers who are present here today—I am referring to the Minister for Petroleum and also the Minister of Finance—to go through and find out how that 'common man' of the Times of India, has reacted.

Of course, how can the comrades be silent when the 'common man' is being talked about? They have thundered: "The UPA Government cannot last a day without their support. And, therefore, they have to hear, they have to bear and they have to follow". This is their statement. I do not know what they are hearing; how much they are bearing; and what they are following. But history has confirmed that Communists are experts in ruining the economy. I have heard with rapt attention that day when a reply was being given during Question Hour or after that, and I will definitely keep it for my future reference which Shri Aiyar had given. I would now quote what another learned Member Shri Gurudas Dasgupta has quoted in Kolkata. He has thundered. "If the UPA Government did not consider a roll back in the price of diesel and LPG, the CPI's labour union, the All India Trade Union Congress will launch a campaign to counter the UPA's anti-people politics". He has also added, "Alternatively, measures such as—that is a suggestion-reduction in customs and sales tax rates and increase in IT rates should be applicable for corporate and rich people to compensate the loss in revenue". This is his suggestion. We are eagerly awaiting, I think, next week, how much the roll back will be, if at all it is going to be, and how much adjustment, in the Supplementary Budget, the hon. Finance Minister is going to make.

[Shri B. Mahtab]

But, in the meanwhile, the Finance Minister has very kindly sacrificed—the word which has been used—Rs. 2,500 crore in customs and excise duty cuts on petroleum products to contain the price rise, specially Rs. 350 crore of import duty cut on steel and scrap. It is expected to have the price control measure which will cross around Rs. 3,500 crore.

But what is happening in the market today? Last week, I had gone with my children to a market, which is frequented by some Members of this House, and I found that the packaged food products do not contain the same amount, the same weightage that it had six months earlier. The gramage of products pack have been reduced with price remaining the same. The traders, especially the Indian traders are very innovative. I do not know whether the Government is looking into this aspect or not. Of course, in some respect, the State Governments will be responsible for this. The Weights and Measures Department will be responsible for this. But this is having a psychological impact on the children also who go out to the market.

Sir, here, I have the National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA Government. It comprises of around 57 pages. This is supposed to be the Bible, the Gita, the Quran on which this Government is functioning with the advice and the guidance of the Left Front. Page 43 of the NCMP mentions about the Fiscal Policy and the economic Reforms. It is the seventh item. It says: "Effective and strong measures to control the price rise of essential commodities". This is the Bible: this is the Gita; and this is the Quran of the UPA Government. But what has happened and what is happening?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mahtab, please come to the main points and conclude. There are 33 Members who had given names to speak on the discussion. Only 12 Members have spoken so far, and 21 Members are still remaining to participate. Time at our disposal is very less.

[Translation]

Your party had been allotted five minutes which you have already crossed.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB: Sir, my previous speaker has very rightly mentioned about the 70 percent of the people. *...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I urge upon all the hon'ble Members to complete their speeches within the allotted times for their party, so that no constraints are felt. Otherwise you all will have to sit upto 10 0'clock at night. Now, let us have the opinion of the House.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB: Sir, we will abide by that decision provided everybody agrees. *...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you all complete your speeches within your time frame, it will be over by 6.30 P.M.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB: Right Sir,

India has a bigger middle class which varies between 30 crore and 35 crore. This middle class is one of the largest middle class of any country in this world. This middle class is a vocal middle class unlike other democratic countries. They are educated, professionals, emerging from the rank, smart, innovative, enterprising and hard working. Many of the them are honest, thoughtful, compassionate, sensitive, socially responsible and politically correct. But this Government has betrayed them. It has also betrayed the poor.

Kerosene is in short supply. Gas, petrol and diesel prices have gone up despite scaling down of crude in the International market. This is the situation today.

Sir, I would like to know from the Government that what concrete steps are being taken to contain the price rise. We have been hearing about the price rise since our college days, since the early Sixties, and the price rise is a phenomenon which occurs year after year continue unabated.

But during the six years of NDA rule, that effect or that impact was not felt. This is the reaction of the common people. But here within six months now, people feel betrayed. So, please assure us and convinces by telling what steps are being taken in this regard.

[Translation]

SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA (Hazaribagh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this discussion on price rise is very significant for the country and its people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have four minutes at your disposal. You conclude your speech with this time limit. Mind the time limit.

SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Time limit is applicable to me only?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is applicable to all.

SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the discussion being held on price-rise is very significant for the country as well as its people. When the UPA Government was formed it was the hope of the poor and labourers of the villages that this Government would perform excellently. The Government enjoy the support of our party also. But prices are rising as a result of inflation that has now touched 8 percent. Recently the price-rise has been upto 7.5 percent in the wholesale and in the retail it has risen up to 10 percent. Recently, the prices of petrol, diesel and gas have risen. The price of the Kerosene oil has not increased.

Before the NDA Government, the retail-price of kerosene oil was Rs. 3 per litre which was raised by the Government to Rs. 9/- per litre. The prices of fertilizers and seeds provided to the farmer have become double and triple. The UPA Government should not the instance of the NDA Government. They have reaped the consequences of their action. If steep price-rise continues in the same manner, the general public would go against the UPA Government and this would not be good for the general public as well as the Government. The way prices of the petroleum products have increased, has badly affected the farmers. The farmers grow the crops but the prices of his product do not increase. The prices of fertilizer, seed, petrol, diesel etc. have gone up. The farmers who constitute 70 percent of the population and the rural labourers are the most affected lot by this price-rise. Today, the unbridled price-rise is assuming ominous proportion.

The price-rise affects the Government employees working in offices and in public sector. They get a paltry amount as dearness allowance to compensate this. Even the Ministers and the hon. Members get an enhancement is salary and allowances to compensate the price rise, but the 90 percent poor labourers and farmers of the villages bear the most of the burden of price rise. Therefore, I would like to urge upon the Government, the hon. Finance Minister who is sitting here, that this issue should be discussed in all earnestness. When the UPA Government had formulated a common minimum programme, it assured that it will work for the poor and the farmers and will not harm the farmers and the poor of the country. You may observe that the prices of jute and sugarcane have come down whereas the prices of sugar have gone up. This is the over all trend being witnessed. So, the way prices are rising the farmers and the poor people will get ruined.

At present, flood and drought have affected several parts of the country which has devastated farmers. They have lost their produce and prices are constantly on the rise. To check his ever growing prices the Government should develop will power. How it will checked, should be a concerted effort.

The hon. Finance Minister during his speech should give an assurance of waiving the loan of the farmers so that the farmers can heave a sigh of relief.

Secondly I would like to submit about the Public Distribution System. The Government with concerted efforts of all the officers of the PDS fair should provide goods at rates by strengthening the PDS.

Thirdly, the Government should provide prices of jute, cotton and sugarcane to farmers and should roll back the price-hike of kerosene, gas and diesel. The rural employment scheme being run in the rural areas should be operated stringently. If the Government fails to do all these, it would meet the same fate as of the NDA Government. Therefore, we warn the UPA Government, on behalf of our party, to check this constant price rise whatever action may be taken by the Government. The prices should not be hiked in public interest. With this, I conclude my speech.

[English]

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South): Thank, you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak. I rise to protest against the price hike, which is irreparable, unprecedented and uncalled for.

I am really shocked to see such a price hike. I am not making any personal allegation or attacking any particular individual but we have generally seen that before

[Kumari Mamata Banerjee]

elections the political parties think people as the essential commodities and after the elections are over they think them as saleable commodities I would like to say that they are not the saleable commodities but the essential commodities and the political parties are not the essential commodities. The matter is so shocking that I gave a notice to discuss it under Rule 184 so that we could discuss it seriously. It is very unfortunate that we are discussing it today under Rule 193. What will be the fate of this discussion? It will end only in a discussion after which we will get an ordinary reply from the Minister. The Government is under no compulsion or obligation to accept it. I do not think merely discussing the issue will lead to a solution.

We are grateful that the Finance Minister, the Minister of Petroleum and other Ministers are sitting here. When I was the Railway Minister in the NDA Government, even at that time the LPG price was hiked. I tendered my resignation on that. I told the then Prime Minister that we could not tolerate this because we would have to ultimately go to the people. Our Constitution says that it is the Government of the people, by the people and for the people. Atal ji was kind enough to consider our demand. Even you were in the NDA at that time and you also criticised the then Government. I remember even some of the BJP friends also criticised the hike. Everybody wanted that Government should roll back and consider the issue favourably.

We should not take the issue as political. Today your Party is in power and tomorrow some other Party may be in power. We should follow some ethics. If today we are not discussing the matter under Rule 184. I do not accuse the Government for it. I accuse my Leftist friends for this. Why did they accept to have a discussion on the matter under Rule 193 and not under Rule 184?

In that event we could have found an opportunity to find out whether my friends from the Left were defending the Government on this issue or were criticising them. The outcome of a discussion under Rule 193 is 'zero'. How will they become a 'hero'? They would not be able to become 'heroes'. Inside the Chamber here a discussion has been allowed under Rule 193 and outside the Chamber they are going for 'Chakka bandh'

[Translation]

When they remain present in the House, they keep mum.

[English]

What they are doing here is hypocrisy and double standard.

