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(English Version)

Eighth Session
(Sixteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Wednesday, April 27, 2016/Vaisakha 7, 1938 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[HON. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[English]

... (*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: Q. No. 41, Shri Gaurav Gogoi.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): Madam Speaker, I want to raise a very important issue. ... (*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: You may not raise it during the Question Hour.

... (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: What could be a more important issue than this? ... (*Interruptions*) Accusations are being hurled at every leader in the country... (*Interruptions*)

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: You may raise it after the Question Hour and not now.

... (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: From the Hon. Prime Minister to the Opposition Leader, everyone is being targeted. ... (*Interruptions*) You need to consider this for discussion... (*Interruptions*)

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: I will hear you after the Question Hour but not now. I am sorry.

11.01 hours

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Gaurav Gogoi may put his Question.

(Q. No.41)

SHRI GAURAV GOGOI: Madam, the Kakrapar Unit is located in Gujarat and the incident took place on 11th March. As regards the breakdown in a coolant of the plant, it is known that the coolants are indigenously manufactured.

I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether any action will be taken or any form of inquiry will be initiated against the manufacturer so that all similar components are tested for their safety.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Madam Speaker, I am glad that the hon. Member has put this supplementary and given me an opportunity to make certain clarifications.

At the outset, I would like to clarify that this should not be described as an accident. We have something called international nuclear event scale which measures the magnitude of these kinds of incidents. It is something

like Richter scale for earthquake. On the scale of I to VII, this has measured only I which means that this is more of an anomaly and so, we could better describe it as an incident rather than an accident.

Having said this, due cognizance is always taken, as he has rightly said, to make certain rectifications wherever required but, at the same time, I would also like to clarify that out of the 306 coolant pipes that were being used in this plant, one of them suffered from a leakage that may not be necessarily because of the content or the composition of the coolant but nevertheless it has happened which is being looked into. It is also not something very unusual. It has been happening even in foreign plants and two of the Canadian plants suffered from this. Moreover, the present shutdown is also part of the regular shutdown which we have for two months in case of each of these plants. The only thing is that it may get prolonged in view of the event that has taken place.

But at the same time, since the hon. Member has shown interest in this, he would be glad to know that, under the leadership of hon. Prime Minister, our overall nuclear generation capacity has tremendously increased over the last two years. When the Government came in, it was just about 35,000 million watts which is now more than 38,000 million watts and we have set before us the target of making it triple in the next ten years.

Moreover, we have also made a headway in bringing a nuclear programme to North India which was not very visible earlier. In the last one year, we have started a plant in Gorakhpur, Haryana and we are also

exploring the possibility of Bhiwandi in Haryana, Patiala in Punjab, Bulandshahr in UP, Dehru Dun in Uttarakhand.

Therefore, we are on a very fast track mode not only in expanding it but also in facilitating it. One of the important decisions which is rather very historical, which I also referred to in the last Session, was to also have joint ventures with other PSUs that would facilitate our financial backup because earlier it was only NPCIL or the Vidyut which were doing it. Because of the financial constraints we were unable to set up new plants. Now, the other PSUs will also come and invest and the NPCIL would provide the technical know-how.

SHRI GAURAV GOGOI: The ‘incident’ as the hon. Minister refers to relates to a nuclear power plant. Every small ‘incident’ should be treated with utmost seriousness. Every ‘incident’ can be a potential accident. Therefore, the hon. Minister should not attempt to minimize the seriousness of this event.

The area itself has a long history of accidents. This was not the first accident. In 2004 the power generated by the Unit I Plant rose from about 170 megawatts when it was deliberately set for a different level. In 1994, flood waters, as per media reports, carried away canisters of radio active waste. In 1991 there was a fire in the switch gear room.

So, my question to the hon. Minister is: What lessons and recommendations have emerged from the past accidents so that we ensure

that no 'incident' can be treated as a minor incident? Given that it is a small 'incident' as alleged by the hon. Minister, can he explain if the 'incident' or the event took place on 11th March, why till this date we did not find out the actual reason for the leakage in the coolant plant? Thank you.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: The observations of the hon. Member are well taken. Certainly we are here to learn. I understand the spirit of his observations. Nobody intends to minimize any experience, good or bad. In fact, we have already set up two Committees, one by the NPCIL and the other by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board.

Having said that, what I was trying to clarify is that instead of being alarmist, let us understand that it is not something that I am saying subjectively. We have a scale called Nuclear Event Scale, which is accepted world over, which has identified this incident as just as one on the scale of one to seven. Therefore, we have a definite evidence to say what I am saying.

As far as the other incidents are concerned, certainly we always learn by what we have experienced, whether good or bad. But at the same time, I think, we have to take pride in the big headway that the atomic energy programme has made in this country.

HON. SPEAKER: Kunwar Haribansh Singh – not present.

Prof. Saugata Roy, welcome back.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: This Question on the leakage in Kakrapar was raised earlier in this House in the last part of the Session. The Minister has given the same reply that time as he has given this time.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: The Question is the same. So, the answer is virtually the same.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: That was sort of a supplementary question. It seems that you have made not much progress in inquiring into the leakage in the cooling plant of the Kakrapar Atomic Power Plant.

It is true that we are fortunate or our engineers have been good that so far in India's nuclear power programme no major accidents have taken place in any of the nuclear power stations unlike what happened in Chernobyl in the USSR or in Three Mile Island in the USA or in Fukushima in Japan.

The nuclear power is less polluting, good for the environment and its only problem is that if accidents take place, they become very dangerous and fatal. In view of that, has the Government under the leadership of the Prime Minister, as you mentioned, taken any final policy decision as to the mix of power generation in the country – thermal, hydel and nuclear?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: That is well taken. I think, there are two or three parts to it. One is that you were kind enough to refer to the hon. Prime Minister, we are very sincerely and seriously following the Prime Minister's dictum of 'zero effect and zero defect'. Therefore, there has been no radioactive leakage; there has been no harm; not even a hazard or a potential

of harm from this incident – which I would not like to describe it as an accident. Having said that, it is not fair to compare it with Chernobyl or Fukushima. Fukushima happened in 2011 on account of a number of other reasons, which have already been taken care of in India. There, an earthquake took place; the whole plant was in water. Here, we made sure that the plant is installed at a site which is away from the seismic zone.

I appreciate your third part of the question – you asked as to what is the headway. It happened on 11th March – two months have passed. We have set up two Committees. That is precisely the reason the plant is still in 'shutdown' in spite of no evidence of having any damage been done. But that too, I would like to assure the august House, should not be taken very alarmingly because otherwise also, it is a practice to shutdown these plants for two months periodically. This time, it might be a little longer. But certainly, when the report comes out, we would like to share the same with the hon. Member.

[Translation]

SHRI BHOLA SINGH: Hon. Speaker, the Narora Atomic Energy Power Plant is in my Lok Sabha Constituency of Bulandshahar. A case of leakage has recently been reported. To prevent such incidents at other plants, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister as to what measures are likely to be taken by the Government in this regard? There is a need to install two additional units there. Does the Government propose to commission two additional units to promote atomic energy?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Certainly, promoting the nuclear power program is part of the Government's policy. I mentioned a few moments ago that efforts are being made to explore locations where we see potential or capacity for this. Various types of minor issues arise in this regard. Issues such as problems related to land acquisition arise in some areas while in others, there is insufficient availability of water because both land and water are needed in adequate quantities for this. There is defence land at some places. Due to these reasons, sometimes there are obstacles but you would be proud to know about the Rawatbhata plant in Rajasthan, which has set a record by ranking second in the world. It has set a record by operating continuously for 365 days, 14 times. This is indeed a matter of great pride for our country India.

(Q. No.42)

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SINGH: Hon. Speaker, through you, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister about the decision to run bullet trains and high-speed trains in the country with the inspiration and progressive thinking of the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi after the formation of the NDA Government. I appreciate and support this visionary thinking

I would also like the Hon. Minister to clarify the apparent contradiction between the Government's initiative to run high-speed trains for the convenience of passengers and to save their time On the one hand and On the other hand the trains run at an average delay of four to six hours due to the

shortage of tracks between Allahabad and Mughalsarai Rail section, except only the Rajdhani Express. Trains serving Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha, and Assam experience such significant delays. Additional rail lines are needed on this railway section to improve the ratio of trains. As such does the Railway Ministry propose to lay new railway lines on the aforementioned railway section within a certain time frame? If so, by when this work is likely to be completed and if not, the reasons therefor?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Madam, it is correct that the trunk route from Kolkata to Delhi is perhaps the most congested trunk route in the country and the world over. The highest number of trains run on this route. The populations of the two most populous States in our country-Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, also travel along this track to different destinations. Therefore, the biggest obstacle in rectifying the entire track from Mumbai to Kolkata, as mentioned by the Hon. Member is due to it being the most congested track between Allahabad and Mughalsarai. We have initiated an effort to rectify it since the previous budget. To decongest it, we have initiated work since last year to create traffic facilities wherever possible, build bridges where necessary, and construct elevated tracks in other required locations. I am confident it will be completed within the next three years because it will take that much time, which has not happened in the past several years. Upon its completion, a large number of people will get relief.

A few days ago, our Hon. Prime Minister inaugurated a bridge in Bihar. Its benefit will also help in de-congesting traffic. However, until the line

capacity increases, it will proceed in the same manner."Uday" should operate smoothly, but if a critical nervecentre malfunctions, the entire system fails to function properly. Similarly, the stretch from Mughalsarai to Allahabad is a critical part of our infrastructure which requires to be repaired. We have commenced the process of rectifying it. I believe it will be rectified soon.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SINGH: Madam, there is a district named Gaya in my constituency which is an international tourist destination from which a train named Mahabodhi Express runs. This train does not have any fixed schedule. It operates with such delay that it has to be cancelled one or two days a month. I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister to the fact that in response to my question's part "d", which highlighted the routes identified for running trains at high speed, there is no route beyond Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, and Odisha are very large States. Bihar's name also appears in ancient history; it houses international Buddhist pilgrimage sites where people from both India and abroad come for ancestral rites. In overlooking of such routes, I believe, there might have been a mistake I would like to know about the date and timeline by which the identification and completion of the route is likely to be done for running trains at high speed between Delhi to Kolkata route, extending up to Assam .

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: We endeavor to complete the work on the dedicated freight corridor by 2019. We have initiated this project with significant momentum, and I am pleased to say that the progress achieved in the dedicated freight corridor during the past year surpasses that of the

previous six years. In this manner, the work achieved in the past year exceeds that of the previous six years. The entire process from land acquisition to tendering has been completed. Our Hon. Prime Minister monitors this project. We will be able to complete this project by the year 2019 or as soon as possible, due to which most of our goods traffic will be transported through this line. Today, the capacity utilization on the Delhi to Kolkata track exceeds 150 percent. If an exceedingly higher number of vehicles are present on the road, it results in traffic congestion, which is noticeable because the vehicles are visible ahead. However, trains are not visible because they stand behind signals. Due to this, the congestion that exists will be eased.

[English]

As you inquired, we have also sanctioned the third line in the fiscal year 2015-16 and the tendering process for it has been completed as well. Therefore, I believe that the work will proceed in this manner and it brings me joy to say that we have brought significant improvements in punctuality nationwide over the past two years. There is indeed a significant difference but it will take some time to eliminate congestion on critical lines such as between Delhi and Kolkata and especially between Mughalsarai and Allahabad. However, we have been successful in improving overall punctuality.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri R. Gopalakrishnan - not present.

Shri Balabhadra Majhi.

Shri Balabhadra Majhi: Madam, through you, I would like to convey to the Hon. Minister, we are discussing bullet trains, and as per the statement given by the. Hon Minister, our express trains are running at an average speed of 50 kilometers per hour, whereas most trains, especially express trains, have a maximum speed of 110 kilometers per hour, and the speed of Shatabdi and Rajdhani Express trains is 130 kilometers per hour. Indeed, while there may be congestion in certain areas where the average speed of trains is reduced in other places, the average speed can be increased accordingly. Huge amount of funds are being spent on bullet trains. Whereas, if we invest close to three trillion rupees we can achieve a speed of 160 kilometers per hour on railway lines across the entire country. Has the hon. Minister thought anything in this direction?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Madam, as I mentioned earlier, we have initiated efforts to increase the average speed of all trains operating in the country. Therefore, after the announcement was made in the budget, the Mobility Directorate was immediately constituted. We are working on increasing the average speed of all the trains. To increase the average speed, especially, two main things are usually required, firstly, separate tracks need to be laid and secondly, our rolling stock needs to be modified differently. That's why we have started working on both of these aspects. We have internally discussed and instructed our rolling stock personnel to plan for rolling stock with speeds exceeding not just 100 or 150 kilometers per hour but even higher. Perhaps we may not reach its ideal speed but let us ensure

that we do not find ourselves in a situation where we have constructed good tracks but our rolling stock is not adequate. Therefore, it will be necessary to address both of these aspects together. Along with that, signaling is also a very important thing. We have observed that on the older tracks, we are unable to increase speed due to our gradients. Wherever tracks were built, permanent speed restrictions were imposed because trains had to take a lot of turns there. Hence, there are safety issues. We have initiated work to address this issue. We have begun the process of thoroughly reviewing our temporary and permanent speed restrictions. We will present a report detailing the actions taken regarding this matter within a month.