Sir, I think, we should be honest in our approach on this issue. No Member, irrespective of which party he/she belongs to, is happy about price hike of essential commodities. Everybody feels that the common people should get justice. A person who goes to the market everyday told me that one day he went to the market with his children and asked.

[Translation]

What is the price of ladyfinger? When the vendors told the price of lady finger they said that we should have brought burner. Hearing the price of ladyfinger his body became so much hot as it would catch fire. If fire breaks out in the kitchen, the house gets burnt. If the fire breaks out in the home, it engulf the country as well. Therefore, I would like to say that

[English]

the Government must re-consider this issue. The Government must sit together and prepare a blueprint in the matter in order that the common people of this country are not put to hardship.

Sir, when we talk of economic reforms and globalisation, the views of only one percent of the total population are taken into consideration and the views of the rest of the 99 percent of the population—they may be villagers, common people, middle class people from the salaried class, or the poor people—background and so you may criticise me. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Mr. Minister, you can do that because you are from Harvard and I am from the grass root level.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I have said nothing about you

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: You have to accept it from your heart and not politically.

Sir, there is no value of this discussion under Rule 193. The price of LPG has been hiked thrice. The NDA Government is not in power at the Centre today. When they were in power they also had raised it but this Government, within a span of just six months, have raised it by 40 percent. The prices of LPG, petrol, coal, cement and even freight rates of the Railways to earn a revenue to the tune of about Rs. 400 crore, have been increased. Coal is an essential commodity but it has been excluded from the list of essential commodities. Coal earlier was there in the list of essential commodities. Coal prices

have been hiked. Even the price of kerosene has been hiked. Where would the common people go? There has been a hike even in consumption of electricity.

Sir, take for example potato. Now, a variety of vegetables are flooding the market. There are two to three types of potatoes. The lowest quality of potato today in the market costs Rs. 8/- per kilogram. This is the position when there are vegetables available in the market. What would be the price of potato when the production and supply of vegetables would be less in the market? Lady's Finger costs Rs. 30/- per kilogram. Brinjal costs about Rs. 15-20 per kilogram. Even edible oil costs more today. Where would the common people go?

You said that the State Government should give some relief to the people by way of taxation, sales tax, etc. In my State, for your information I may tell you that there is a price difference of Rs. 17 to Rs. 25 as far as LPG is concerned. The price of domestic gas is about Rs. 280 or 285 in Chennai or in Mumbai or in Delhi. But in my State, the price is more. It is more by about Rs. 25 as compared to Delhi and Mumbai. Please look into this matter. When the Central Government is increasing prices on one part and getting more taxes from the people from another part, where will the common man go? I think the Government must sit with the Government and prepare a blue print so that the common people may not be harmed and they shall at least live peacefully.

You know the state of salaried people. Their salary has not been increased. The Central Government has got many programmes for the poor people. From the time of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, there have been many rural development programmes like the Food for Work Programme, Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and other programmes. But money is not reaching the people. The money which the Central Government is sending to the State Government is not reaching the people. This money is diverted for other purposes. This money is not utilised. Members belongings to different States may speak in detail about their own respective States. I cannot say about other States. I can say only about my State.

There is at a garden in my State called the Jalpaiguri Duar Tea Garden where more than one thousand people died. Poverty is prevailing there. In districts like Belpahadi, Amalsol, Midnapore, Bagmundi Purulia, Cooch Behar, South Dinajpur and Jalpaiguri, people are suffering due to hunger. Starvation like situation is increasing like anything. That is why, I am appealing to you on this issue. Please do not take it lightly or do not take it that we are saying it just like that. We are saying this for the benefit of the people. Please consider the prices of petroleum products like LPG, kerosene, diesel, etc. Diesel is used in the tractors. If you increase the price of diesel, then it will affect other areas also. That is why, I request you to please see that there is a monitoring system and there should be some sort of a check and balance. Prices are different in different markets. There is no control and no monitoring system and there is no system of check and balance. You may think that CPI (M) will balance your Government. They will check you sometimes but will not balance you. And when there is a need or a difficulty for you, they will be the first persons to withdraw their support because we know their game very well. Hence please do not take any risk or unnecessary burden to satisfy them. You should satisfy the people of this country. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDHANGSHU SEAL (Calcutta North West): Do not give advice. ...*(Interruptions)*

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: I am not giving you advice. You are clever people. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, they are always clever people. They play double game and always mislead and misguide people. They have started playing the game. When the Planning Commission was set up, they had their own people in it. ...*(Interruptions)* We are not responsible for this. We may continue in the Opposition. But we would not disturb the Government. Where we were supporting the NDA Government and when we found any problem for the people, we raised the issue to Government. Sir, they are not doing so. They are just pushing the people towards the PMO and other places. ...*(Interruptions)* That is why, I have an appeal to make to you. Please do not trust the Leftists. They are opportunities. Leftists will always misguide you, mislead you and disturb you, and the result will be zero. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madam, please conclude.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, why should they disturb me when I did not disturb them when they were speaking?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madam, you have already taken ten minutes' time.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

*...(Interruptions)**

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: It is null and void. It is absolutely wrong. *...(Interruptions)* The Corporation has already replied. *...(Interruptions)* You do not know the details. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madam, address the Chair and conclude your speech.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record. Please take your seat.

*...(Interruptions)**

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, I think I have raised right points. That is why they are angry. You are angry. But do not make the people hungry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madam, please conclude.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: With these words, I request the Government to please re-consider the price hike which is the demand of the people. People want that. You should re-consider this decision as it is people's demand. It is not a matter of sentiments, like we are going for roll back. If you do not roll back, then it will be rolled gold. They are the rolled gold. They will sell you like anything. With these words I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. But at the same time I would plead for the people that the Government should re-consider the price hike and please see that common people are not made to suffer because of the decision of the Government. You please set up a monitoring system. You please prepare a blue print so that common people get their livelihood. With these words I thank you very much. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: No interruption. I am not allowing you.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: No cross talks please.

...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

[Translation]

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR (Amreli): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Ramji Lal Suman have raised the issue of price-rise in the House for discussion under rule 193. I have stood up to give some suggestions on this issue. The hon. Members who have put forth their views prior to me, are not present in the House now. Therefore, I would like to convey my views to them through the Members of their party that they had made a commitment to the people and as per that commitment ran the Government, formulated a common minimum programme created a feel good factor. I would like to know as to what you did in the country under the feel good factor. You increased the tax on the tractors. Till now, the farmers were getting the tractors without excise duty. But the NDA Government reduced the excise duty by Rs. 60,000 on the Honda City car and increased the excise duty on the tractor of the farmers. The farmers have been made to pay the said excise duty for the last six months. Due to their policies the country is in a fix. I would like to give my suggestion on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Mamata Didi was expressing her views now. I was listening her views attentively. She was speaking about the Left Front. You joined the NDA Government. The mismanagement of the NDA Government during the last six years has caused sufferings to the farmers. Ten years back, the farmers were getting remunerative price of Rs. 300 to Rs. 350 of groundnut. But today, their groundnut is not selling at the rate of Rs. 250. Ten years back, the farmer was getting Rs. 600 for cotton, but today their cotton is not fetching a price of even Rs. 400. Today, the price of cloth has increased too much. The people are suffering due to wrong policies of the Government. The Government will have to think over it. A good Government under the leadership of hon. Shri Manmohan Singhji have came into existence. *...(Interruptions).* They will not be able to listen because they are sitting there. Now, they have to sit there itself. Now, they are not going to get a seat here *...(Interruptions).* I rise to give suggestions to my Government. The prices of tractor and kerosene were increased by the previous Government. Even now under the pressure of international market, the prices of kerosene and tractors are increased. But, the State Governments are increasing Sales Tax thereon. The Government should impose Sales Tax within a limit and in case the price of petrol goes up beyond Rs. 30, the State Government should not impose Sales Tax on it.

Even now, petrol and diesel can be made available to the consumers at cheaper rates. The prices of kerosene have also been increased. Recently, I visited Rajasthan. The Chief Minister of Rajasthan has suggested to get the children take a glass of milk. I visited an area inhabited by the poor. I asked as to whether they provided a glass of milk to their children. They said as to how they would provide that. They said that for 50 years they purchased kerosene at area of Rs. 3 per litre. But, during the last six years such a Government had came into existence that enhanced the price of kerosene from Rs. 3 to Rs. 9 per litre. Our monthly income is spent on kerosene, how can we provide milk? Such things happened due to the policies of the Government. Now, where are the people who coined the term feel good factor. They should also observe it. The present situation has deteriorated to the extent that the cost of electricity is highest in Gujarat under the BJP Government and it is due to its wrong policies. Nowhere in the country the power is as costly as it is in Gujarat. The BJP Members from Gujarat are not present in the House. You should tell your Government about the condition of the farmers. Today, the farmers are compelled to commit suicide. It is so because the farmers used to get remunerative prices of upto Rs. 600 for cotton when Manmohan Singhji was the Finance Minister and when the BJP Government came into power, the said prices came down. The prices of electricity, diesel and petrol have increased which have led the farmers to commit suicide. Many persons assumed the office of Chief Minister of Gujarat. ...Interruptions*)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing should go on record except the speech of Shri V.K. Thummar.