Madam, unfortunately, misinformation is deliberately spread in our country and I do not understand why this is the case. There is no conflict between the development of bullet trains and the enhancement of our average railway operations. The funding for the bullet train will come from Japan. As a result, it will not affect our regular operations in any way. I would like to know if the situation was the same before the bullet train was introduced. Does this situation arise because of the bullet train? The introduction of the bullet train will benefit the railway as well as it will bring advanced technology. We will learn how to integrate signalling works. Madam, the bullet train also known as high-speed railway, runs all over the world and involves the complete integration of signalling, rolling stock, and tracks. There is a need to integrate, it will increase speed, but for that, we will need to acquire technology from somewhere. The technology is not currently

available in our country. Therefore, we have made efforts to utilize the public funds allocated in the budget entirely for enhancing the amenities for the common people, focusing on increasing the speed for the benefit of the common people. We are currently introducing trains like Antyodaya Express and Tejas which will run at speeds exceeding 130 kilometers per hour. We will also launch them within six months and their products are also being made. We are paying attention to all these aspects but if we want to improve the entire railway network of our country. We will need to work on both high-speed railways and regular railways. There is no conflict between these two. One project will proceed independently and the other project will proceed separately. This is a specific project and the benefits of this project will also contribute to improving the overall condition of the country's railways. Since we have signed this agreement with Japan, I would like to say that it is because of our Hon. Prime Minister's efforts that the agreement for the bullet train has been made in the interest of the country. As I mentioned in my previous response yesterday, I don't want to repeat it. Japan has also acknowledged that they will assist us in revamping our existing railway network. Japan's safety record is the best in the world, there are almost zero accidents there. Due to this agreement, they are also willing to share their knowledge with us. Additionally, Japan's excellent Research and Development Organization provides valuable support to our RDSO. Therefore, the collaboration with Japan will benefit in enhancing public

service and revamping our existing network and the bullet train is a small part of that.

(Q. No.43)

DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR: Hon. Speaker, as we know, the objective of the Natural Resource Data Management System is to strengthen integrated resource management and develop tools and techniques for capacity building at various levels within a geospatial framework.

Hon. Speaker, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister through you, what are the important achievements of this system since it was put into use and how have they benefited the people of the country? Currently, the drought situation is worse, affecting lakes, ponds, and rivers across the country. I would like to specifically mention Bundelkhand where drought conditions have persisted for several years, causing the groundwater levels to drop significantly. Has the government conducted any study on the drought situation in Bundelkhand as well as the lakes in Rajasthan so that this system can be used for drought management by studying the lakes, rivers, and step-wells across the country?

Dr. HARSH VARDHAN: Hon. Speaker, through you, I would like to tell the hon. Member history of this subject to help them understand the answer to their question more comprehensively.

Hon. Speaker, in 1982, our Department of Science and Technology put in place the National Resource Data Management System and conducted some pilot studies on how we can use science and technology to utilize data for better governance at the local level. In 1984, the Planning Commission constituted the Hanumantha Rao Committee which further advanced this initiative. They recommended that computer-based data be collected, organized, and used for the best possible local governance, initially in five districts and later in the year 1986, another five districts thereby covering ten districts by 1988 in coordination with the district collectors. In the subsequent years of 1991-92, the 73rd and 74th amendments were introduced, emphasizing the strengthening of the Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies. Collaboration with our department led to the implementation of this system on a larger scale across 60 districts in West Bengal, Karnataka, and Uttarakhand. This involved organizing geospatial data to facilitate various initiatives, ranging from disaster management, drought mitigation, watershed management, water resources, electoral processes, district planning, and other related endeavors. In this regard, the department and the States needed to take a proactive approach. From the year 2000 to 2010 and even more so in the last three years, hundred districts from four States Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha, and Jharkhand have been selected for this initiative. The question you have raised pertains to a specific location. Currently, our department has established National Geo-Spatial Infrastructure

in 160 districts at both the National and State levels. In this way, the functions of local governance are being conducted in an exemplary manner.

As far as the Government of India is concerned, our department lacks the means to advance this matter without the cooperation or proactive involvement of the States. As of today, at the National level, we possess National GIS data. By integrating this geospatial information with State and National data, we are currently in a position to determine how this data can be utilized in the future for major programs undertaken by the Prime Minister, whether it pertains to river linking, drought control, Digital India, or other initiatives like Make in India. We have recently received a request from the Government of Madhya Pradesh one month ago with regard to a place which you represent as an MP, upon which we are actively working. Over the past 25-30 years, we have developed quite advanced systems. By using science and technology, particularly geospatial information and GIS, we can collect all types of data for any area, blend them, and extract the required data for the country. This can then be utilized for better governance. Based on the theme of this discussion, I understand that your answer implies that if we talk about Rajasthan, the State Government is not directly involved in it yet. Currently, we cannot comment on the Rajasthan data.

HON. SPEAKER: I believe that after such detailed answers, there should be no need for supplementary questions.

DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR: Hon. Speaker, the Hon. Minister has referred to Karnataka and West Bengal in his response. I would like to inquire about the

districts covered under Madhya Pradesh and whether the budgetary allocation of Rupees 22 crores in section 'D' of the question will be sufficient for carrying out such significant tasks.

Furthermore, as per your information on the activities of NRDMS, it is also necessary to develop software for the application of management and geospatial data alongside GIS-based development. I would like to inquire about the extent of success we have achieved in this direction with the assistance of NRDMS. How we have utilized it and what objectives we have set for the next five years in this regard.

DR. HARSH VARDHAN: Hon. Speaker, as I mentioned in my previous response, we have recently received a request from Madhya Pradesh, just one month ago, requesting guidance for the districts of Madhya Pradesh through this method. If he has spoken about the budget, I simply want to state that by leveraging the science and technology within our department, we establish a system, gather data, utilize it scientifically, and govern through data, until there is financial support, willingness, and involvement from the States. We have developed the technology and successfully demonstrated it by establishing it within 160 districts. Currently, all States of the country need to adopt that technology. Additionally, as I mentioned earlier, we are also considering the context of major programs at the national level, contemplating how we can utilize GIS and our Geo-Spatial Infrastructure Technology, which exists at both the National and State levels, by superimposing all of these to effectively control major disasters and large-

scale programs. You have also mentioned drought. How can we control other things at the country level? *[English]*

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Hon. Speaker, I appreciate that the hon. Minister has given a lengthy reply. This programme was introduced in the year 1982 but in the written reply and also in the deliberation, it is very clear that we have covered only 160 districts. It is true that with a well defined objective of development this programme was introduced.

I would like to know, through you, Madam, from the hon. Minister why the Government has made it optional and instead of that why can they not make it as mandatory. If the finance is the main issue, why can the Government not give assistance because being at the national level, it is the most important issue. So, why can the Government not think in such a way?

DR. HARSH VARDHAN: Madam, as far as the Government of India is concerned, as I mentioned in my reply to the earlier part of the question, we are already in the process of considering it at the national level where we impose the National Geographical Information Systems over the National Geospatial Data. This is what we are already in the process.

This is a programme in which the data has to be ultimately provided by the States. Without the proactive involvement of the States, the Government of India can not force anything over the State Governments. But I see that now, after the successful implementation and the successful establishment of the systems in place, there is an interest growing amongst the States also.

As far as, we are concerned, from the national perspective for our national programmes, we are trying to work out that how we can use in the best possible manner, the data that is available at the State level for Geospatial thing plus the GIA system at the national level.

I agree with the hon. Member that it has to be done for the whole country. But without the active involvement of the States, it is not technically, physically and practically possible.

SHRI ANIL SHIROLE: Madam Speaker, has the Government considered introduction of Proactive Management Information System to ensure efficient use of natural resources in the national interest? If so, what are the details of action taken or proposed to be taken? *[Translation]* I posed this question as the Hon. Minister was discussing the proactive stance of the States.

[English]

SHRI HARSH VARDHAN: As far as this system is concerned, it is taking care of virtually everything. It is not only one aspect, which the hon. Member is talking about. For example, the natural resources, water resources, minerals and metal resources, disaster management, watershed management. Virtually, everything that one can think of, one can imagine till now, that is all being taken care of; and it has been established for States, which have taken active interest. Here is a book that we produced for the Karnataka State. Similar things, we have been doing for the other Districts. After the States come

forward, we are now a position where we can help the whole country from our Department.

HON. SPEAKER: Q. No. 44.

Shri Naranbhai Kachhadiya - not present;

Shri C.S. Putta Raju - not present.

Hon. Minister.

(Q. 44)

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Thank you, Madam, Speaker for giving me the opportunity to ask a very important Supplementary.

The MTNL is a Navratna company. It had been making profits till 2008-09. But afterwards, due to bad policies, it did not perform well. The conditions became so worse that due to negligible volume of trade and cost reduction, the MTNL had given the approval by the shareholders to de-list it from Chennai, Kolkata and Delhi Stock Exchanges. The MTNL also moved from New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) to OTCQX due to some other reasons.

But the present Government has taken strong measures to improve its performance, which is evident in the results of the financial year 2015-16. In Quarter 3, there were profits. The broadband revenue for Quarter 3, had increased by 2.06 per cent compared to the previous years. The trend reflects that the MTNL is on the path of revival, now.

I would urge the hon. Minister to let the nation know as to what steps and decisions were taken between 2008 and 2014, which caused the performance of the MTNL to fall by which this PSU of the telecom industry faced severe challenges.

[Translation]

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Hon. Speaker, the Hon. Member has drawn attention to a very serious issue. This question pertains to the market

share of BSNL and MTNL in comparison to private operators. I would like to humbly inform the House that in the year 2004, BSNL recorded a profit of Rs.10,183 crores whereas ten years later, in the year 2014, BSNL incurred a loss of Rs 8,234 crores. The discussion about MTNL was initiated by the Hon. Member indicated that in the year 2004, it had a profit of Rs 938 crores, whereas in the year 2014, it incurred a loss Rs of 2,893 crores. In the past decade, what has become of these profit-making companies, and which are pivotal to India's economy? This is a grave question. Today, I would like to humbly state before you that I am prepared for a thorough discussion on this matter once the House convenes. I have enough to listen to and to say. However, following the directives of the Hon. Prime Minister, stated that we need to rectify this. Later, I will come to MTNL. In one year and eight months, BSNL has achieved an operating profit of Rs. 672 crores after five years which is a significant turnaround from the previous loss. Its revenue has increased by 4.6 percent.

Hon. Speaker, I am delighted to inform you that last year BSNL had 7-8 lakh customers till July-August, the numbers have surged to 20 to 22 lakhs since January. This is the result of our efforts. They have installed approximately 23,060 2G BTS sites and further will install additional 21 thousand more this year. I would never say that things have completely improved but they are on the path of improvement. BSNL provides free services during earthquakes in Nepal and international calls are charged at local rates. Similar measures were implemented during a flood in Tamil

Nadu. The narrative presented by the Hon. Member regarding MTNL is indeed a familiar one. However, I am pleased to report that despite the challenging circumstances for MTNL, the total revenue increased by 25 crores in 3rd Quarter - October-December 15 compared to Quarter 2 July-September 15. If you work honestly things will improve. We have told both the departments that they need to improve. Things are progressing rapidly as we have initiated several major programs for the nation. Here, I would like to inform my colleagues that under the direction of the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs, who is present here, approximately 2,199 towers were directed to be installed in left wing extremism affected areas across India. Hon. Minister of Home Affairs has closely monitored this and I am pleased to report that our BSNL has, installed towers for communication purposes whether it be in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, or in Maoist-affected regions and they are also performing commendably.

Hon. Speaker, I humbly want to state that the process of reforms initiated after the advent of our Government is underway and we shall continue to advance it further.

[English]

SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL: Madam, the hon. Minister has mentioned about the performance of BSNL between the year 2004-05 and 2014-15. But here the question is about the market share of telecom PSUs. As per the hon. Minister's reply, the market share as on 31.03.2014 was 12.88 per cent and

the market share as on 31.03.2015 had declined to 9.36 per cent. In this current year, the market share is 9.43 per cent. That means the market share has declined from that of 2013-14 in 2014-15 also and, it has also declined in the year 2015-16.

The hon. Minister has also stated the reasons as frequent interruptions in landline service due to cable damage by various agencies working for road widening works, water and drainage activities and laying of electrical cables etc.

At the same time, the private market share has been increasing. Why is this happening in the same period? It is because of the quality of service. We have been complaining for the last one year about the call drops. Whenever we use the BSNL mobile, we are not in a position to speak one minute continuously. There are frequent call drops. The quality of service is affecting the market share. It is better if the Minister addresses this problem. The hon. Minister has already assured in this House about addressing this problem. What is the status of those things?