*...(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI V.K THUMMAR: I think that Joshiji did not feel good. He has strong craving for remaining in power. But, you will have to think about the farmers and the poor for coming to power. The term of the NDA Government is over and the UPA Government have come to power. From the time the UPA Government have come to power, the people think that their own Government have assumed the office. Even the farmers and the poor think that their Government have come to power and a new hope's as dawned upon them. The Minister of Finance and the Minister of Petroleum of the UPA Government were informed that prices had been increasing due to the wrong policies of the previous Government. My suggestion to the Government is that the sales tax should not be increased and the Government should think about reducing the prices of petrol and diesel.

Fair Price Shop has been renamed as 'Deendayal Grahak Yojana' in Gujarat. In the Fair Price shop, we get 20 kg wheat for Rs. 193 whereas in the market 20 kg wheat is available Rs. 150. What sort of scheme is it? I would like to suggest the Government to think over this aspect and make efforts to provide consumer items to the poor people at the cheapest rates and tax should be enhanced on the luxury items such as on perfumes which are not of use for the poor people. I would only request the Government to strive to do good work for the poor. I thank Shri Basu Deb Achariaji and Shri Sumanji who by initiating discussion on a very serious issue have drawn the attention of the Government.

[English]

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for the opportunity given to me to participate in this very momentous discussion affecting the breath and width of the country. There can be no two opinion on the fact that the country today is experiencing price rise. But there is a difference of opinion on the perception of price rise. People say that it is alarming, it is unprecedented, it is skyrocketing and it is galloping. But in my view, price rise is there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Prof Ramadass, just sit down for a minute.

18.00 hrs.

[Translation]

If the House agrees, the time of the House may be extended for an hour? I think the House agrees, therefore, the time of House is extended for an hour.

I request the hon. Members to keep the time constraint in mind. All the hon. Members will be able to speak if the time limit is kept in mind. The time of the House is extended up to 7 p.m.

*Not recorded.

[English]

PROF. M. RAMADASS: Therefore, Mr. Chairman, there is only a difference in the perception of the problem of price rise in the country today. I feel that the price rise is of creeping nature rather than of galloping nature and one should not feel very much alarmed about it. This is because most of the developments that have led to the recent price rise in the country are beyond our control and most of the factors are international factors and imported factors that have come to the country.

So, while criticising the present Government, one should always take into account the compelling reasons causing price rise in the country. Price rise in this country has been a pervasive phenomenon ever since 1956 when we went in for large scale deficit financing in this country; whether this Government was there or that Government was there, price rise was inescapable fora developing country like India and that has been proved beyond doubt. Therefore, what we should look at are the remedies rather than harping upon the political aspects of it. I fully agree with Kumari Mamta Banerjee that there is no political question involved in this. There are more of economic happenings and events that have contributed to the price rise.

Sir, if you look at the recent price rise in the country, in my view, there are four important factors which must be tackled by the Government today.

The first factor is the unprecedented rise in the prices of petroleum products in the international market.

The second is the rise in prices of a number of commodities at the international level, which we are importing, into this country. This is another factor, which no Member has raised. There is a commodity price index constructed for the global level. This shows that the prices were up by 8.8 percent in the current period and this has got a cascading effect on the Indian economy, which is importing these commodities.

The third important factor is that there has been less than the expected growth on the agricultural front.

The fourth important reason is that the UPA Government has now undertaken a number of expansionary activities for the benefit of the growth of the country. The Government today is really in fix whether to promote growth and thereby render justice to the people of this country or to concentrate on inflationary forces. In my view, there has to be a golden trade off between inflation and growth. You cannot have growth without allowing for inflation and you cannot control inflation without promoting economic growth. The hon. Finance Minister was kind enough to realise the fact that the credit has been a constraint in the economic activities of agriculture, small-scale industry, export, import, etc. and he has announced a liberal policy of agricultural credit to the extent of Rs. 1,05,000 crore.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: I am giving economic factors. You should not disturb me like this, Give me three more minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is a constraint of time. Please conclude quickly.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: So, this year, Rs. 92,443 crore have actually been disbursed so far as non-food credit against the last year's disbursal of Rs. 41,034 crore. The total flow of resourcefulness banks and financial institutions to the commercial sector has touched a level of Rs. 1,08,051 crore and the limit of advances given to the priority sector has been enhanced to the extent of 40 percent. All these activities are expansionary in nature, which increased the liquidity in the economy, and thereby the purchasing power of the people and, therefore, the demand management becomes difficult for the Government from a macro level perspective.

Therefore, these four factors have to be attacked somehow or the other and we should realise that we are new in the stage of initiating inflation and unless it is curbed, it may endanger the Indian economy.

The Government has responded very well to this situation. As soon as the prices of petroleum products rose, the Finance Minister was kind enough to give a dole of Rs. 3,500 crore. First of all, he reduced the base import duty by 10 percent on edible oil. The duty on steel has been reduced and the customs duties on petroleum products have also been reduced, all theses to the extent of Rs. 3,500 crore. This was an immediate response.

The UPA Agenda, that is, the National Common Minimum Programme, says that this is a responsible and responsible and responsive administration. Therefore, as

soon as the prices went up, the Finance Minister pushed himself and then responded to this. No other Government in this country has done it. But at the same time, let there be no complacency on the part of the Government also. We should be able to think of some important measures also.

I would feel that now the villain of piece is the price of petroleum products. There is no reason to argue whether it affects the common man or not, but it becomes an input in many of the commodities that the produced in the country and therefore, their prices have to be slashed.

There are only four options before the Government as far as petroleum products are concerned. One is a cut in the customs duty. Second is, the oil companies will have to bear a part of the burden. I understand that the hon. Finance Minister and the hon. Minister of Petroleum may not agree on these measures because of their constraints. The third option is that you will have to persuade the State Governments to reduce the sales tax. I see a possibility in this because after the Finance Commission grants, the Planning Commission grants and now the State Governments are also claiming a share in the service tax revenue, we should be in a position to persuade to the State Government to reduce sales tax.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: I will take only one minute, Sir,

If the State Governments are craving for a share in the service tax, they should be able to help the Government of India at the present juncture by reducing the sales tax on petroleum products to some extent. If these three options are not available the Government should be able to think of the fourth alternative. The fourth alternative being that we should be able to allow Indian currency to appreciate in the international market. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. M. Jagannath to speak now.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: When the dollar rate is coming down, then that is one of the best options that is available to us. If you are able to fix a rate of Rs. 40 per dollar, we would be able to slash the import bill by ten percent. The import bill can be reduced to the original level of 19 billion dollars.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record now.

*...(Interruptions)**

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagar Kurnool): Respected Chairman Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in the debate on price rise in petroleum products under Rule 193. The recent hike in petroleum products like petrol, diesel and LPG is most unfortunate and unwarranted at this juncture. It will cause a lot of burden on the common man.

The Congress had been criticising the previous NDA Government whenever there had been a marginal hike keeping in view the international market. What do they have to say now? But at that time, it was not coming to their mind. I totally agree with Shri K.S. Rao, that at least he has accepted that it is internationally related and every Government, whichever party is ruling, has to take that step. Referring to Left, he says, they will always be opposing. It is because they do not have any chance of coming to power and taking care of these things. That is why, on whichever side they are, they will always be opposing.

The Congress had promised during the election that they would not increase the prices of petrol, diesel land LPG. What have they done now? Within a period of six months after coming to power they have increased the prices of petrol, diesel and LPG three times. It is a gift to the country by the UPA Government because they have been voted to power.

Contrary to their promise, the Economic Survey, which they have presented, stated that the growth rate would be seven to eight percent and would give us strong results in terms of poverty reduction and increase in employment. After the first Budget of the UPA Government, we find that the inflation has crossed eight percent.

The NDA had touched the growth rate of 8 percent, but now the UPA has taken the inflation to that digit. This situation should change to help the poor people. When Dr. Manmohan Singh—an economist—became The Prime Minister, the people of the country were expecting him to be pro-poor, but we find that due to rise in prices of essential commodities, people are suffering. It is felt that, sharp rise in the prices of petroleum, diesel and LPG—though it was direct on the vehicular traffic—has got a long-lasting and indirect effect on the common man. It does not only affect the vehicular traffic. It will indirectly affect the prices at the places where the essential

[Dr. M. Jagannath]

commodities will be transported. Now, you will see that the rate of inflation is more than 8 percent, which is affecting essential commodities like sugar etc.

Mr. K.S. Rao said that price rise has not affected the common man; it has affected only the poor people. I would like to put a question to Mr. K.S. Rao. Who are the people who travel by the Government transport, namely, Government buses and diesel-hauled trains? Sir, tamarind-I do not know how it is sued in other parts of the country—is one which is used by the poorest of the poor to make curry with chilly called Pachi Pules is. that is a poor man's item. Now, tamarind is sold in Andhra Pradesh at Rs. 70 per kilogram, which was to be sold at Rs. 30 or Rs. 40 per kilogram. It is all because of this inflation, and because of price rise which have indirectly made the transporters to increase their prices. All sections of the people are suffering. There is speculation also. Due to that, there is price rise in the wholesale market, and the increase is going on.