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Madam, as far as the issue raised by the hon. Senior Member is concerned, let me first explain the first part of his query.

When we said it was a declining trend, it was going on and I can show him the trend of the last seven or eight years. What happened was, because of the declining loss of profit, the entire market share started coming down.

What have we done? We have arrested that trend. From 9.36, it has become 9.43 till December, 2015. When the final audited figure of March, 2015 will come, we will cross 10 per cent. Therefore, the declining trend has been arrested. I am telling you there is 4.1 per cent revenue jump. The operating profit is Rs.672 crore, and by this year we are going to match the loss of 20 per cent less. Therefore, all this would lead to a reclaiming of the market share about which I told you how we are adding more to the mobile customers. People are leaving others and reporting to us.

Regarding the quality of service, you are absolutely right. After our Government came to power, improving the quality of service is one of the most driving agendas of our governance. I have been taking interest. I had a meeting of all the Members of Parliament. I have taken their feedback. Hon. Speaker Madam, I am happy to inform the hon. House that since July in the entire country 94,254 new BTS sites have been added. It is such a huge number. In Delhi alone, 5,835 have been added. Hon. the Speaker was very kind enough to permit our Department to improve the system. Two moving towers have been installed in the premises of the Parliament Reception and about 10 in and around the whole campus of New Delhi. About 80 are going to come in the next two months. Therefore, my Department is constantly monitoring it and because of our effort, as I said, 94,254 sites have been added in the last 7-8 months, including 5,835 in Delhi. We will further improve it.

Any further suggestion from you is most welcome. We have to work together to ensure that the service improves. Yes, one thing I would like to flag because you are a senior MP and also a former Minister. Earlier, the operators were not at all obliged to accept their responsibility. We said, no, it is your accountability to give good service and now they are doing it. The TRAI has come with a regulation also of imposition of fine which is pending before the Supreme Court. Therefore, we are collectively doing it, and I am open to any further suggestion which the hon. Member has to give.

(Q.NO. 45)

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Madam, with your permission I want to ask a very pointed and specific question to the hon. Minister and I hope that she will give a specific and pointed reply to my question.

Madam, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is not true that the 66th round of National Sample Survey data said that among the major religious groups, the proportion of urban households with major source of earnings as self-employment was highest for Muslims, that is, 46 per cent. The Prime Minister also said that if one can employ five people, he or she is contributing enough to the nation. Stand Up India is dedicated to women and to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people but not for minorities. My question to the hon. Minister is, how many Government's private or PPP model incubators, technology design and support centres or technology business incubators are located in 90 MCDs? Are there subsidies on incubation amount and support amount for Muslim and minority youth in this area? Is the Ministry earmarking grants like in the big PRISM Scheme for the Muslim and minority youth?

[Translation]

DR. NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Madam, a scheme Start Up India has been announced. When the Prime Minister addressed the nation in August, he announced two schemes - one Start-Up India and the other one Stand Up India and within Stand Up India, Skill India was introduced. The scheme of

Start-Up India signifies innovation. There was a lack of innovation in our country. In ancient times, during antiquity, India contributed numeral mathematical concepts and extensive research was underway, yet utterly lacking in innovation. Therefore, this scheme has been initiated and launched recently. The data for this has not been collected yet. The question raised by our Hon. Member is very important and it is not even related to my Ministry. This is a matter related directly to some other Ministry... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Madam, you have admitted this. You have acknowledged this question. However, this is not the answer... (*Interruptions*)
[English]

HON. SPEAKER: She is replying to your question. Owaisi ji, please sit down. She is not saying 'no'. Let her complete her reply.

... (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

DR. NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Owaisi Sahib, there is no need to be so agitated. Please listen quietly, I am answering. Hon. Speaker has admitted it and I have also admitted it. If I wanted, I could have sent this question. I haven't forwarded it. Hence, I'm responding that the data is not ready yet. As soon as it is prepared, I will personally send it to you and also place it on the floor of the house. This is an innovative scheme conceived by the Prime Minister. An exhibition was held last month at the President's House during which the innovative young scientists showcased their innovations. Through

this scheme, the innovations will receive hand-holding, support, financial assistance, and equipment support as they may not be capable of using expensive machinery and equipment. I understand that after a number of years such a scheme has been introduced here in our country and it will encourage our youth. I have already replied to you.

[English]

As soon as the information regarding the placement of incubators in the districts of minority communities becomes available, I will provide it to you.

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: My second supplementary to the hon. Minister is that one of the eligibility criteria is that the product or service should be new one or a significantly improved version of existing services or products. There are a lot of IPs generated by Muslims and minority craftsmen. An IP can be in a form of product design patent or product process patent.

I want to know whether innovation under craftsmanship and arts can be considered innovative. Are there any plans to earmark a budget or relaxation on trademark and copyright by artists and craftsmen and as per plan for tax exemption for craftsmen and related innovation by Muslims and minority youths?

There is a Part-II in the question of NMDFC. Is it true that in the 12th Five Year Plan, the total allocation made to NMDFC is only 62.9 per cent? Will the Government make it 100 per cent before the 12th Plan finishes? This

is a very pointed question. But, hon. Madam, I am really shocked that the hon. Minister has held a constitutional post. It is you who have accepted the question but not she. Thank you, Madam.

[Translation]

DR. NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: I would like to answer your second question. As far as the question of NMDFC is concerned, the NMDFC scheme has been operational since 1994. When I assumed the responsibility of this ministry, it became apparent that over the past two years, the preceding Government, their Ministers having made requisitions, were hampered by the fact that their portion of the Central Government's allocation had been depleted within their capital reserves. Their authorized share capital stood at Rs.1500 crores. I am referring to the time before all the schemes like Startup India and Standup India. When I presented this matter to the Cabinet from my ministry, it did not take more than two minutes for the Prime Minister and the Cabinet to double the authorized share capital from Rs.1500 crores to 3000 crore rupees. I am elucidating a circumstance before the Start-Up and Stand-Up initiatives, highlighting that the preceding Government did not allocate resources for the NMDFC. It was our government that undertook this task at top priority. You have inquired about the Start-Up India initiative whether innovation pertains to any field, be it science, technology, art, culture, or any other domain. Our nation has set the direction. Undoubtedly, whether they are our Muslim artisans, participants of Start Up, or adherents

of other faiths, our government here does not scrutinize innovation based on religion.

I am telling this to you because if you had seen that exhibition at the President's House and inquired from our Minister of Science and Technology who was present there, about the level of involvement of Muslim children in innovation, you would have known about it. In response to your question, I am referring to them as Muslims. However, I must mention that the children of India have also contributed significantly to innovation.

DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA: Hon. Speaker, I would like to request to the Hon. Minister to reply a question. In my constituency also, minorities constitute approximately 15% of the total population. Concerning the youth, will you make any efforts to coordinate with schemes such as the Ministry of Skill India, Mudra Scheme, Public Sector Banks, etc., through NMDFC to swiftly resolve the challenges they face?

DR. NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Our hon'ble MP has posed the question and I am aware that there is a significant population of Muslim individuals in his constituency. They need to be identified. There are six type of loans available for individuals of my faith within this ministry. We provide two types of loans through NMDFC. Firstly, we provide small loans of one and a half lakh rupees, and secondly, we provide large loans of up to thirty lakh rupees.

There is a procedure to provide loans in our Ministry to individuals in urban areas with incomes up to 1,03,000 rupees and rural areas with incomes

up to 81,000 rupees so that we can work at the grassroots level for the benefit of smaller individuals. It is the principle of our government to uplift those who are at the very bottom of the socio-economic ladder of society, ensuring that those who are the most marginalized are brought to the forefront. We give them loans through NMDFC. Before this, we undertake skill development for them.

I would like to inform the House that ever since our Government came to power, we have been providing skill development training to children belonging to minority communities. Approximately 35,000 children are being trained and are currently in the process of receiving training. Once these children are trained, we will either provide them with employment or offer them loans through NMDFC to start their businesses. I am pleased to note that the Hon. Prime Minister has initiated the 'Mudra' Scheme. Through the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana', we have facilitated the opening of bank accounts for the people. Even children from minority communities have availed of loans under it. They are also getting loans through 'Mudra Bank'. We are providing training to our children. So far, I have not received any complaints regarding this. If they encounter any difficulties in obtaining loans, our ministry will provide them with full assistance.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV: Hon. Speaker, through you, we would like to inquire about the HON. Speaker. I also had discussions with them. This is a golden scheme that has emerged akin to a dream, focusing on self-employment for the SC and ST, and empowering women. We would like

to inquire whether the Government intends to make it comprehensive by including minorities and OBC women. Especially in areas such as Bhagalpur, Banka, Bihar Sharif and other regions handloom industries are ceasing operations on a large scale due to lack of access to loans from banks. The Hon. Prime Minister also has a fifteen-point program for this. Is there a proposal to include this in that scheme? Does the Government intend to accord special consideration to Bhagalpur, Banka and Bihar Sharif in this scheme?

12.00 hours

DR. NAJMA A. HEPTUALLA: Hon. Speaker madam, you are also a woman and I am a woman too. I would like to express gratitude on behalf of both of us and behalf of women to the Prime Minister for initiating the Start-Up and Stand-Up schemes, especially the Stand-Up scheme. This scheme includes SCs, and STs who are the most backward, and Muslim women. The inclusion of Muslim women in this scheme is equally important for their empowerment in terms of women's empowerment. It seems to me that this matter has not caught people's attention that *[English]* 50 percent population of this country is covered under that scheme in which every woman comes into it regardless of caste, creed, and religion.

[Translation] Here, there is no controversy within our Government. Those who are the most marginalized, particularly the SC, ST, and women are the most backward. Whether they are Muslim women or women from other backward castes, all women are marginalized. By including these

women in this scheme, I believe that the Prime Minister has made a very commendable start.... *(Interruptions)* You are mentioning Banka but I am speaking about the entire nation of India. Wherever there is poverty in India, whether they are weavers or engaged in any other occupation, they are covered. Through women, I would say, Mr. Owaisi, that you can avail loans under the ... * scheme. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Madam, what did they say? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: No wrong statement has been made; you need not worry.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Question...* is not about. ... *(Interruptions)* If I were to start speaking about your husband, what would that signify? ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: She has not made any bad remark.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please take it lightly.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

* Not recorded.

HON. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Why are you interrupting in between?
Please sit down.

. . . *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)... *

HON. SPEAKER: Just take back your words.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: This statement is wrong. Why am I... *
being mentioned here?

DR. NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Owaisi Sahib, please don't get angry. I ...*
did not speak wrong about you. ... *(Interruptions)* *[English]*

No, let him understand. ... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Please refrain from making personal
remarks. We both have different political ideologies. Please refrain from
making personal remarks. ... *(Interruptions)* You are such a senior member. ...
(Interruptions)

* Not recorded.

DR. NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Please listen to what I have to say. I have not made any derogatory remarks about your wife's dignity. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: No one can do it. ... *(Interruptions)*

DR. NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: I did not do it. Please listen to what I have to say. ... *(Interruptions)* Owaisi Sahib, I mentioned that women are covered in this. If your ... * wishes to take a loan under this, they can do so. If not ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Please do not make it an issue.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have received notices of Adjournment Motion ...

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Now, nothing will go on record.

... *(Interruptions)*... *

HON. SPEAKER: Do not make it an issue.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have received notices of Adjournment Motion from Shri Jai Prakash Narayan Yadav ...

*Not recorded.

... (*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: Please sit down, Mr. Owaisi.

... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

HON. SPEAKER: If you don't prefer it, [*English*] then we will delete all these things from the records. [*Translation*] Why prolong the matter?

... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT; MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION and MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): Madam, my suggestion is that both references should not be included in the records. Alright, please proceed.

[*English*]

HON. SPEAKER: We will delete all the references like this. Is it okay? Do not make such things.

... (*Interruptions*)

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have received notices of Adjournment Motion from Shri Jai Prakash Narayan Yadav, Prof. Saugata Roy, Shri P. Karunakaran, Shri Sankar Prasad Datta, Shri Md. Badaruddoza Khan, Shri Mallikarjun Kharge, Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Shri K. C. Venugopal, Shri Rajeev Satav, Shri N.K. Premachandran, and Shri Prem Singh Chandumajra on different issues.

The matters, though important, do not warrant interruption of Business of the day. The matters can be raised through other opportunities.

... (*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: I have, therefore, disallowed all the notices of Adjournment Motion.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA (GUNA): Madam, it is a very important issue. ... (*Interruptions*)

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

***Starred Question Nos. 46 to 53**

and 55 to 60

Unstarred Question Nos. 461 to 690

***For Questions, please refer to Master copy of English version, placed in Library.**

You can also visit <https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers> for more information.

12.04 hours**PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE**

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Now, Papers to be laid on the Table. Item No. 2, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad.

... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): I beg to lay on the Table: -

(1) A copy of the Indian Post Office (Amendment) Rules, 2015 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 881(E) in Gazette of India dated 18th November, 2015 under sub-section (4) of Section 74 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 together with a corrigendum thereto published in Notification No. G.S.R. 276(E) (in English version only) dated 3rd March, 2016.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 4547/16/16]

- (2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, New Delhi, New Delhi, for the year 2014-2015, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Telecom Regulatory

Authority of India, New Delhi, New Delhi, for the year 2014-2015.

- (3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 4548/16/16]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): I beg to lay on the Table: -

(1) A copy of the Apprenticeship (Second Amendment) Rules, 2016 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 198(E) in Gazette of India dated 26th February, 2016 under sub-section (3) of Section 37 of the Apprentices Act, 1961.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 4549/16/16]

(2) Outcome Budget (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship for the year 2016-2017.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 4550/16/16]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY): Madam, I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of Section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:-

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Central Electronics Limited, New Delhi, for the year

2014-2015.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Central Electronics Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2014-2015, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 4551/16/16]

12.05 hours

**COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND
SCHEDULED TRIBES**

6th Report

[Translation]

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE (MANDLA): Hon. Speaker madam, I beg to lay on the Table the Sixth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on 'Role of Educational Institutions including Universities, Technical, Medical, and Engineering in the socio-economic development of SCs and STs - Implementation of reservation policy In Jawaharlal Nehru University' pertaining to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Higher Education).

12.05 ¼ hours

**COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND
RESOLUTIONS**

21st Report

[English]

SHRI THANGSO BAITE (OUTER MANIPUR): Madam, I beg to present the Twenty-first Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

12.05 ½ hours

COMMITTEE ON PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

7th Report

[English]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (AURANGABAD): Madam, I beg to present the Seventh Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (2015-2016).

12.05 ¾ hours**STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE****22nd Report***[Translation]*

SHRI JANARDAN MISHRA (REWA): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table, the 22nd Report* (Hindi and English versions) (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (2015-16) on the 'Rajendra Central Agricultural University Bill, 2015' of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (Department of Agricultural Research and Education)¹.

12.06 hours**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY****14th Report**

DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA (MUMBAI NORTH EAST): Hon. Speaker, with your permission, I beg to lay on the Table the 14th report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Energy on the subject 'Evaluation of Role, Performance, and Functioning of the Power Exchanges'.

¹ 22nd Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (2015-16) was presented to the Hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha on 31.03.2016 under Direction 71A of 'The Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha'. Hon. Speaker has accorded permission for printing, publication, and circulation of the report before it was presented/laid in the House under Rule 280 of the 'Rules of Procedures and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha' on 11.04.2016.

12.06 ¼ hours

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOME AFFAIRS

196th Report

[English]

SHRI PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA (ANANDPUR SAHIB):

Madam, I beg to lay on the Table the One Hundred and Ninety-sixth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Home Affairs on the Demands for Grants (2016-17) of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.

12.06 ½ hours

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT**

276th to 280th Reports

SHRIMATI SANTOSH AHLAWAT (JHUNJHUNU): Madam, I beg to lay on the Table the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development: -

- (1) 276th Report on Action Taken by the Government on Recommendations/Observations contained in the 267th Report on Demands for Grants (2015-16) of the Department of School Education & Literacy.
 - (2) 277th Report on Demands for Grants (2016-17) of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.
 - (3) 278th Report on Demands for Grants (2016-17) of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
 - (4) 279th Report on Demands for Grants (2016-17) of the Department of Higher Education.
 - (5) 280th Report on Demands for Grants 2016-17 of the Department of School Education & Literacy.
-

12.07 hours**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE****93rd and 94th Reports***[Translation]*

SHRIMATI RANJANBEN BHATT (VADODARA): Hon. Speaker, with your permission, I beg to lay the following reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare: -

- (1) 93rd Report on Demands for Grants (2016-17) of the Department of Health and Family Welfare.
 - (2) 94th Report on the Demands for Grants (2016-17) of the Department of Health Research.
-

12.07 ½ hours

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 255th Report of the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests on Demands for Grants (2015-16), pertaining to the Department of Space*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH):

Madam, I beg to lay a statement regarding the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 255th Report of the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests on Demands for Grants (2015-16), pertaining to the Department of Space.

* Laid on the Table and also placed in Library, See No. LT 4552/16/16

12.08 hours

**MOTION RE: TWENTY-NINTH REPORT OF
BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

[English]

SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL (BIKANER): Madam, I beg to move the following: -

“That this House do agree with the Twenty-ninth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on 26th April, 2016 subject to modification that the recommendation regarding items at serial Nos. 1, 5 and 6 already disposed of by the House, be omitted.”

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

“That this House do agree with the Twenty-ninth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on 26th April, 2016 subject to modification that the recommendation regarding items at serial Nos. 1, 5 and 6 already disposed of by the House, be omitted.”

The motion was adopted.

[English]

... (Interruptions)

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA (GUNA): Madam, this is an important issue relating to the internal security of our country. ...

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (AURANGABAD): Hon. Speaker madam, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus in Mumbai is the city's finest historic building and railway station, the design of which is influenced by Victorian and Mughal Architecture. It also houses headquarters of the Central Railway. The construction of this magnificent station was completed in 1887, after 34 years the first train ran in India. Earlier, it was known as Victoria Terminus. Later, in 1996 this Victoria Terminus was renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus in honour of Maharashtra's valiant warrior, Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. It was also declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO in 1984.

In India, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus is the busiest station with millions of passengers commuting through it daily. Millions of tourists visit this historic building to admire its grandeur.

Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was an Indian Ruler and founder of the Maratha Empire. He was born in Pune at Shivneri Durg. Shivaji Maharaj was a courageous, intelligent, and fearless ruler who established an

independent Hindu State in western Maharashtra. Shivaji Maharaj has consistently remained a symbol of pride and honour for the State of Maharashtra.

Therefore, through you, I request that a beautiful statue of Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj be installed within this terminal. This will ensure that his memories are enshrined within the terminal, providing information to the commuters and tourists about the contributions of Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. People coming from outside Maharashtra will also become acquainted with this warrior's legacy. This will not only increase awareness about him among the people domestically and internationally but also enhance respect for brave warriors among individuals. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri Shrirang Appa Barne, Shri Rodmal Nagar, Shri Sudheer Gupta, Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, Dr. Manoj Rajoria, Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra, Shri Arvind Sawant, Shri Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu, Shri Vinayak Raut and Shri Gajanan Kirtikar are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Chandrakant Khaire.

SHRI AJAY MISRA TENI (KHERI): Hon. Speaker, amendments have been made to the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, in the process of issuing new licenses and renewing existing ones. This came to my attention through a notification issued by the Central Government on 29th December 2015. In this context, along with increasing the license fees, provision has been made for the appointment of a separate pharmacist at each pharmacy, which could be a commendable step towards eliminating irregularities in this sector.

However, considering the actual circumstances of our country and the ratio of pharmacists to the number of pharmacies, it is impossible to achieve. In such circumstances, the absence of pharmacies, especially in rural areas of Uttar Pradesh may lead to adverse effects not only on the supply of medicines but also on people's health.

Through you, I humbly request the Government to consider amending Section 65 (2) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, to grant licenses to chemists based on their prior experience, reduce license fees, and simplify the renewal process. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri Sharad Tripathi, Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, Dr. Manoj Rajoria, Shri Rodmal Nagar, Shri Sudheer Gupta, Dr. Kirit Solanki, and Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra are permitted to associate with the matter raised by Shri Ajay Misra Teni.

SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE (MAVAL): Hon. Speaker, in my Parliamentary Constituency of Pimpri Chinchwad, there is a chemical fertilizer company owned by the Government of India. It is known as the Hindustan Antibiotics Company. This pharmaceutical company has been operating in the country since its inception. Despite its historical significance, the construction work of this company is completely halted. In this company, there are approximately 1100 workers who have not received their wages for the past 18 months, while Chemical Fertilizers has submitted a revival proposal for this company to the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance has not taken any steps in this regard.

Through you, I humbly request the Government that the proposal sent by the Chemical Fertiliser should be approved by the Ministry of Finance and the Cabinet so that the Government of India's Company can be restarted. For the past 18 months, the company's employees not receiving salaries has severely impacted the conditions of their families. This will provide them with relief. I demand the Government to initiate the operation of the company. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Arvind Sawant and Shri Gajanan Kirtikar are permitted to associate with the matter raised by Shri Shrirang Appa Barne.

SHRI SADASHIV LOKHANDE (SHIRDI): Hon. Speaker, the Narmada Valley Development Project has been non-operational for the past 42 years. There are 182 villages which are adjacent to Shirdi Sai Baba where people from across the country and abroad come to visit Sai Baba. In 182 villages, there is a lack of water for drinking and irrigation purposes, despite dams being constructed here. The Government of Maharashtra had received a letter from IBP and now the IBP scheme has been terminated. We met Pant Pradhan and conveyed to him the urgency of resuming the work that had been stopped for the last 42 years under the irrigation scheme. I implore him to commence the pending work to complete the project. It is the commemoration of Baba's centenary anniversary. The canal work of the dam under the Pant Pradhan Irrigation Scheme has achieved 75% completion before its scheduled commencement in 2017-18. Through you, I request the Hon. Minister to expedite the completion of this task and give approval to the

above project before Sai Baba's centennial year and ensure the provision of drinking water and water for agricultural purposes in the 182 villages.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Ravindra Kumar Jena, Shri Sudhir Gupta, Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, Shri Rodmal Nagar, Dr. Manoj Rajoria, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Shri Arvind Sawant, Shri Shrirang Appa Barne, Dr. Ravindra Babu and Shri M Murali Mohan are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Sadashiv Lokhande.

SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI (SOUTH DELHI): Hon. Speaker, through you, I wish to draw attention of the House and the Government to the growing pollution and the antics of the Chief Minister in Delhi regarding odd even measures. Here, I have stated this three times. The third phase of the Metro was scheduled to commence in December 2015 but the Delhi Government has been sitting on that file. This phase is intended to extend from Badarpur to Aerocity Mahipalpur covering Seven Assembly Constituencies with a population of approximately 30 lakhs. There are traffic jams lasting up to even 3 hours on the road. The Hon. Minister has written to the Delhi Government six times. Since this area is part of the NCR, people refer to the MP as a senior authority. The pollution in Delhi is exacerbated by traffic congestion. The Government should take the initiative regarding the metro phase .I adopted Adarsh Gram and its land needed to be utilized. However, the Government has suppressed that file. The Government is fostering anarchy in Delhi. If the Central Government takes the initiative on it the metro network be extended up to three kilometres to Jaipur, where there

is a population of five lakhs. The Government should engage in discussions at the Chief Secretary level. If the Chief Minister engages in frivolous behaviour and hinders the functioning of the Centre, it should be unacceptable. We are here to work on behalf of the people. In Delhi, theatrics are being performed in the name of the environment. The transportation infrastructure is not that advanced. The metro system is experiencing congestion from Lal Kuan to Pahladpur, Khanpur, Devli, INA Nagar, Chattarpur, and Ambedkar Nagar colonies, causing inconvenience to thirty lakh residents. Through you, I would like to request the Government to initiate measures that would not only mitigate pollution but also facilitate ease of movement for the public. This is our right. The fourth phase was intended to commence in December 2015 and now five months of 2016 have passed. My earnest request before you is to take some initiatives against the Chief Minister.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Sudhir Gupta, Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, Shri Rodmal Nagar, Shri Ajay Mishra Teni, Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Dr. Kirit P. Solanki, Shrimati Meenakshi Lekhi, Dr. Manoj Rajoria, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, and Dr. Virendra Kumar are allowed to associate with the issue raised by Shri Ramesh Bidhuri.

[English]

SHRI NAGENDRA KUMAR PRADHAN (SAMBALPUR): Madam Speaker, the State Government of Odisha submitted a DPR for setting up one IT Investment Region (ITIR) as per the ITIR policy of the Government of

India in 2010. The ITIR in Bhubaneswar covers about 10,210 acres (41.32 sq km) area at a distance of 15 km from south Bhubaneswar in Jatani, Khurda and Bhubaneswar Tehsil. There will be a processing area of 43 per cent (4,300 acres) to house all the IT, ITES, EHM, R&D centres, etc. The cost involved is expected to be around Rs.3,700 crore. Centre will be required to provide assistance of Rs.1,750 crore. The DPR of the State Government was cleared in a high power Committee meeting held on 6th July 2012 under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary, Government of India wherein the Chief Secretary of Odisha and Secretary, Electronics & Information Technology Department of Odisha made the presentation. But the final approval from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology is pending since last two years for which the project has not yet started. The hon. Chief Minister of Odisha has also requested the hon. Prime Minister in this regard. So, I would request the Government through you, Madam, to immediately clear the file so that the work will be started.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Ravindra Kumar Jena is allowed to associate himself with the matter raised by Shri Nagendra Kumar Pradhan.

SHRI RAMDAS C. TADAS (WARDHA): Hon. Speaker, my seat is over there.