Sir, democratic policies respond to the demand of the people. Still 26 percent of the people are below the poverty line, and all the Governments are trying to bring them above BPL. Unless the Government has a policy to cater to the needs of such people, and if the polices are taken like this—hiking of prices are very much affecting the common man—they are not going to get their objectives fulfilled. Mr. K.S. Rao has rightly said that the increased growth would provide increased revenue, which can be used for increasing the social expenditure. That is not a part of this subject. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

DR. M. JAGANNATH: I am addressing the Chair, Sir, I am not addressing anybody else ....*(Interruptions)*

He said that the present Government of Andhra Pradesh has conceived projects costing Rs. 46,000 crore. He said that no steps had been taken by the previous Government, I give one example. Jurala Project is the first Project of the Krishna River in Andhra Pradesh after Karnataka. Congress have spent only Rs. 30 crore during 20 years, whereas during Telugu Desam Government, under the Chief Minister ship of Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, more than Rs. 565 crore were spent. Likewise, they are proposing to have Rs. 46,000 crore. They said, they will be getting Rs. 10,000 crore through AIBP. I would like to ask through you, the Finance Minister as to what is the total Budget of AIBP. Will it be giving finance to the Projects which they are going to start now ...*(Interruptions)* If they are taking pro-farmer issues and pro-farmer steps. What made the farmers to commit suicides? More than 2000 farmers have committed suicides in Andhra Pradesh. The respected Prime Minister also came to Andhra Pradesh twice. He had promised that every care would be taken to protect the farmers interests that the Government had already started a Helpline Project. They said that every farmer, who is going to die, will be helped, if he comes through the Helpline Project.

Now, the help line project has become the death line project for them. Nobody is caring about the help line project now. Though 2,200 farmers have committed suicide, not even hundred farmers have been given any relief, and only a few farmers have given relief.

Under these circumstances, I, on behalf of Telugu Desam Party and on my own behalf, demand the Government to roll back all the prices to the previous status. All the prices which have been increased have to be rolled back to the previous level immediately.

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH (Jhalawar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on price rise under rule 193, which has been raised by Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Ramji Lal Suman.

I must say that when the UPA Government came to power, there is a lot of faith on the two economic maestros, two eminent economists within the UPA Government. One is our hon. Prime Minister and the other is our hon. Finance Minister. People have got a lot of faith on both of you.

Everyone mentioned here that price rise is thanks to oil price rise but there are other factors which we also need to look at. You have put eight percent service tax on 64 items. You have put two cent overall education cess. The steel prices have been hiked. The housing interest rate has also been hiked. It comes out to the bottom level. It comes out to the consumer. The consumer gets affected. The rise in prices of essential commodities is pinching the common man you had mentioned in your Budget speech I belong to the common man. I am there to look after their interests. I mention to you, Sir, that it is the common people who are facing several hardships.

Sir, while introducing your Common Minimum Programme, you have said that the UPA Government would be working for the welfare of the farmers, for the agriculturists, for the labourers, for the weavers, for the workers, and for the weaker sections of the society. You

have aimed to ensure the economic growth at seven to eight percent per year. I must commend the previous Government headed by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. During his tenure as the Prime Minister, there was inflation but it was maintained between 4 and 4.5 percent, unlike you have it in your Government. It has now gone up to eight percent. It is affecting the common man, and the common man is getting affected on day-to-day basis. The common man can not purchase vegetables. The purchase rates have gone up. The essential commodities like fruits, edible oil and other things have been severely affected within the country. It also hit your Employment Guarantee Programme. You have said that you would give hundred days employment under this Programme. When you give someone employment and increase the rates of your products, you are affecting the wages of the person. As you mentioned right now in the House, the wages have also not been given to the optimum level as you have planned. The daily wagers are finding it difficult to manage a square meal. So, we need to look at an avenue, to work together in a combined way, to work for a common purpose for the country.

We should also look at the salaried persons. The salaried persons and the people at home are also cutting down on their essential goods and commodities which they were used to during the NDA Government.

Sir, you have promised in your manifesto that when you come to power, you would work for the common man. I do not think, Sir, you have worked on that framework.

Now coming to the main framework of today's debate, we had increased the crude oil prices. So, we had the trickle effect. I must say we do have a lot of reserves within India. I belong to the State of Rajasthan. I request the hon. Minister of Petroleum to give us the opportunity to select a refinery centre in my State, Rajasthan, so that we can produce world-class oil and reduce the bottom line of the price level, and we can have a better way of living out here. I must say it has affected the farmers even individually. The prices of products have gone up. The prices of urea have gone up. It has affected the farmers all over the country. The prices of LPG, CNG and kerosene have also gone up and it has a zooming effect on the people of India.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Five-six Members are yet to speak from your party. As much as additional time you take that will be deduced from the time allotted to your party.

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: So far, you have given me just two minutes. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

I would say that the RBI had a yearly review, and they have clearly mentioned that there is a tremendous increase in inflation rate from 4.6 percent to 8.4 percent. It is shocking that it has increased within the six month's period. I must also say that there is an increase in the diesel prices by Rs. 7. So, the bottom line level of the farmer, the common man, common farmer has really been affected.

I would end by saying about your partners. When they came to power in West Bengal, West Bengal was number three in industrialisation. Now, when they have held power for 27 years, it is ranking 16th. You know how well they are doing in other parts of the country. But they are meddling with our State of Rajasthan. First, they should get their State organised. I must say we must work together in tandem to made this country a successful place.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: My submission to the hon. Finance Minister would be to work with the RBI, with the Planning Commission and with the FIIs which are coming. You ask your allies to get foreign members here to teach us, to mould us, to create a niche for us wherever we are good at, make our country so powerful and not criticise each other like.

[Translation]

There is a glass of milk.

[English]

We must improve and make our India a promising place. But I must say that you have not given us what you have promised. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MUNSHI RAM (Bijnor): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on Price-rise under Rule 193. The whole House is of the unanimous opinion that the main reason for price rise is hike in the prices of the petroleum products hiked by the Government. The price rise has increased 15-20 times during the last 30 years. The whole House is concerned about the upliftment and development of farmers but prices of the agricultural produces have increased merely 4-5 times during these 30 years. You agree that over 70 percent of the people in India are farmers and labourers.

[Shri Munshi Ram]

I would like to draw attention of the Finance Minister to this very fact that now with increase in the prices of diesel the cost of irrigation has gone up. Apart from the price rise farmers are not getting adequate power supply. Thousands of crores of rupees might have been spent on the construction of canals in different States till now but 15 to 20 percent of canals do not carry water to the fields of farmers. Farmers will not remain dependent upon petrol and diesel, if they get water for irrigation on subsidised rates from canals.

Sir, I would like to submit that prices of sugar have gone up from Rs. 12 to Rs. 17. per kilogram. It has increased approximately by 40 percent to 50 percent. But even if we demand an increase of 25 percent in prices of surgarcane from the Government for sugarcane growers, the demand is ignored. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister of Finance and the hon. Minister of Petroleum to either make available diesel to farmers at subsidised rates or the Government should shoulder the responsibility of providing water to the fields of farmers for irrigation. In that case only farmers of this country can prosper and this price rise will not adversely affect them. The farmers will be benefited if they get fertilizers and power timely at lower costs.

With these words I express my thanks to you for giving me time to speak.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you providing me an opportunity to speak. The Government has assured that there is no reason to be panicky about price rise. Particularly, the Minister of Finance had quoted a filmy dialogue "Main Hoon Na". While the Government attributes price rise in foodgrains to erratic and inconsistent monsoon as a result of which the rate of inflation rose to a two years record level of 7.51 percent. However, the inflation due to increase in prices of petroleum products has assumed gigantic proportions.

The Government had also assured to bring about changes in the economic policies after the onset of Monsoon and check inflation. But, nothing seems to have happened. The UPA Government had promised in its common Minimum Programme to control the rise in the prices of essential commodities. But it has been observed for the several months that there is no difference in it. The prices have gone up and there are no signs of decline. The Government said that there is always an extreme point of price rise and after that prices begin to come down. But this assessment is also faulty. Whenever prices of diesel have increased, they had a direct and definite impact on prices of other commodities too. In our country, goods finished or raw materials are transported mostly by roads. Prices of other commodities also increase whenever prices of diesel and petrol go up. There has been a jump in the prices of crude oil and it has risen to $45 per barrel. In this context our economist Shri Ashok Lahiriji has said that the rate of inflation has come down due to proper harmonisation of policies at the onset of monsoon, while the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia had stated that they would bring about change in the situation after the arrival of monsoon. But the inflation has shaken us four times during five decades whether it be due to wars or increase in the prices of petroleum products in the international market. I remember that a song from film 'Roti Kapda Aur Makan' had become very popular "Hai-Hai Yeh Mahangai, Tu Kahan Se Aayi, Apne Thela Se Paise Jate Hain, Mutthi Bhar Shakkar Laate Hain".

Nowadays, the main reasons for inflation are flood, drought and also terrorism. As far as controlling the price rise in petroleum products are concerned, we can check it by way of waiving excise and custom duty on petrol, cooking gas and kerosene oil. The common man is the worst sufferer in this tussle of alliance politics between the BJP and the Congress. The figures we have furnished are not going to reduce the burden of price rise being borne by the poor instead he will have to do something to check the price rise.

The poor people are flocking to the cities from villages. As far as the problems of hoarding and black-marketing are concerned.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shailendraji, please conclude now. Your time is over.

Shri S. Mallikarjuniah to speak now.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: He had stated at the time of Lok Sabha Elections that the hand of the Congress is with the common man but now the hand of the common man is with the Congress.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri Mallikarjunaiah.

*...(Interruptions)**

*Not recorded.

SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNIAH (Tumkur): *Hon. Chairman Sir, you are ringing the bell again and again due to paucity of time. Therefore, I do not want to go into the details of the steep increase in prices of essential commodities. The PDS has collapsed in the country completely. The poor people are not getting any foodgrains in the black market.

So, a central team is visiting Karnataka to study the drought situation in the State. As you are aware the State is reeling under severe drought condition for the last four years. Therefore my request is that the Central team should give its report at the earliest such that the poor people can get some help. I hope the hon. Finance Minister will be magnanimous in considering the difficulties of the people of Karnataka and to provide immediate relief.*

[English]

Sir, I request that you may kindly accept my written statement which may go as part of the record.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But you have already spoken.

Now Shri S.K. Kharventhan.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): Thank you, Mr. Chairman for giving me this opportunity to participate in this discussion. Our friends sitting in the opposite camp have vehemently opposed this Government for this price rise and inflation. Actually, they came to power in 1996 for 13 days, in 1998 for 13 months and in 1999 for four-and-a-half years.

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKER AIYAR): And finished on 13th May.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Yes, before their death in September in 2004 they committed suicide in April 2004 itself.

Sir, who is responsible for the price rise? The previous Government developed corruption from village level to public sector undertakings. I want to mention particularly one thing. When they came to power, the price of kerosene was Rs. 3 a litre. Then they fixed it at Rs. 9 a litre. I want to know whether the poor people are able to get it at Rs. 9 a litre or not. The direction from the Government of India to all the public distribution shops was that they should sell blue kerosene at Rs. 9 a litre. What were they doing? They were making it white by putting a powder and selling it outside for Rs. 20 a litre and the poor people were not able to get it. This was the success of the previous Government.

The public sector undertakings were sold out for meagre money. Not only that in Tamil Nadu, in the year 1989, free electricity was introduced by our former Chief Minister Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi. The previous NDA Government introduced amendments in the Electricity Act and the Electricity Regulatory Authority was appointed. Then, this free power was cancelled in the State even for poor farmers and restored after 13.5.04 results. This was the achievement of the previous Government.

They have forgotten one more thing. Five years back in some of the States, people have given power to that Party. Then people were not able to get even one onion. People were forced to purchase onions from outside. They are now saying about price rise.

Because of the faults of the previous Government only, we are now suffering this price rise and inflation. Our hon. Ministers, particularly hon. Minister of Finance Shri P. Chidambaram and the hon. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar have taken effective steps to control the price hike and inflation.

I want to mention certain steps taken by them. Particularly on June 15, 2004, this Government reduced excise duties on selected petroleum products to keep the domestic retail prices under check. In the face of rising international prices of oil, excise duty on petrol was reduced from 30 percent to 26 percent. Like that, they have taken all the steps necessary to reduce the price. Also, this Government and our Ministers are working on the line to really reduce the price and safeguard the interest of the public.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ilyas Azmi.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI (Shahabad): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are left with only two minutes out of the time allotted to your party.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: We are left with 10-12 minutes in party time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It would not happen as you like. It would be according to the time record, not according to your guess.

..... English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: O.K. I allot that time to you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, you please speak. We have just given the indication to you and you are getting angry.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the time of discussion over the price-hike, some people were relating the price-hike to the UPA Government while some were relating it to the NDA Government. Price-hike has its relation with none. *...(Interruptions).* Mr. Chairman, Sir, it was said and spread all over the country that price-hike has been caused by increase in prices of petroleum products. It is partially right but not fully. It was said earlier that the Gulf economy is based on oil but gradually our economy has also become dependent on oil. Whatever expenditure the people have to bear as per the Budget, the State Government and the Union Government do get approximately one-fourth of that though oil.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, when the price of crude oil suddenly hiked at 37 dollar in 1973, then the price of diesel was Rs. 5 in our country but today it is Rs. 55. However, the hon. Minister of Petroleum today in reply to one of my query stated that they are purchasing it for Rs. 37. The purchasing price is equal to that of 1973 while it has hiked since then. He himself should see the difference between Rs. 30 and Rs. 5. However, I am not standing here to find faults. I say that the price of cement was Rs. 110-115 two years before. The cement factory owners, after discussion, raised the price to Rs. 150-160. Whether no government existed that time? Today, the sugar mill owners, after discussion, are raising the price of sugar to one and half times while there has been no hike in the price of sugarcane.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You mean to say that the prices of factory-produced good are increasing.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: It is a well hatched conspiracy. Whether the factory owners can rise the prices to one and half times without Government's intention? The price of cement rose two years before, and same is the situation in respect of sugar under their Government. It depends on coal price also. Coal do comes under the Government's monopoly. The prices have been rising every year during their times and these are still rising. Due to rise in coal price, the price of iron and bricks are also rising. The Government, if intends, can reduce the prices.

I say that corruption at large scale is one major cause of price rise. Mr. Chairman, Sir he was the Minister of Food. We know he is the saviour of the poor. He introduced the BPL and Antyodya schemes in the name of the poor. The expenditure under these schemes has risen so much that today 26 thousand crore rupees are being allotted from the budget. I can certainly say that the BPL and Antyodya families are not receiving even one thousand rupees out of that 26 thousand crore rupees. All the funds is collectively being looted by the officers and staff, bullies, mafias and DRDA of the Central and the State Governments.

A new class of the new rich persons is emerging through corruption, which is being followed by the emergence of the five star civilization in the villages. Thus, corruption is a very big reason of rising prices.

Not saying much, I would now like to give some suggestions. Chidambaramji has walked out. Minister of Petroleum is present here.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENT AFFAIRS (SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE): We are there to take down the points raised by you.

[Translation]

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: The owners of cement and iron factories are responsible for price-rise as they form their syndicate and showing less production. Such a law should be enacted against them on the lines of TADA and POTA enacted against the terrorists so that they may be punished very severely before the public.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: The POTA Act should be removed.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: the act which was enacted for the ignorant. ..(Interruptions). The Government have control over coal price. By reducing coal prices, the prices of iron and bricks will get automatically reduced. Most of the iron-factories are under the control of Government. For this, the Government should bring such a scheme by which iron factories may be tightened. This will reduced the prices of iron.

I would specially like to say one thing to Chidambaramji and Aiyarji. The date as and charts which the bureaucrats prepare and present, they forget acting upon them considering them wholly factual. Thus, half of the problems would automatically get removed. The budget should be kept balanced.

As I said that Rs. 26 thousand crores have been allocated for various schemes for the poor. Hon. Chairman, Sir, when you were the Minister of Food, such schemes were formulated but 25 thousand crore rupees are being looted out of 26 thousand crore rupees. 99 percent of funds allocated for national literacy mission and adult education is looted. Even one percent of that fund is not spent. Crores of rupees which should be spent over these jobs, are not being utilised. Not a single person has been educated under these programmes. Literacy drive as well as many other schemes are being run. One-two crore rupees is being released to the DRDA but that is shared in connivance with the officers and NGOs. All this has to be checked. The budget should be made balanced. The benefits should be extended to the poors under the Antyoda scheme meant for them. Devise the ways and means to implement these schemes properly and sufficient time for that may be taken. It may be kept in obeyance for a year but please do devise the ways and means by which the poor can be benefited straightaway. I would appreciate that step. No matter he has to allocate 26 thousand crore rupees instead of 25 thousand crore rupees for this purpose but just do think of this job. He is continuously allotting funds to the looters and. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have spoken. You are talking of removal of middle man.

SHRI ILYAS AZMI: Unnecessary expenditure should be checked Regarding reducing the price of petrol, I would like to tell the Minister of Petroleum that he had made a human cry that the price of oil was 55 dollars. He himself has admitted that the Government are purchasing it for dollars 37. Please reduce the price by 15 dollars which has been reduced in-between. It would certainly have some impact over price-hike.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH (Satna): Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, I take an opportunity to thank you that today a very important issue is being discussed here. About 90 percent of the people of the country are facing this problem. When the UPA Government was formed, many people cherished a lot of aspirations that the former Minister of Finance has assumed the office of Prime Minister. An experienced economist has become the Minister of Finance. This will definitely be beneficial for the country. People were feeling like that but the current situation in the country is altogether different one.

No one had imagined the way the prices of commodities have gone up. The NDA Government rule has also been debated here that there was also price rise during their rule. I would like to submit that in their regime, price rise was not so much intense and no mass movement or demonstration was launched for price rise. In the current scenario, within six months regime many politicians including those belonging to the UPA Government had also voiced their intense protest against this issue. It's a different issue that even if they voiced protest from outside but extended their support from inside. Our independence dates back around five and half decade. In the past too, the issue of price rise was seriously debated in this House. The issue of price rise figured in the agenda of many political parties but the price control has gone down during the last six months and there has been steep rise in the price of commodities. The impact of price rise is much that there has been an abnormal increase in every commodity. The Government should lend a serious thought to it. Now day as the rate of inflation has gone up to 8.33. I would like to remind hon. Minister of Finance that one of his statements was published in the newspaper on the 16th of August that Government will control the price rise. Close on the heels of this statement there were indications in the newspapers that the inflation which was 7.15 percent on 31st July rose to 7.16 after three days. Subsequently, the hike was such that the inflation spurted to 7.96. Currently, it has touched 8.33. Now a days I would like to know as to why the Government have failed to check the price-rise? The price of petroleum products went up and as a result thereof, the prices of the other commodities also witnessed a rise. We the Budget was being presented he assured the House that price rise would be checked. What is the price of cement today? At what level is the price of Iron? What is the price of foodgrains? What is the price of farming equipments and drugs. There is no commodity which has not witnessed the price-rise. I would like to submit that earlier control was exercised in the even of price rise. In the year 2001 the rate of inflation rose to 3.5 to 4 percent. What is the reason behind the spurt in inflationary trend? Hon. Chairman, I would like to submit that it's time Government should ponder over its decision.