Hon. Speaker, through you, I wish to appeal to the Hon. Minister of Road Transport and Highways to focus on my Parliamentary Constituency of

Wardha and consider the necessity of constructing a bypass from the Southern part of Wardha city. The population of Wardha city is increasing day by day. Due to the absence of a bypass, traffic congestion persists in the city, resulting in significant difficulties for the general public and vehicles traveling on the highway. The land acquisition process by the State Government has been completed and arrangements should be made by the Central Government in this fiscal year, i.e. in the budget for the year 2016-17, to allocate funds for the construction of this bypass. This will enable the prompt commencement of the bypass construction and facilitate the resolution of the issue faced by the general public.

Hon. Speaker, my parliamentary constituency has been the workplace of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Vinoba Bhave, underscoring the necessity of funding from the Central Government for the construction of the "Gandhi for Tomorrow" theme park. Therefore, I request that this work should be completed as expeditiously as possible. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members Shri Bhairu Prasad Mishra, Shri Chandraprakash Joshi, Shri Rodmal Nagar, and Shri Sudheer Gupta are allowed to associate themselves with the subject raised by Hon. Member Shri Ramdas C. Tadas.

SHRI HARISH CHANDRA ALIAS HARISH DWIVEDI (BASTI): Hon. Speaker, my Parliamentary Constituency is Basti district in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and incidents of agitations are occurring across Uttar Pradesh including Basti. Mr. Dharmendra, I wish to bring this matter to the attention

of the Hon. Minister. Hence please refrain from engaging in a conversation with him for a few moments, ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: This is a matter related to the Central Government.

SHRI HARISH CHANDRA ALIAS HARISH DWIVEDI: Hon. Speaker, this is a matter concerned with both the Central and the State Governments. The Hon. Minister is present here and if his attention is drawn towards this issue, it will be advantageous for the people of Uttar Pradesh. Therefore, I also want to draw his attention to this matter.

Hon. Speaker, at present fire is spreading throughout the State of Uttar Pradesh. In my Parliamentary Constituency of Gorakhpur, Sant Kabir Nagar, Siddharth Nagar and Faizabad, goods and crops worth millions of rupees are being damaged daily due to fires. Weddings take place during the summer months. A poor man gathers household items for his daughter's wedding throughout the year but they are destroyed due to fire. Due to this, they are incurring losses. Due to the fire, there are fatalities among people and losses to livestock. When I approached the district administration or the fire department with a request to arrange for fire extinguishing measures they informed me that they simply do not have the resources.

Hon Speaker, I met district magistrate of my district and conveyed my intention to allocate funds from my Member of Parliament Local Area Development Fund for the procurement of firefighting equipment. However, they raised concerns regarding the maintenance of drivers and this

equipment. First, please consider this matter. Therefore, I request you and through you, I also request Hon. Mulayam Singh, that the district officers of Uttar Pradesh be provided with some guidance from the government.

HON. SPEAKER: It is not so.

SHRI HARISH CHANDRA ALIAS HARISH DWIVEDI: Hon. Speaker, the fire is leading to substantial financial losses in terms of both lives and property amounting to crores of rupees. There should be arrangements made for his security and for extinguishing the fire there. I humbly request that the Indian Government be directed to allocate funds from the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) for the purchase of fire engines, enabling us to manage fire incidents and facilitate the maintenance of these vehicles. This allocation will help address the losses incurred in Basti and across Uttar Pradesh.

HON. SPEAKER: Mr. Mulayam Singh ji, that is not the case. They have not even mentioned such a name.

Hon. Member, Mr. Harishchandra also known as Mr. Harish Dwivedi has presented the subject with which Hon. Members Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri Bhairo Prasad Mishra, Shri Chandraprakash Joshi, Shri Sudheer Gupta, Shri Rodmal Nagar, Shri Sharad Tripathi and Shri Ajay Mishra Teni are allowed to associate themselves.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (AZAMGARH): Hon. Speaker, I am stating that Mr. Harishchandra also known as Shri Harish Dwivedi has made

a valid point. I want to inform them that if there is any further assistance available. Please let us know about it as well. Just to inform you a considerable sum has been allocated there and assistance will also be provided. Please provide us with written details regarding the damage caused due to drought and floods. Please provide us with the written details immediately. If that's the case, we will provide further assistance.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): Permission should be granted to purchase fire engines under the MPLADS.

HON. SPEAKER: Yes, it's okay.

SHRI BADRUDDIN AJMAL (DHUBRI): Madam Speaker, currently while a drought is widespread across the entire nation, our region of Assam is facing widespread devastation due to pre-monsoon rainfall. I have sent all the paper cuttings to you.

[English]

Like every year, this year also flood-like situation is looming over Assam as pre-monsoon rain with hailstorm and thunderbolts caused the havoc and sever tributaries of the Brahmaputra started to flow above the danger level. According to an official report by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority, the flood wave has caused the death of dozens of people so far, washed away thousands of houses, and damaged several thousand hectares of crop area, and destroyed crops, vegetables, etc.

The torrential rains have also triggered off massive landslides in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Assam, disrupting railway traffic in the Lumding-Badarpur hill section for the third consecutive day. Landslides have cut off Anjaw district in eastern Arunachal Pradesh and Mon district in Nagaland.

Over one lakh people are affected in several districts including my constituency Dhubri and Goalpara as well as Barpeta, Karimganj, Haliakandi, Nagaon, Sivasagar, Charaideo, Jorhat, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh and Cachar. They had to shift to 40 relief camps to save their lives.

I would like to request the Central Government to announce at least Rs. 1,000 crore for relief and rehabilitation of the affected people and deploy NDRF team in all the affected areas for rescue operation. I once again request for declaration of 'Flood and Erosion of Assam' as a 'National Calamity' and prepare a mechanism to fight the problem and find out a permanent solution.

DR. A. SAMPATH (ATTINGAL): Madam, I want to associate.

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI (HYDERABAD): I also want to associate.

HON. SPEAKER: Okay, you can.

... (*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra Shri Radheshyam Biswas are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Badruddin Ajmal.

Shri Malla Reddy.

SHRI CH. MALLA REDDY (MALKAJGIRI): Madam Speaker, thank you for permitting me to raise this matter of urgent public importance.

Thousands of appendicitis surgeries and hysterectomy operations were performed by doctors in Jagtial and Sircilla revenue divisions of Karimnagar district, Telangana State to make fast bucks. I appreciate that the State Health Department has launched a comprehensive survey to identify the people on whom the doctors performed these surgeries. Out of 583 surgeries, 238 were performed on children below 15 years. This shows total negligence on the part of doctors. It has been reported that some doctors are encouraging RMPs by providing them with commission for getting patients to the hospitals. Giving and taking commission is fundamentally wrong. Recently some doctors financed and supported the convention of the RMPs in Karimnagar. Therefore, there is a nexus between doctors and RMPs in performing rampant surgeries on poor patients. This should be looked into.

I would therefore urge upon the Centre to depute a team of Indian Medical Association or Indian Medical Council and lodge a probe into the rampant surgeries performed by doctors to fleece innocent rural masses in Karimnagar district and take suitable action against doctors who are found guilty.

Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJEEV SATAV (HINGOLI): Hon. Speaker madam, I wish to bring forth an important issue concerning Maharashtra and specifically my Parliamentary Constituency. Maharashtra has been suffering from severe drought for the past two years. This year the water crisis has become so severe that there is not even drinking water available in Maharashtra, especially in Marathwada and Vidarbha. As a result, the people and farmers are completely distressed and in a dire situation. Out of the 36 districts in Maharashtra, 21 have been declared drought-affected, impacting four crore people.

Hon Speaker, through you, I urge the Government to address the issue that banks are not supporting farmers resulting in Maharashtra reaching the top position in terms of suicides. Farmers who are not receiving Government benefits in Maharashtra are being forced to commit suicide. They are now being forced to sell their valuable land to moneylenders at low prices. A large number of children approximately 40 percent of the population have migrated from Marathwada and Vidarbha to cities. ... (Interruptions) They have migrated

Through you, I urge the Government to note that the funds requested by the Maharashtra Government from the Central Government over the past two years have not yet been received by the Maharashtra Government. The Hon. Prime Minister has not visited Maharashtra particularly Marathwada and Vidarbha, even once in the past two years to witness the suffering of the

farmers. Through you, I request the Government to announce debt relief immediately. The Hon. Prime Minister at least should visit Marathwada and Vidarbha to understand the pain of the farmer.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Shrirang Appa Barne is allowed to associate with the subject raised by Shri Rajeev Satav.

SHRI NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Hon. Speaker, I had raised the issue of the Aircel Maxis case in this House. Subsequently, the ED has conducted a raid just now. The findings from the ED raid are crucial for the nation to know revealing how the UPA government was involved in scams with blatant audacity. The Government was the source of corruption in various ways. The one who held power was deeply involved in corruption. When this raid occurred a case emerged involving JD Group and Vasan Healthcare, in which several senior Congress leaders were involved. The current President of the party in Rajasthan was also named in this case.... *(Interruptions)* I am not taking anyone's name. Mr. Kharge, I know what I need to say as an MP. I am not naming anyone.... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Nishikant ji, please address the Chair.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)... **

HON. SPEAKER: He is not taking any name.

[Translation]

SHRI NISHIKANT DUBEY: Hon. Speaker madam, a case is going on in the CAT, where an official stated that there has been an embezzlement of 223 crore rupees. The CBDT has recently submitted its affidavit. The CBDT has stated since the officer held a press conference, they are against it, but the truth is that somewhere around 223 crores of rupees have been embezzled. How did this happen? There are three companies, one is the JD Group and the second is Ausbridge. The former Minister of Finance's son holds a complete 95 percent ownership in Ausbridge. The Ausbridge Company acquires an advantage strategically and increases its stake in Vasani Healthcare by five percent... *(Interruptions)* has just been raided by the ED. I am informing you that this is not the same question as last time. ... *(Interruptions)* On 29.10.2008 the promoters of Vasani Health bought three lakh shares. They bought three lakh shares at 200 each and within 24 hours they transferred one and a half lakh shares to Advantage Strategic for just a hundred rupees. Following this 30,000 shares were transferred to Sequoia, the entity on which the raid occurred. This is a new revelation for your information, these shares were given to Sequoia for 7,500 rupees. A share initially valued at a hundred rupees was later sold for 7,500 rupees.

*Not recorded

The most significant aspect is that the Ausbridge company purchased from Mr. Mohanan Rajesh in 2006 was sold back to him in 2011. It has never happened before that a company purchased from someone is owned by the same person again within five years. Despite this, they were not satisfied. I want to disclose that they felt if they sold it, all the money would be lost. What they did was, they distribute the remaining three lakh shares among four individuals. The four individuals were CBN Reddy, B. Rangarajan, and two others. These individuals made their will and the will was created on 19, 2013. The most important thing is that the will they made is of the same type. *[English]* All Will's were uniformly executed on the same day - 19th June 2013, identical in language and content. In three of them, the first witness is CBN Reddy. In CBN Reddy's Will, it was Mr. Ravi Viswanathan. The second witness for all four Wills is one V Murali. *[Translation]* V Murali is executing all four wills and it is stated in all of them that the final money will go to his granddaughter, the granddaughter of the former finance minister. This is an open and shut case. The case of the CBI which has been pending for so long still hasn't resulted in an FIR.

Today, concerning the matters brought forth by the ED Sequoia. I would like to inquire whether the Government is aware that there are 88 acres of land located in Samarset. Is their transaction associated with open high investment? All of this has been discovered during the raid. Weligama Bay Resort is located within the Emerald Bay Hotel. Whose stake does he have there? Wine Yards has been bought in Dubai and South Africa, what is the

role of Sequoia in it? Have they invested 400 Singapore dollars in BVI or not?

The most important is venture capital. I would like to inform you that Sequoia has been raided. When raids occur, it is often said that if we stop such companies' venture capital, it will create problems, and investment in our country will cease. They stated in their press conference that they had investment in Google and Yahoo. I wish to inform you that the USA Government and the UK Government are investigating Sequoia regarding the allocation of a 44 billion profit to Apple, with Sequoia's role in it, and the payment of 130 million in taxes to Google. Through you, I urge the government that after the ED raid in Aircel Maxis, because file of the ED officer who was investigating, has been so badly degraded that he is not being promoted. They have committed theft and are compelled to resort to deceit on top of it. This is an open-shut case. The FIR of this case is pending with the CBI. The accused individuals should be immediately presented before the court and sent to jail... (*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: Shrimati Meenakshi Lekhi, Shri Udit Raj, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri Rajendra Agrawal, Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra, Shri C.P. Joshi, Shri Sudhir Gupta, Shri Rodmal Nagar, Shri Shivkumar Udasi, Shri Manoj Rajoria, Shri Rahul Kaswan, Shri Sharad Tripathi, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Shri Dushyant Singh are allowed to associate themselves with the subject raised by Shri Nishikant Dubey.

SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV (BULDHANA): Hon. Speaker, through you, I wish to draw attention of the Hon. Minister to the Satpura mountain range located on the border of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh which adjoins my Parliamentary Constituency of Buldhana. The tribal people of the Naikda community from Bhillala, Barela, Paura, and Mothala talukas have come to Maharashtra to support their families. These people are living in the forests and supporting their families. The tribal people and their children who have come from Madhya Pradesh are unable to obtain Scheduled Tribe certificates because they are asked to provide 35-year-old residential proof. Due to living in the forests and migrating from Madhya Pradesh to Maharashtra, they do not have a 35-year residential record. Because of this, people are unable to obtain Scheduled Tribe certificates. Many children of this tribe are attending schools and have received a good education but they do not have a certificate. They are unable to benefit from any Government schemes. These are people living in the forests.

I request the Hon. Minister to relax the requirement for providing 35-year-old proof in the process of issuing Scheduled Tribe certificates to the tribal people who have come from Madhya Pradesh to the border of Maharashtra and the Naikda community living in the forests of Motala tehsil in my Parliamentary Constituency of Buldhana. This will enable these people to obtain their certificates and benefit from Government schemes.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri C.P. Joshi, Shri Sudheer Gupta, Shri Rodmal Nagar, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Shri

Arvind Sawant, and Shri Shrirang Barne are allowed to associate themselves with the issue raised by Shri Prataprao Jadhav.

... (*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: Kharge ji, the issue of your adjournment motion has been raised and discussed. [*English*] You want to raise the same issue now and then. That is why, I have disallowed it.

... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

HON. SPEAKER: This issue has already been discussed under Rule 193.

... (*Interruptions*)

DR. SAWAMI SAKSHIJI MAHARAJ (UNNAO): Hon. Speaker, I express my heartfelt gratitude to you for allowing me to speak on this extremely important issue concerning my parliamentary constituency. Within my parliamentary constituency, National Highway No. 232(A), now renumbered as 231, passes through Unnao to Raebareli where there is a damaged culvert at 26 Km. This culvert has caused numerous deaths over the past several years and is known as the bloody culvert. Many people have lost their lives because of this culvert. This culvert has not been repaired for many years. The Government and administration have not paid attention to this culvert. On this highway, Bihar has railway crossings where the need for a railway underpass is being strongly felt. Since traffic and vehicle pressure have been continuously increasing here, there is a pressing need for a railway

underpass at the railway crossing location. Furthermore, National Highway No. 231 which connects Unnao to Raebareli has been transformed into potholes. Accidents occur on this road every day. This highway also connects several districts of Purvanchal. This road is very important in terms of transportation. Due to the damaged condition of this highway, the general public has to travel several extra kilometers, causing them physical, mental, and financial harm.

Therefore, Hon. Speaker, through you, I urge the Government and the Hon. Minister to reconstruct the damaged culverts of National Highway No. 231, construct railway underpasses in Bihar, and reconstruct this entire road so that the general public can be relieved from the hardships. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, Shri Sudheer Gupta, Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra, and Shri Rodmal Nagar are allowed to associate themselves with the matter raised by Shri Sakshi Maharaj.

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT (RATNAGIRI-SINDHUDURG): Hon. Speaker madam, during Zero Hour I would like to draw Government's attention to the situation that has developed in the sea of Sindhudurg district in Maharashtra over the past several days.

For several days now, there has been a very loud noise coming from the sea between Sindhudurg and Vijaydurg. Furthermore, the waves rise at such a rapid pace that they create a sand mountain-like structure. In many places, the land sinks. The magnitude of these ocean waves has increased to the extent

that it has caused disturbance among all the fishermen and coastal villages. I have personally visited there. The situation that usually occurs in June-July has occurred this month itself earlier than usual. This is not an ordinary situation. This is a critical situation. I have also requested the district administration in the region. Additionally, through you, I also want to appeal to the Central Government to conduct a study of this situation through the Oceanography Department. Furthermore, I also urge the Government to pay attention to the environment in the area where the Jaitapur nuclear energy project is planned as there have been recent questions regarding the situation in Kakrapar. Jaitapur and Vijaydurg are the nearby areas. This situation is assessed until the correct cause of this situation is known. I would like to request to stop the atomic energy project in Jaithapur. The Government should quickly investigate the causes of this situation through the Oceanography Department and clarify whether it poses any danger to the people.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Arvind Sawant, Shri Shrirang Appa Barne, Shri Gajanan Kirtikar, Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, Shri Sudheer Gupta, and Shri Rodmal Nagar are allowed to associate themselves with the issue raised by Shri Vinayak Bhaurao Raut.

Shri M. Venkateshwar Rao - not present.

SHRIMATI RITI PATHAK (SIDHI): Hon. Speaker madam, the subject I am about to raise today, I used to consider it a matter of empathy before and many others like me also thought it was a matter of great sensitivity.

However, during my Parliamentary Constituency visits, I encountered such issues gradually. I felt that this subject matter was more of a necessity than a matter of conscience.

This concerns the issues faced by the deceased's dependents. Today, through you, I am going to present this subject in this House. When an individual working in Government service in a happy family dies due to any reason or accident, the members of that family feel completely helpless. Several such issues arise. Many of these issues remain unresolved. Indeed, our Government has made commendable efforts to expedite the resolution of many longstanding cases. However, today, through this House, I only want to request that the established standards for such cases be made slightly simpler. They should not be made complex. The family member's dependent on the deceased have to wait for a long time. Their waiting period should be reduced so that the family can progress comfortably. Our Government has devised a scheme to provide assistance and benefits to the general public. Therefore, by bringing this subject here today, I wish to convey that our Government should pay sensitive attention to this matter.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Sudheer Gupta, Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, Shri Rodmal Nagar, Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri Rabindra Kumar Jena, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Shri Sharad Tripathi are allowed to associate with the matter raised by Shrimati Riti Pathak.

SHRI RAJAN VICHARE (THANE): Hon. Speaker, through you, I want to draw the attention of this House towards the curriculum of Class 7th, tenth, and 12th by the NCERT in Maharashtra, wherein Indian culture has been disrespected and history has been misrepresented in a few words.

Through you, I would like to inform this House that in the NCERT textbooks of Maharashtra, in the 7th-grade books, only five lines have been dedicated to the life of the great patriot, visionary, nation-builder, and skilled administrator, the founder of the Maratha Empire, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Whereas, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a living symbol of Nationalism and Independence, a visionary leader, whose military prowess had unsettled powerful rulers like the Mughals. According to historians, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was not just a fearless warrior and a successful conqueror but also an enlightened ruler of his subjects. The spirit of freedom that inspired him was also ignited in the hearts of his countrymen by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was truly a pragmatic idealist. Hence, he is still revered as the founder of Swarajya, a skilled warrior, a king who prioritized the welfare of his subjects, a proficient administrator who upheld religious tolerance, and a visionary monarch. Even today, millions of youth consider him their role model. He was an ideal for India and everyone. All students need to know such great personalities from history and it is also the ultimate responsibility of the government. In this regard, the Hindu Janajagruti Samiti submitted a memorandum to the Central Government on March 19, 2015, but so far, no action has been taken. Through

this House, I request the Hon. Minister of Education to direct the NCERT to incorporate the detailed life of the great Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and his actual history into the syllabuses of the aforementioned classes and urge the Government to fulfill its duty. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra, Shri Shrirang Appa Barne, Shri Arvind Sawant, and Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel are permitted to associate themselves with the issue raised by Shri Rajan Vichare.

[English]

***ADV. SHARADKUMAR MARUTI BANSODE (SOLAPUR):** Madam Speaker, kindly allow me to ask my question in Marathi. There are around 75000 women beedi workers in my constituency, Solapur. WHO has issued a notification which made it mandatory to cover the 85% of the label of beedi bundle for the health warning? Hence, most of the beedi factory owners have shut their shop during last month and 75000 beedi workers today are facing hardships. They have been left without a job and future.

In fact, the Parliamentary Standing Committee had recommended that only 50% of the label of beedi bundle be used for printing the statutory health warning. But that has not been accepted, now it is not possible practically to print necessary information because there is no space left for printing the brand name and manufacturing date. If we do not accept this recommendation, the beedi producers would stop the production. These beedi

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

workers are living in distress for last one month and are facing the problem of earning their livelihood.

Government of Maharashtra is providing food to these distressed women workers through Food Security Scheme. Hon'ble Praniti Susheel Kumar Shinde, MLA has started a Food Bank there. Subhash Bapu Deshmukh Ex-MP, has started a food shelter for them.*(Interruptions)* Hon. Kharge Ji, we are facing greater hardships than you. ... *(Interruptions)* We have more difficulties.

Comrade Adam master is roaming here and there with 10,000 women workers. Don't they have any self respect? *[English]* Are they supposed to suffer? Shouldn't their children get education? Shouldn't their daughters get married? If they remain unemployed, how they would be able to lead their lives.

Solapur is facing drought conditions, too. Therefore, I would like to urge upon Hon'ble Prime Minister, our powerful leaders and others to find a solution to this issue. Either they should get some kind of alternative employment or this condition of printing space should be scrapped. Thank you.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel ji is allowed to associate himself with the matter raised by Advocate Sharad Bansode.

SHRI RAJENDRA AGRAWAL (MEERUT): Hon. Speaker, through this House, I want to draw attention of the government towards the accidents caused by Chinese manja.

Madam, in my Lok Sabha constituency of Meerut, on April 11, 2016, just 15 days ago, a ten-year-old boy named Shehzad flew a kite with Chinese Manja. His kite got entangled in a 33thousand kilowatt high-tension line and as a result of the current passing through the manja, the child was severely electrocuted and tragically passed away. Apart from this tragic incident, incidents of injuries and deaths of both humans and birds due to Chinese manja have been occurring across the country. This manjha is not only lethal but also extremely harmful from an environmental perspective, as it is made of toxic and non-biodegradable substances. In some states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan the sale and use of Chinese manja have been banned under the Environmental Protection Act, 1986. Despite this ban, effective prevention of accidents caused by manja has not been achieved, mainly due to the lack of a precise definition of Chinese manja. Due to the lack of a clear definition, sellers of this manja often operate outside the legal framework, making it difficult to take any legal action against them.

Hon. Speaker, through you, I request the Government to first define this manja clearly in consultation with textile technology experts. Storage, sale, and use of Chinese manjas or similar harmful manjas should be banned in Uttar Pradesh as well as across the country and strict punitive action should

be taken against those who violate this ban. Thank you very much for providing me with the opportunity to speak.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel, Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra, Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, Shri Sudheer Gupta, Shri Rodmal Nagar are allowed to associate themselves with the matter raised by Shri Rajendra Agrawal.

12.52 hours

SUBMISSION BY MEMBER

Re: Problems being faced by Tobacco farmers in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

[English]

SHRI R. DHIRUVANARAYANA (CHAMARAJANAGAR): Madam Speaker, thank you.

I want to raise an important issue regarding tobacco farmers. Tobacco is an important commercial and dry crop grown in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. About 45.7 million people are involved in this, including farmers, farm labourers, workers, retailers, etc. Thirty lakh farmers are dependent on this industry.

Now, the Union Government has decided to put pictorial health warning covering 85 per cent of the space on both sides of the packet, which is up by 40 per cent. The Parliamentary Committee concerned had recommended that the pictorial warning could occupy only fifty per cent of the packet. But that recommendation has not been taken into consideration. Now, the cigarette factories are on the verge of closure.

I would request the Union Government to take adequate steps to go for alternative farming system and provide adequate money for this purpose. Also reduce the coverage of pictorial warning so that the tobacco industries could resume production. Thank you.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel ji is allowed to associate himself with the issue raised by Shri R. Dhruvanarayana.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT; MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION and MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): I would like Shri Kharge also to hear this seriously. This is a serious problem. The entire House, at one time or the other, has to discuss this issue. In seven districts of Karnataka and seven or eight districts of Andhra Pradesh, tobacco crop is the main livelihood. But the WHO and other agencies are all saying that smoking is injurious to health, which is also a fact.

Keeping that in mind, world public opinion is growing stronger day by day to discourage smoking – whether it is cigarette or *bidi* also. The point raised by the hon. Member is about the livelihood opportunities of *bidi* workers – whether it is Sholapur or Adilabad of Andhra Pradesh or in Karnataka or in Kerala. There is a problem between these two. One is the public opinion worldwide and the health experts advise to dissuade people from smoking. Pictorial warning is one such step in that direction. The court is also monitoring the case. At one stage or other we have to evolve a broad consensus because the Government alone taking a decision unilaterally again lead to other consequences also.

This morning, I met farmers from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. We have been meeting earlier also. We have to slowly encourage farmers to go for alternate crops. That is the only way. Otherwise, we cannot continue with this situation. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI R. DHIRUVANARAYANA: Is the Government thinking of announcing a special package?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I would be discussing with the Ministers of Commerce and Agriculture about this problem. The Health Minister is very serious because he has been receiving inputs from the WHO and other organizations. We have to find out some solution to this problem. I would like to discuss informally with the Congress Leader of the House and other hon. Members also. We would try to find some solution. In the last one or two years, we have been agitating but we were not able to find out any meaningful and practical solution. If somebody has got good suggestions and ideas, they are welcome; we would discuss the same.