Amongst the supporters of the UPA Government some are our socialist allies, they are extending their support, this issue figured in their agenda, I do not know what prompted them to consign all these issues into oblivion. The check on price rise figured in their agenda, ban on expenditure too found mention in their agenda. The price of any item must not be more than one-and-

[Shri Ganesh Singh]

half-times of the manufacturing cost. These were the objectives of their movement. I do not know under what compulsion they are extending their support to the UPA Government. In view of the allied issues I would like to urge our socialist colleagues to withdraw their support and also stand by the opposition on the issue. I would like to tell the Minister of Finance that the message is loud and clear. There is resentment in the people across the country. If price rise is not checked, it will lead to serious repercussion.

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI (Rewa): Mr. Chairman, Sir, discussion on price rise is being held under rule 193. I would like to say that except human life the prices of everything have risen during the last six months. I am unable to understand that Dr. Manmohan Singh being the Prime Minister and Shri Chidambaram being the Finance Minister, why they are unable to control the rising prices. I thought over it deeply and after that I gathered that first time such a Government have come to power whose Prime Minister does not have any control over his Ministers. The Finance Minister says something and the Petroleum Minister says something else. Instead of being accountable to the Prime Minister they are accountable to someone else. It is the only reason for the all round price rise.

Mr. Chairman, when the elections were being held, these people had said, "Congress ka hath janata ke sath". Now they have ignored the public. The prices have hiked in every sector. Some of our friends were speaking just now and I feel like laughing. Except allies of Shri Vajpayee's Government even the opposition parties did not raise the issue of price rise in the House. Mr. Chairman, Sir now the situation such that the left lists raise the issue of price-rise under Rule 193 instead of Rule 184.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tripathiji you cannot pass remarks against the chair. You are quite experienced and a socialist Member.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Member is not aware that discussion on price rise were held in the House during the tenure of the last Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sumanji, you belong to socialist party but Tripathiji is speaking on behalf of the BJP.

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI: Mr. Chairman, I have been a socialist and no other party can be more socialist than the BJP. I would like to tell my friend, Mr. Sumanji. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tripathiji, please speak on the subject.

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am the last speaker.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is why I have given you two minutes time.

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not know under which compulsion he is supporting this Government. The prices of petroleum products have never hiked so much during the last six years as have risen during the last six months of Dr. Manmohan Singh's Government. During the Atalji's Government the prices of petroleum products were raised only when the prices of crude oil in world market went up. Thus, the prices of petroleum products were raised only four times during the period of six years. When the prices in the world market came down the Atalji's Government reduced the prices of petroleum products. Now, when the prices of oil in the world market have come down, the Government have not reduced the prices thereof. The hon. Minister of Petroleum was telling that the prices of cooking gas will be hiked at the rate of rupees 5 per month which have been withdrew by him. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why are you telling about your own experience.

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI: I would like to submit you that now the inflation rate has gone more than 8 percent, whereas it was 2 to 4 percent during the Atalji's Government. I would like to tell the leftists that they support the Government in the House and oppose it outside. This type of double standard will not be allowed to prevail. Mr. Chairman, in the end I would like to say that this is a promise breaking, insensitive and anticommon man Government. The earlier it goes, the better it is. I would like to conclude, quoting the following: "Barbadiyon ke karan sada jo rahe hain, Ab intajame chaman unke hath aa gaya hai".

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to nearly 30 hon. Members who have participated

in this debate which has ranged for about four and-a-half hours. I am especially grateful to the 23 hon. Members who do the honour of listening to my reply.

Sir, I think memories are short. Memories are not only short; memories fail Members more often than they should. An hon. Member started by saying that we have destroyed the economy in the last six months. I do not know from where he gets his figures.

Presumably from the publication of his own party. For the period April, October, compared to the period April-October, 2003, crude oil production has increased by 3.6 percent against minus 0.9 percent; petroleum products by 7.2 percent against 5.2 percent; coal by 7.3 percent against 3.2 percent, electricity by 7.3 percent against 2.9 percent; and cement by 6 percent against 5.7 percent. ...*(Interruptions)*

Shri Mahtab, I did not interrupt you. Please listen to me. Maybe you will get some facts which you did not know. ...*(Interruptions)* Just a moment. ...*(Interruptions)* You have given your figures and I am giving my figures. Let us see who is right. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI B. MAHTAB: The question was: Where did I get the figures. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am not yielding in his favour. ...*(Interruptions)* He has given his figures, I am giving my figures. Let Members draw their own conclusion.

Except in the case of steel, every other core sector has growth at a higher rate in the current fiscal than in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. The annual growth rate of all core and infrastructure industries in April-October, 2004 is 5.9 percent against 5.4 percent in the corresponding period last year. This 5.9 percent is not only higher than the corresponding growth in the period last year, it is higher than the 5.4 percent growth in the whole of last year, it is higher than the 5.6 percent growth in the whole of 2002-03.

The Sensex today is over 6,300, that is, 6,304. The rupee is stronger after a long gap, it has breached 44. It was at 43.92. Bank credit on 12th November, 2004 increased by 30.5 percent. Non-food credit increased by 31.2 percent. FII investment in the current year is over eight billion dollars, a record for any year. The total foreign exchange reserves stand at 127 billion dollars, the highest ever achieved. In fact, if prices had not increased, there would be nothing for you to attack the Government. In every sector, in the current fiscal, in the calender year, the record is an impressive record—a record of growth, a record of stability and a record of promise. There is a problem with inflation. ...*(Interruptions)* If you are patient, you will get the answers. You must be patient please. You are impatient in one minute. ...*(Interruptions)* I do not mind. I can speak in one minute and close, if you want. ...*(Interruptions)* He is not anxious to hear. What am I to do? ...*(Interruptions)* There is a problem of inflation. What is inflation? I hope you heard Prof. Ramadass. We are talking about relative prices. Inflation is about relative prices. If the price of a particular commodity last year was at a certain level and if the price of that commodity this year is at a higher level, that is measured as 'point-to-point inflation'.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute, Hon. Minister.

Hon. Members, shall we extend the time of the House till the hon. Finance Minister completes his speech?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So the time of the House is extended till the hon. Minister completes his speech.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I shall complete my speech by 7.15 p.m.

We are talking about relative prices. There are three main reasons why prices have behaved in a manner in which they are behaving in the current year.

19.00 hrs.

But as I said, memories are rather short. It was claimed, and the last hon. Member, I think, said that never before and certainly not in the NDA regime, it had touched this height. Let me give you some figures. I am only talking about weekly point-to-point inflation above seven percent. If I took above six percent, the picture will be far worse. I am only looking at weeks where weekly point-to-point inflation was above seven percent. In the year 1998-99, the first year of the NDA Government, between 3rd of July and 24th of July, the point-to-point WPI inflation crossed seven percent for four weeks. Then again, between 23rd October and 4th December, for seven consecutive weeks, the point-to-point inflation was over seven percent. in the year 2000-01., when the NDA Government was in full flow and India was beginning to shine, for 22 weeks, for 22 uninterrupted weeks, inflation was above seven percent. It touched 8.8

[Shri P. Chidambaram]

percent in the week ending 15th of January, 2001. It remained at 8.7 percent for two weeks thereafter. It again went up to 8.8 percent in the week ending 12th February, 2001. When the NDA Government's term was coming to an end, the week ending 11th December, 2003—and I will give you the figures, I am reading the weekly figures. *...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Minister is replying here. Suppose that he should tell how they would control the rising prices. What happened or what not happened is separate thing. The prices have increased and please tell us about what the Government is going to do to control it?. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: You talked about Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi....*(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister is just giving the details of the background.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI K.S. RAO: what is the harm in giving statistics?. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Just a minute. You all spoke about the last 20 years. I am speaking about the last 20 months. *...(Interruptions)*

Sir, beginning the week, in October and November, 2003, the weekly point-to-point inflation consistently rose up to 19th February, 2004. Then, it dipped for a while. Then again, in the current fiscal—and I will give you the figures of the current fiscal—every week, it was 4.5; 4.6; 4.7; 4.3; 4.6; 4.6; 5.0; 5.2; 5.6; 6.7 when the new Government assumed office.

Now, there are reasons, and the point is that we must understand why this is happening and what is the way to control it. There is no point blaming and saying that the UPA Government has come and destroyed the economy. The economy is far from destroyed. The economy is strong. The economy is growing. Inflation is a problem. The Prime Minister recognises it. I recognise that. And, I will not tell you why this is happening, and what we will do.