[Translation]

SHRI PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA (ANANDPUR SAHIB): Hon. Speaker, an international airport has recently been established in my constituency, Sahibzada Jit Singh Nagar. HON. Prime Minister inaugurated it on September 11, but international flights have not yet commenced from there. It is said that some airlines are not ready yet.

Hon. Speaker, I would like to appeal to the Government through you that Air India could be ready and international flights should be started with Air India. Earlier, there was a controversy over its name. The Punjab Government proposed the name of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, which was also passed by the Haryana Assembly. Now, there is no longer any controversy. As far as the name of this city, Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar is concerned, it is named after Shri Guru Gobind Singh Elder Son and Shri Guru Gobind Singh's 350th birth anniversary is being celebrated nationwide.

Therefore, we want international flights should be started as soon as possible from that airport. I have repeatedly requested the Hon. Minister for domestic flights for Nanded Sahab. The trains introduced by our government require people to travel very far from their locations. People from Punjab and Haryana are making a lot of efforts to ensure that domestic flights are also operated for Nanded Sahib Airport. This is exactly what I want to request.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Ravneet Singh, Shri Santokh Singh Chaudhary, Shri A. Sampath, and Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra are allowed to associate themselves with the matter raised by Shri Prem Singh Chandumajra.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV (BANKA): Hon. Speaker, I would like to draw the Government's attention to a very important question. Across the states of the country, particularly the nomadic and Banjara communities, these people are compelled to live under the open sky. The same situation prevails with the Khair, Khairawar, Pujhar, and Nayya communities. Their health, housing, food, clothing, and shelter are not

adequately provided for and the life of this community is even worse than that of the country's BPL families, making the situation extremely grim. During the process of drafting the constitution Dr. B.R. Ambedkar stated that the most marginalized individuals in society should be uplifted, supported, and granted their rights. However, today the situation of the Banjara community has worsened significantly. I believe that citizens across the country would agree that the current situation of the Banjara community is very poor in the country. The previous Government established the Renke Commission to address the reality, population, and sugarcane issues of this community. The commission submitted its report to the Government but no action has been taken on the report to date. According to the Renke Commission, the population of this community is approximately 12 crore. For building a Swachh Bharat, the Banjara and nomadic communities need to be healthy, as they are an integral part of Indian society.

Therefore, considering the enormity of the situation, I request the Hon. Minister to immediately clarify the Government's stand in the House and improve the arrangements for the health and welfare of the Banjara and Nomadic communities. Along with this, we also discussed the arrangements for the Khair, Khairwar, Pujhar, and Nayya communities. We urge the House to pay special attention to this matter.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra and Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel are allowed to associate themselves with the issue raised by Shri Jai Prakash Narayan Yadav.

13.00 hours

[English]

SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL (ALAPPUZHA): Madam Speaker, I would like to invite attention of the Government, through you, to a shocking incident which happened on 21st April, 2016. In a shocking incident on 21st April, a Nurse from Kerala, Chikku Robert, hailing from Angamali in Ernakulam District of Kerala was found murdered in Salalah Oman. Chikku Robert, a Staff Nurse with Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals, Salalah, had been working in the institution for the past three years. The incident came to light after Chikku did not report for her night duty. Sources said that Chikku was three months pregnant and planning to come to her native place after two months. It is also reported that a Pakistani national has been put under detention and is being investigated in the case. Till now her body has not been brought to her home town. Her mortal remains are in a mortuary in the custody of Royal Oman Police. I would request the Government to intervene in this matter immediately and take all necessary steps to expedite the transfer of the mortal remains of Chikku Robert to her home town.

Further, I would also like bring to the attention of the Government that thousands of nurses are working abroad, especially from Kerala. The security of these nurses is in danger. Therefore, I would request the Government to take necessary steps to ensure the safety of Indian nurses who are working in many countries of the world.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Dr. A Sampath is allowed to associate himself with the matter raised by Shri K.C.Venugopal.

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR (HAMIRPUR): Hon. Speaker, the issue of JNU has been a topic of significant discussion for some time now. I simply want to state that education plays a very important role in character-building and nation-building. History also plays a very significant role in this. Madam, after everything that has happened at JNU, another incident comes to the forefront, involving two different ideologies. Now it's unclear if anyone has any ideology or not. The book titled - "India's Struggle for Independence" in Delhi University has portrayed Bhagat Singh as a revolutionary terrorist, branding him as a terrorist. On one hand, Chandumajra stated that Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, and on the other hand, certain individuals attempted to portray him as ...*during the previous tenure of the Uttar Pradesh Government. In the same vein, the professors...* attempted to portray.... *

HON. SPEAKER: Please put your point.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Madam, Shaheed Bhagat Singh was referred to as a terrorist. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please express your thoughts about Bhagat Singh respectfully.

*Not recorded

. . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Madam, I simply want to ask who are these people? ... * Those who were appointed as professors at JNU. ... *(Interruptions)* Vigilance inquiry is pending against them for financial irregularities. ... *(Interruptions)* They were appointed in the library under the Nehru Memorial Museum. ... *(Interruptions)* A case is going on against them for financial irregularities. ... *(Interruptions)* Late Vipin Chandra, who served as the Chairperson of the National Book Trust during the Uttar Pradesh Government's tenure from 2004 to 2012 is being followed by these people. Not only that, in the UPSC Mains exam of 2007 a question was set to this effect *[English]* The candidates were asked to evaluate the contribution of revolutionary terrorism represented by Bhagat Singh. *[Translation]* Madam, how should we interpret this statement? ... *To portray ... *as. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: I have already said it will not go on record.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Madam, I am not saying this. Please look at this, it is given in writing. Children are asked. ... *(Interruptions)*

* Not recorded

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: All these things will not go on record.

*(Interruptions)...**

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Madam, the individual who held 44 seats for the Congress Party ... *(Interruptions)*.

HON. SPEAKER: Please proceed with your statement.

. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Madam, I would like to say that there should be a discussion on what kind of history is being taught to school children. ... *(Interruptions)* There should be a discussion on what history is being taught in colleges and schools across the country. ... *(Interruptions)* This coalition between the Communist and Congress party is not limited to just West Bengal. ... *(Interruptions)* You have attempted to sabotage the education system of the country. ... *(Interruptions)* The nation will never forgive you for what you have done. ... *(Interruptions)* It is only because of Shri Bhagat Singh who liberated the country so that we can now sit in this House today. ... *(Interruptions)* This country was not liberated by Shri Rahul Gandhi, it was Shri Bhagat Singh who secured our freedom. ...

* Not recorded

(Interruptions) You cannot call Shri Bhagat Singh a terrorist. ...

(Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Smt. Anju Bala, Dr. Heena Vijaykumar Gavit, Shri Nishikant Dubey, Shri Harish Meena, Dr. Manoj Rajoria, Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel and Shri Dushyant Singh are allowed to associate themselves with the issue raised by Shri Anurag Singh Thakur.

The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.05 p.m.

13.04 hours

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Five Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.10 hours

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Ten Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

(Shri Ramen Deka *in the Chair*)

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377 *

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, the Matters under Rule 377 shall be laid on the Table of the House. Members who have been permitted to raise matters under Rule 377 today and are desirous of laying them, may personally hand over the text of the matter at the Table of the House within twenty minutes.

Only those matters shall be treated as laid for which the text of the matter has been received at the Table within the stipulated time. The rest will be treated as lapsed.

* Treated as laid on the Table

(i) Need to set up medical colleges in all the districts under Hamirpur Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh.

[Translation]

KUNWAR PUSHPENDRA SINGH CHANDEL (HAMIRPUR): I wish to address the issue of improving healthcare facilities in All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and the establishment of new medical colleges in every district of my parliamentary constituency, Hamirpur. While the average expenditure on medical treatment by patients in Uttar Pradesh is significantly higher than the national average, my parliamentary constituency faces a serious challenge in providing timely and adequate healthcare facilities. A large number of patients from Bundelkhand travel to AIIMS Delhi for the treatment of chronic and serious illnesses. However, despite waiting for a long time, they do not receive adequate treatment. The AIIMS institutions are not keeping pace with the continuous increase in the number of patients.

In the entire Bundelkhand region, with a population of 1.5 crores, there are fewer than 5 medical colleges whereas in my Parliamentary Constituency of Hamirpur, there is not a single medical college. Patients are forced to either borrow money or sell their land to travel to AIIMS Delhi for treatment, and they have to stay outside the AIIMS institution in very helpless conditions. Most of the patients and their families who seek treatment at AIIMS Delhi are daily wage workers. During their treatment, they lose their source of income as well. Due to the complex administrative procedures and

the inappropriate treatment they receive, they often suffer from depression and sometimes they resort to extreme measures.

Therefore, I urge the Government of India to increase the capacity of AIIMS institutions on a top priority basis. Immediate treatment should be provided for serious and chronic patients whose cases have been pending for a long time and who have already received assistance from the Prime Minister's Fund. Administrative procedures for treatment should be simplified and doctors should be made more sensitive towards patients. Additionally, proper arrangements for accommodation and food should be made for patients and their attendants coming from outside AIIMS Delhi. Moreover, I request the immediate establishment of medical colleges in the Hamirpur- Mahoba-Tindwari districts of my Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh.

(ii) Need to open a branch of Nationalised Bank at Bilhara in Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh.

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAYAN YADAV (SAGAR): In my Lok Sabha Parliamentary constituency, the village of Bilhara Raja in Sagar district has a population of approximately 15 thousand, and around 1 lakh people reside in the surrounding areas. Currently, the Government is implementing processes like Jan Dhan and DBT wherein subsidies for all Governmental schemes are transferred directly into the beneficiary's bank accounts. However, there is not a single Government (Nationalised) bank in Bilhara, forcing people to travel 30-40 km for their banking needs.

Therefore, I request the Government to issue a directive for the opening of a Nationalised Bank in Bilhara.

(iii) Need to set up Solar Power corridor in Bellary Parliamentary constituency of Karnataka

[English]

SHRI B. SRIRAMULU (BELLARY): With an average rainfall of 1152 mm for Karnataka, Bellary district gets an average of 638 mm rainfall. With inadequate irrigation facility and below average rainfall, the climate is not very conducive for agriculture as only 35 percent land is used for agriculture. Moreover, the plateau landscape does not offer much scope to the people of the region to pursue agriculture.

I would like to bring to the attention of the Government the announcement made by Shri Rajnath Singh Ji during the Lok Sabha campaign regarding bringing solar power Corridor to the region.

Large tracts of land remain idle and rainfall is very scanty, which offer great scope for solar power. Moreover, the high level and low level canal of the Tungabhadra Dam runs into around 400 kilometers on which the solar panels can be fitted for power generation with no requirement of additional land.

We are proud that our Government is giving priority on renewable source of energy, particularly the solar power. I would request the Government, particularly the Minister of Coal and Power to take cognizance of the need of my constituency for initiating solar power corridor for the development of the region.

(iv) Need to ensure admission of children belonging to Economically Weaker Sections and Disadvantaged Groups in private unaided schools as per laid down norms and standards of Right to Education Act, 2009 in all the States particularly in Uttar Pradesh.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJENDRA AGARWAL (MEERUT): According to Section 12 (1) (C) of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, there is a provision to admit children from economically weaker sections (EWS) and disadvantaged groups in Class I/Pre-primary classes in private recognized schools, at least up to 25% of the seating capacity. According to the District Information System for Education (DISE) data in 2013-14, out of 21.1 lakh seats available under this section in private schools across the country, only 6.1 lakh (about 29%) seats were filled, out of which almost half (3.2 lakh) seats were filled only in the states of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. In Uttar Pradesh, out of 5.84 lakh seats available under this section, only 3.62%, i.e. only 21,186 seats were filled. The resulting situation is that even after 6 years of passing the law, a large section of the population is deprived of the right to compulsory education.

I request the Government to form a committee to identify and address all obstacles in the implementation of this provision in Uttar Pradesh and other States and to ensure that the benefits reach the needy people within the prescribed timeframe. Subsequently, necessary directives should be issued to the State Governments accordingly.

(v) Need to address the problem of shortage of drinking water in Sikar Parliamentary Constituency, Rajasthan.

SHRI SUMEDHANAND SARASWATI (SIKAR): In Rajasthan, there is a significant issue of clean drinking water across the entire State. The State Government is working diligently on this matter. However, due to the lack of resources, the problem cannot be completely resolved. In such a situation, special assistance from the Central Government is needed to resolve this issue, ensuring adequate drinking water facilities for the people.

Approximately 80 percent of my constituency, Sikar has been declared a dark zone and the remaining areas are also not in a satisfactory condition. In areas where there is water, the fluoride content is higher. In such a situation, Sikar could be connected through the Kumbha Lift Project or other projects to provide water for drinking through canals. For this, special assistance from the Central Government is required.