The first reason and the most important reason is the petroleum prices. This is entirely beyond our control and that everybody has accepted. Seventy percent of our crude oil requirements are imported, and everybody concedes it, and that is why the bulk of this debate was not on price increase but on petroleum induced price increase. All of us recognise that it is petroleum. If you look at the figures. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Santosh Gangwarji, let the hon. Minister reply. Please do not interrupt. This is not fair.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: The average price of crude in 2003-04. *...(Interruptions)*

Please allow me to speak. I am not yielding. I am not going to respond to you. *...(Interruptions)* Will you please allow me to speak?. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the speech of the hon. Minister.

*...(Interruptions)**

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, the average price of crude in 2003-04 was 27 dollar and 96 cent per barrel.

The average price in 2004-05 so far is 37 dollars and 60 cents a barrel, an increase of 10 dollars a barrel which means, upon 27.96, it is almost an increase of 10 percent over last year's price. If this year's price is higher than last year's price, as I explained a little while ago, since inflation means relative prices, the point to point inflation will indeed be high until petroleum prices come down to last year's price. *...(Interruptions)* Sir, you have to protect me. The hon. Member cannot interrupt me like this. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. This is not fair. Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: No, I am not going to respond to you. *...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record. Please listen to the hon. Minister.

*...(Interruptions)**

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*Not recorded.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: No. I am not going to respond to you. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the hon. Minister's reply.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: No I am not going to respond to you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Take your seat please. Nothing is going on record. No. This is no fair.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I did not say that. I said that this was the first reason Please listen to me. Shri Swain. I said that I would give you the reasons. The first reason is petroleum prices. I said that this was the first reason. Please wait and listen to me carefully. You are a young man. ...*(Interruptions)*

On the 1st April 2004, the Indian basket of crude was 32 dollars a barrel. On the 24th of May, it was 33 dollars a barrel. It touched 40 dollars a barrel. 40 dollars a barrel upon 32 dollars represents an increase of 25 percent. Again when you measure inflation as relative prices, point to point inflation, it will be reflected in the WPI for all commodities. The international prices of crude oil mainly Brent, for example, went up to 51 dollars 40 cents. And on some days, you will remember that it went up to 56 dollars a barrel. There is no way in which we can insulate Indian prices from international prices unless—mark this 'unless'—the entire price increase is absorbed by the oil marketing companies or the exchequer and the price increase is not transmitted to retail prices.

We can argue about that. We can argue whether that should be done or not. In fact, the hon. Member from Maharashtra said that between 1995 and 1999, their Government decided that 'come what may, the prices of ten essential commodities will be maintained and other programmes of the Government may take a hit, but they would maintain prices'. Now, what happened in 1999? Why was that Government defeated?

The point is that the international prices will get transmitted to retail prices. As I said, unless the State decided 'we will not transmit it to retail prices; we will absorb the entire burden - either the exchequer takes the burden or the oil companies take the burden'. What have we done here?

You heard the Minister of Petroleum speak in the Rajya Sabha yesterday. It has been reported in the papers. The bulk of the burden has been taken by the oil companies. A burden of something like Rs. 20,000 crore will be, in this year, absorbed by the oil companies. The exchequer has already taken a burden of Rs. 4,400 crore by cutting customs duties and excise duties. The remaining burden has indeed been passed on to the people. I am not happy about it. Nobody is happy to increase the petroleum prices or diesel prices or LPG prices.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: What is the remedy?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am coming to that. Let me first describe the problem so that we understand the problem.

So, what we have done is this. There are three stakeholders. One is the oil marketing companies. According to me, they have taken a large part of the burden. The second is the exchequer. The exchequer has already taken a substantial part of the burden. The remaining part of the burden has been passed on to the people, for which I am not deeply sorry. But this is something over which we cannot have any control unless international prices of crude oil moderates.

Now, let me tell you what we have done as far as exchequer is concerned. The NDA Government left us the following customs duties. Nobody is blaming them. That is the custom duty that we inherited. For motor spirit it was 20 percent and we brought it down to 15 percent. For diesel it was 20 percent and we brought it down to 15 percent. For LPG it was 10 percent and we brought it down to five percent. For kerosene it was 10 percent and we brought it down to five percent.

When we assumed the Office the excise duty for major spirit was 30 percent and it was brought down by us first to 26 percent and then 23 percent. Similarly, for diesel it was 14 percent and we brought it down to 11 percent and then to eight percent. For LPG it was 16 percent and we brought it down to eight percent. For kerosene it was 16 percent and we brought it down to 12 percent.

By these cuts in the excise duty and customs duty, the exchequer has already taken a hit of about Rs. 4,400

*Not recorded.

[Shri P. Chidambaram]

crore. The question is, can we afford to take a larger hit. If we take a larger hit, what happens to other programmes that we have to fund? The Food for Work Programme, which has been started in 150 districts, is costing us Rs. 2020 crore. Allotment for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been doubled this year. If we want to maintain prices and not pass on any of this, take more hits, we can do that but some other programme will suffer.

As Prof. Ramadass has said, we have to balance between the investment necessary for growth and putting up with the burden of inflation for sometime until international prices of petroleum moderate, in which event some of these prices will indeed get rolled back. So, the first reason is, crude prices are entirely beyond our control. We have done our best. I have not heard any suggestion. *...(Interruptions)*

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, we are not happy with this answer because the Minister is justifying the price hike. Government cannot give any protection to the people. It is very unfortunate. We are walking out in protest.

19.12 hrs.

(At this stage, Kumari Mamata Banerjee and some other hon. Members left the House)

[Translation]

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Minister is not telling that why the prices are still rising even after doing all this. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR (Bareilly): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are not satisfied with the reply being given by hon. Minister. Hence we are leaving the House.

19.13 hrs.

(Shri Santosh Gangwar and some other Hon. Members then left the House)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the Minister's reply.

*...(Interruptions)**

*Not recorded.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Chairman, Sir, we request the hon. Finance Minister. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Are you staying back or walking out? I want you to stay back. Please stay back.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, the Minister need not explain all these things.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Why? I have heard them for four-and-a-half hours. Should I not explain the Government's case? You have come just now. What am I here for if I do not explain the Government's case? My duty is to explain the Government's case.

AN HON. MEMBER: He wants to go out along with the BJP. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I know Shri Yerrannaidu will remain in the House. I heave heard them for four-and-a-half hours. Bear with me for ten minutes.

Therefore, the first reason is, this is really petro-flation. This is imported inflation caused by high crude price. I think crude prices will moderate. There are indications that they are moderating. As they moderate, you will find that WPI will also moderate.

What did the NDA Government do when prices went up in the past? I am only talking about crude prices. Yesterday, my colleague, the Minister of Petroleum gave out these figures. During the NDA regime the international petrol prices went up by 63 percent and retail prices were increased by 93 percent. During the UPA Government regime, from December to June, the international prices of petrol went up by 15 percent and we have increased it by only six percent. From June to today the international prices went up by 22 percent and we have increased it only by nine percent. The remaining burden has been borne by the oil companies and the exchequer. That is the point I am trying to say. We have not passed on the entire increase in international prices to the retail customers. With regard to diesel, during NDA regime the international prices went up by 31 percent and retail prices were increased by 197 percent.

What are they talking about?. *...(Interruptions)* Shri Yerrannaidu, you have come at the fag end of the debate. *...(Interruptions)* You were not here during the four and a half hour long debate. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: If the previous NDA Government increased the prices, does it mean that this Government would also increase the prices?. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: You were not there during the debate and you do not know what the debate was all about. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, nowhere in the world has ever any Government increased the prices of petrol by Rs. 5.50, of diesel by Rs. 4.92 and that of LPG cylinder by Rs. 40 within a span of just six months. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, he has come at the fag end of the day and now he wants to have his say. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, this Government is anti-farmers and anti-poor and, therefore, in protest, my party also is walking out. ...*(Interruptions)*

19.16 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Kinjarapu Yerrannaidu and some other hon. Members left the House)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing, except what the hon. Minister is saying, would go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, the second reason for increase in prices is commodity prices. Today, there is a great demand for certain commodities. Steel, coal, metals—international demand for these commodities has increased very sharply, especially because China is growing at an extremely fast pace there is a demand for these commodities in China. In India also, the manufacturing sector, is growing by 7.9 to 8.0 percent, and the demand for these commodities has increased sharply. As demand for these commodities increase and international prices increase, domestic prices will also increase. Unless we impose price control unless we impose statutory price control, with increase in international prices, domestic prices will also increase because imports are no longer a restraining factor.

So, the second reason why there is inflation is the rise in international commodity prices spurred by higher demand. The higher demand is coming not only from China but from India as well as per the figures. Credit has expanded. Non-food credit has expanded; agricultural credit has expanded and all these mean investment is taking place. There is a demand for these commodities. It will stimulate growth and that growth will bring, as Prof. Ramdoss said, some measure of inflation, and if crude oil prices were relatively stable would not have caused us this problem.

Sir, let me give one figure which is a telling way to explain this. Inflation is made up of three broad segments. One is, primary articles, the other is fuel power light lubricants and the third is the manufactured products. Let me now compare the period April to November 15. Primary articles this year contributed 14.4 percent to inflation. Last year, they contributed 14.5 percent to inflation. Manufactured products this year has contributed 46. I percent to inflation. Last year, they contributed 61.7 percent to inflation. So, if the third segment had remained more or less constant, then inflation this year would have been lower than last year. Unfortunately for us, because fuel power light lubricant segment is behaving irrationally, thanks to international prices, the contribution from this segment this year is 39.8 percent compared to last year's contribution of 23.6 percent.

Sir, we are, in fact, a victim of international prices. If only this segment, the fuel power light lubricants segments, had behaved in the same manner this year as last year, believe me, point to point inflation this year would have been lower than last year. I still maintain, once international prices moderate, the hon. Members would find that inflation would moderate in this country as it happened in 1998-99 and again in 2000-01.

Sir, things are not so bad as people are trying to make out. It is bad I am unhappy about it. But I think, this is just a stroke of bad luck that when everything is going well, international prices of crude oil have created this extremely difficult problem for us. But after the point to point inflation peaked at 8.7 percent in the week ending 28th August, let us look at what happened thereafter. On 28th of August, it touched 8.7 percent. In the succeeding weeks it was 8.2 percent, 8.2 percent, 7.9 percent, 7.3 percent and then it went up to 7.8 percent and has now come down to 7.3 percent.

As of tomorrow, that is for the week ending two weeks ago, the point to point inflation declined again marginally from 7.34 percent to 7.3 percent. I am confident that if international prices of crude do not rise further with a good North-East monsoon, with the Rabi crop coming, I am confident that we would be able to gain

*Not recorded.

[Shri P. Chidambaram]

mastery over WPI point inflation. But I am keeping my fingers crossed about the petroleum prices.

The third reason, a reason which I am going to try to explain—although it is a trifle difficult to explain—is the very short-sighted liquidity management by the previous Government. Everybody thinks that when foreign exchange comes to this country, that is good. I agree. It is good in itself. But it causes problems. When foreign exchange comes into this country, it contributes to liquidity. Unless the liquidity is managed well, an abundance of liquidity will give a push to inflation. This is precisely what happened last year.

Let me deal with this very briefly. I will tell you some measures that we can take. For example, as far as foreign exchange is concerned, in end March 2003, we had a foreign exchange reserve of $ 75 billion. In end March, 2004, it rose to $111 billion. $ 36 billion came in as foreign exchange. That is good by itself. But it pushed up M-3. The broad money supply was pushed up sharply to 16.6 percent as against 14 percent which is the target. The excess liquidity, when it enters the market, unless production expands, output expands to match this liquidity, prices will rise. This is one of the reasons why we have to be extremely careful in managing the inflow of foreign exchange. We are no longer in a situation of 1991 when we had to manage it with very great difficulty. Virtually, there was no foreign exchange. A billion dollars were there. In 1991, we were faced with one kind of problem. Dr. Manmohan Singh tackled that problem effectively. In 2004, we are confronted with a very different kind of problem. We cannot apply the medicines of 1991 to 2004. We have to manage this liquidity. We are managing liquidity. We are trying to keep M-3 to 14 percent. If I succeed for the remainder of the year to keep M-3 at 14 percent, you will find that liquidity-induced inflation is moderated over the next four or five months.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Today, is the M-3 at 14 or 16 percent?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Last year, it was 16.6 percent. Today, we are targeting it at 14. We are confident that we will keep it at 14 percent. Today, it is about 14 percent. We are trying to manage the liquidity. These are the three main reasons why inflation was on a rising trend. As we assumed the Government, the inflation was on a rising trend. It got accentuated because of the petroleum prices. It is now beginning to moderate because the international prices are moderating. It moderated because we have cut some customs duties and excise duties. We have done something in edible oil, we have done something in steel. I am not taking the time of the House on that. It is moderating because we are managing liquidity.

One other reason which has caused this inflation is really inflationary expectations. In the last ten years, in three years, we had deficient rainfall. These were in 1995-96, in 2000-01 and in the current year. The behaviour of prices is exactly the same in these three years. In 1994-95, foodgrains production declined from 191.5 million tonnes to 180.4 million tonnes. Similarly, in 2000-01, foodgrains production declined from 209.8 million tonnes to 199.5 million tonnes. This led to inflationary expectations.

This year, unfortunately, the first monsoon, the Southwest Monsoon, was deficient by 13 percent. A 13 percent deficiency meant that the market assumed, quite rightly, that there would be pressure on prices and this had also caused some pressure on prices. But fortunately for us, the 13 percent deficiency is likely to be made up, more or less, in the second monsoon, the Northeast Monsoon and if the Rabi crop which is being projected turns out to be as good as that, you will find that much of this can be offset in the Rabi crop and much of these inflationary expectations would be dampened.

Now, what are we doing? Firstly, Sir, we are in negotiations with a number of countries to reduce our dependency on imported oil and gas and improvo our own resources for oil and gas. The Petroleum Minister has made a very detailed statement yesterday in the Rajya Sabha and, I am sure, when there is an opportunity, he will make a statement yesterday in the Rajya Sabha and, I am sure, when there is an opportunity, he will make a statement here. But this is not something that will happen overnight. This will happen over a period of time. But we must reduce our dependency on imported crude and we must find our own sources of crude as well as gas in order to meet our energy requirements. We are in talks with oil producing countries. We are talking to them to see that the Asian premium, which they are charging, is not being charged, that we get crude at prices at which other countries get. As international prices moderate and as the price of the Indian basket also moderates, I am sure that the first cause of inflation would be, more or less, taken care of.

Secondly, we have done as much as we can do in terms of customs duties and excise duties. I cannot see any scope for further reduction of duties before the next

Budget, nor can I tell you now what I may be able to do in the next Budget. But I will certainly keep your suggestions in mind and to the extent that the exchequer can bear the burden, we will address this issue by adjusting some taxes although I cannot make any promise of what taxes I can adjust or to what extent I can adjust.

The third thing that we have done is with respect to managing liquidity. I think our management of liquidity is extremely sober and balanced today. We are watching liquidity very carefully. The Reserve Bank and the Government are working together. If we keep M3 growth within the targeted limits, you will find that liquidity-induced inflation is moderated.

Finally, I am praying—I am keeping my fingers crossed—that the rabi crop should be a good crop, that we make up for the deficiency of the Khariff crop and if the Rabi crop makes up for the deficiency of the Khariff crop, you will find that WPI inflation will moderate.

I am absolutely confident that the worst is over, that unless there are unexpected external shocks, WPI inflation would moderate. As WPI moderates, you will find that the CPI also moderates. Fortunately for us, the CPI of essential commodities is still within tolerable limits. It was 4.6 percent for the month of October. It was 4.8 percent, but it has come down to 4.6 percent.

We are keeping a careful watch over essential commodities and we will ensure that prices of essential commodities remain within the reach of the common man and we will take other steps by augmenting supply, by importing them, if necessary, and by ensuring that supply bottlenecks do not develop. We will keep a close watch over essential commodities and ensure that the CPI inflation remains well within limits.

Government is doing its best. I am as concerned as any other hon. Member about inflation, but we must learn to live with some inflation because of international prices. I am confident that in the medium-term we will gain mastery over inflation and we will be able to bring down prices.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to make two points.

One is about CPI and WPI because I referred to them in my speech and said that there was a wider differentiation between CPI and WPI. He has not explained that.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I will explain that.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: The second point is, yesterday in the Rajya Sabha, the Petroleum Minister has elaborately stated about the plan and programme to enhance our crude production. Even if we increase our crude production, because of the import parity system, the benefit will not go to the common man.

I would like to know whether the Government would consider reviewing the administered price mechanism, which was there prior to 2001-02 so that the Government can control of prices. Today, the Government has no control over the price of petroleum products. So, Government can control the price of petroleum products. This is very important. Even if the crude production is increased, the Government will have no control over the price.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Why there is difference between CPI and WPI, difference is easily explained. In the CPI calculation, the food group has a weightage of 57 percent. In the WPI calculation, the food group has a weightage of 27 percent. That is the WPI takes in some other items and the weightage for calculating the wholesale price index is a different weight, and for CPI the weightages are different. Quite rightly because for the consumer, food represents the biggest component.

Now, food group inflation, as I just told you, has been moderate. So, if you take the moderate food group inflation, apply the weight of 27 percent in the WPI, it results only in a small contribution of the WPI. In the sense that it does not pull it down further because the weight is only 27. In the CPI, since the weight is 57, that is more than half, and food group inflation has been moderate, the CPI inflations is much lower than the WPI inflation. This is the reason why there is a difference between the CPI inflation and WPI inflation.

The next question is a larger policy question, and I cannot answer a question of that kind. The administered price mechanism was dismantled, not entirely, dismantled in rather fragmented fashion. It was never fully dismantled. We have moved to import parity, but we have never really fully implemented import parity either. We are now in some kind of a hybrid situation where some prices are administered, some prices are at import parity.

The larger question whether we will go back to administered prices means that the State must then bear the entire burden of international price rises and not transmit it to retail prices.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Today, we are producing 30 percent of our requirement.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: This is a larger question. This cannot be answered in a manner that "You ask and I stand up and answer here". There are serious consequences for not passing on the real price effect to the retail consumer. To what extent we should pass it to the retail consumer is a matter for debate. But to say that no price changes should be transmitted to the retail customer, and that all price changes must be absorbed by the State or oil producing marketing companies raises questions, which cannot be answered in this fashion. It requires deep thought and reflection.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11 a.m.

19.33 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the clock on Friday, December, 10, 2004, Agrahayana 19, 1926 (Saka).

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