**(vi) Need to set up vegetables and fruits based Food Industry in
Maharajganj Parliamentary Constituency, Bihar.**

SHRI JANARDAN SINGH SIGRIWAL (MAHARAJGANJ): I urge the Government to establish food technology-based food processing units in areas that produce vegetables and fruits in my Parliamentary Constituency Maharajganj, Bihar. It is to be noted that my parliamentary constituency includes the northern parts of Panapur, Taraiya, and Mashrak in Saran district, Bihar, as well as the riverbank and diary areas of the Gandak River. Similarly, the Manjhi area of Saran district is also part of my parliamentary constituency and is situated along the banks of the Saryu River. The people residing along the banks of these two rivers own Diara land across the Gandak River and the Saryu River, towards the north and south respectively. On this land, they predominantly cultivate a variety of vegetables such as pointed gourd, watermelon, muskmelon, cucumber, sweet potato, bottle gourd, ridge gourd, sponge gourd, bitter gourd, and potatoes, producing them in abundance. In addition to these areas, the Diara regions throughout the entire Saran division have a significantly high number of farmers who are producers of various vegetables and fruits. The Diara region encompasses approximately thousands of hectares of land where the production of vegetables and fruits takes place. The vegetables and fruits produced here are sent in sufficient quantities by traders for business purposes to various regions of the country such as Varanasi, Allahabad,

Kanpur, Delhi, Kolkata, Patna, Guwahati, and other areas. In this regard, establishing industrial units based on food technology within our Parliamentary Constituency can provide increased benefits and employment opportunities to the people of the entire Saran division, along with the local farmers.

Hence, I once again request the Government to kindly take necessary action to establish a large-scale food industrial unit in one of the following locations within my parliamentary constituency Jalalpur, Manjhi, Ekma, Maharajganj, Goriya Kothi, Bhagwanpur, Mashrak, Panapur and Taraiya.

(vii) Need to prepare a fresh list of BPL families to facilitate extension of social security benefits to all the eligible BPL families.

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (RACHI): The current Government is making an effort to ensure that senior citizens, physically disabled persons, and widowed women receive pension benefits to become fully self-reliant. However, in reality, this is not being effectively achieved. From submitting applications to getting them approved, these groups are facing numerous difficulties. In this regard, it has been stipulated that elderly individuals, physically challenged persons, and widowed women who possess a BPL card will be eligible for pension benefits. However, individuals in these categories are being deprived of old age pensions, disability pensions, and widow pensions if they do not possess a BPL card. It is regrettable to inform with sorrow that BPL cards are not being issued for these categories as well causing needy individuals to be deprived of the benefits of old-age pension, disability pension, and widow pension. Consequently, the noble intentions of this Government's welfare initiatives are not being fully achieved. People who are not eligible for a BPL card have BPL cards and those who should have a BPL card do not have one.

I request that a survey be conducted at the Panchayat level to prepare a new list of BPL. This will facilitate the identification of all elderly individuals aged 60 and above as well as persons with disabilities, widows, and economically disadvantaged individuals, enabling them to receive

pension benefits. Provision should be made for this and rules should be simplified in this regard.

(viii) Need to increase the number of attempts for appearing in Indian Engineering Services to 6 and also enhance the maximum age limit to 32 years.

SHRI MAHESH GIRI (EAST DELHI): In the prestigious and very important examinations of the country like Indian Administrative Services (IAS) and Indian Engineering Services (IES), the general category students get fewer attempts than the students of other reserved categories and the age limit is also less. In 2014, the Union Public Service Commission increased the number of attempts for general category students in the Civil Services Examination from 4 to 6. Along with this, the age limit was also increased from 30 years to 32 years. This decision was very beneficial and relieving for lakhs of aspirants of the general category. But even today, the age limit and number of attempts for general category students in the Indian Engineering Services examinations are 30 years and 4 years respectively.

I request that, since both examinations are for Category 'A' posts and are conducted by the UPSC, the number of attempts for general category students in the Indian Engineering Services examination be increased to 6 attempts and the age limit be raised to 32 years. This will benefit millions of aspirants from the general category.

(ix) Need to expedite issuance of C.M.R.T.S. frequency licence to Gujarat Police.

DR. KIRIT P SOLANKI (AHMEDABAD): I wish to bring to the Government's attention that the State of Gujarat has requested a CMRTS frequency license from the Communication Department in Delhi to modernize the police communication system. At present, the digital trunk radio system is progressing in the state of Gujarat and to operate this system smoothly, a frequency license is essential.

The Gujarat Police has submitted the necessary forms and other documents along with fees to the Communication Department in Delhi to obtain the frequency license. Despite this, the frequency license has not been issued yet. In this context, the Department of Telecommunications in Delhi has completed all technical procedures. The Department of Telecommunications in Delhi has requested non-objection certificates from two departments. After receiving the non-objection certificate from the Ahmedabad Telecom Region, the Department of Telecommunications in Delhi raised the issue of pending spectrum charges. The Gujarat Betar Police Department has already deposited an annual spectrum charge of INR 22,87,89,417. Currently, the Department of Communications in Delhi has shown outstanding dues of INR 93,51,17,673. To settle this, the Gujarat Police DGP has also written a letter to the Secretary of Communication and Information Technology in this regard.

Hence, I request that the outstanding amount be waived off and the Gujarat Police Department be provided with the frequency license.

(x) Need to take suitable measures for flood management in North Bihar.

SHRIMATI RAMA DEVI (SHEOHAR): 76 percent of Bihar's total population depends on agriculture, with more than one-third relying on rainfall for irrigation in their fields. A part of Bihar is affected by floods every year, while another part is affected by drought. The permanent solutions proposed by the Central Government to address the issues of floods and drought in this regard have not been implemented yet. Several districts in North Bihar are affected by floods, resulting in damage worth crores of rupees to crops, loss of lives of many individuals, and the deaths of hundreds of animals. This year, a total of 20 lakh people in 2152 villages across 43 blocks in the districts of Kishanganj, Purnia, Araria, Katihar, Muzaffarpur, Supaul, Saharsa, and Gopalganj have been affected by floods. The Government's approach towards taking concrete measures to prevent floods, such as constructing a high-level dam on the Kosi River, a high-level dam at Chisapani on the Kamla River, and a high-level dam at Nunthar on the Bagmati River, has been disappointing. The funds allocated by the Government for the repair of the Sone canal have not been utilized for this purpose yet.

I request the Government to implement a permanent solution to the recurring flood problem in Bihar, which will help increase the production of food grains and vegetables in the country.

(xi) Need to name IIM, Shilong after the name of former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL (BIKANER): Dr. Abdul Kalam, the former President of India and Missile Man, has always been respected and a guiding figure for the younger generation. Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam took his last breath on the campus of IIM Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya. In his final address to the management students, he said that Earth is the only habitable planet in the entire universe. Presently, we have polluted it. Our collective duty is to make it habitable for all. While expressing concerns about the environment, he bid farewell to this world due to a sudden cardiac arrest. Presently, the IIM, Shillong is being developed in the name of former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi, and there is a proposal to name it Shri Rajiv Gandhi Management Institute. In this regard, I would like to state that Shri Rajiv Gandhi never visited IIM Shillong, and he has no association whatsoever with this educational institution. Our former President indeed took his last breath there, and that too while expressing concerns for the environment.

Therefore, I request the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Government of India to rename IIM Shillong after the late Dr. Abdul Kalam, so that he remains forever inspirational in the hearts of the youth, and we can pay our sincere homage to him.

(xii) Need to provide adequate compensation to farmers of eastern Uttar Pradesh who lost their crops due to adverse weather condition and incidents of fire.

SHRI SHARAD TRIPATHI (SANT KABIR NAGAR): In the districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, the Rabi crop had to endure double damage this year. On the one hand, farming suffered adverse weather, while on the other hand, the remaining crop suffered fire. The wheat crop spread over lakhs of acres, was destroyed due to adverse weather conditions and fires that broke out in various places. Farmers and their families are facing heavy difficulties due to the losses incurred by the crops.

My request to the Central Government is to provide adequate and fair compensation to the farmers in Eastern Uttar Pradesh whose crops have been destroyed.

(xiii) Need to construct an elevated flyover road at Bhadsora Chauraha on N.H.-79 in Chittorgarh Parliamentary Constituency, Rajasthan.

SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH JOSHI (CHITTORGARH): I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister of Road Transport and Highways to Bhadsoda Chauraha (Bagund) located on National Highway 79 in my Parliamentary Constituency of Chittorgarh. This intersection experiences extremely heavy traffic congestion. Hundreds of large and small vehicles pass through here every day. The famous religious site of Sanwaliya ji- Mandafiya is associated with the Mewar region and is connected to this intersection by a 7 km long divider road. Similarly, the road leading to Shani Maharaj Ali is also connected to this intersection. The temple of Sanwaliya Seth's place of origin is located right at this intersection. Besides, the Bhadesar Bheruji Temple, Shakti Peeth Avari Mata Temple, and the famous Dargah of Kapasan are also connected to this intersection. Every day, thousands of devotees visit these places of worship. On no-moon days (Amavasya) and Saturdays, the surrounding area often experiences traffic jams due to heavier traffic. Similarly, commercial vehicles also pass through this intersection in large numbers. The proposed expansion to 6 lanes at this highly utilized intersection will be implemented. After the expansion, there could be some disruption in the arrangements here. The construction of an elevated flyover road is the ultimate solution to address all these issues. Through this, those who need to travel straight from here will be able to exit over the bridge, and

the rest of the traffic at that intersection will continue smoothly under the bridge. The construction of the bridge will not only facilitate the movement of people to and from religious places but also provide employment opportunities for traders at the intersection. Therefore, considering the public interest, I demand the construction of an elevated flyover road at this intersection in the proposed 6 lanes.

(xiv) Need to start work on Salgaon Drinking Water Project in Mount Abu, Rajasthan to address the drinking water problem of the city.

SHRI DEVAJI M PATEL (JALORE): The Salgaon Project, initiated three decades ago, was aimed at resolving the crucial water scarcity issue in the mountainous tourist destination of Mount Abu. Here in the Airforce, Army, and CRPF hostels, in addition to the school children studying, annually more than 22 Lakh tourists from both domestic and international locations also visit. It is estimated that this number increases by approximately two lakhs each year. At present, the PHED has access to the Upper Kodra Dam and Lower Kodra Dam for the city's water supply, which together provide approximately 41 M.C.F.T. of water storage capacity. Currently, the city's water supply requirement is at least 112 M.C.F.T. decrease in rainfall exacerbates the water crisis. In Mount Abu, there is a severe shortage of groundwater, leading to almost no water even in wells and hand pumps further intensifying the drinking water crisis. In such a situation, Mount Abu could face the alarming prospect of evacuation.

I request the Central Government to expedite work on the Salgaon Project for drinking water in the mountainous tourist destination of Mount Abu.

(xv) Need to take steps to curb road accidents in the country.

[English]

SHRI RAVNEET SINGH (LUDHIANA): India has only one percent of the world's vehicles but account for 10 percent of the world's road accidents. More people die in road accidents daily compared to any other crime or law & order problem, but there is no time bound plan to check accidents.

As per the National Crime Record Bureau Report of 2014, in India 387 deaths and 1308 injuries per day are just due to road accidents. Most of the victims of accidents around 60.7% are aged between 15 and 44 years. As per the report of the WHO and Global Road Safety Partnership, driving under the influence of alcohol is responsible for 30 to 50 percent of road deaths.

We are losing our youth in avoidable road accidents. There is an urgent need to check the two major killers "Speed and Drunken Driving" which can be tackle with "Enforcement of Traffic Rules and Awareness amongst the Road Users".

The Government should urgently take steps for the closure of hundreds of Liquor Shops along the Highways and deploy more Traffic Police on our National and State Highways to check over-speeding.

(xvi) Need to put in place a mechanism to prevent man-animal conflict particularly in Keonjhar Parliamentary Constituency, Odisha.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SAKUNTALA LAGURI (KEONJHAR): I would like to draw the Government's attention to regions where mining and mineral activities are underway, causing wild animals from the forests to venture into populated areas. In many places where there are villages of tribal people, these animals have not only attacked tribal communities but have also caused significant damage to agriculture, resulting in the loss of hard-earned resources of impoverished tribal individuals. According to a report by India Today, the highest number of elephants have been killed in my Parliamentary Constituency of Keonjhar due to several reasons, and in the country, more than 100 people are killed every year due to attacks by wild animals and elephants. Those who are killed by these wild animals often do not receive adequate and timely compensation. The Government has established and implemented various provisions for the conservation of wild animals in such circumstances.

My request to the Government is to create effective provisions to protect wildlife and safeguard the lives and property of people from their attacks, and to enforce them strictly.

(xvii) Need to shut down waste dumping ground at Deonar in South Central Mumbai Parliamentary Constituency.

SHRI RAHUL SHEWALE (MUMBAI SOUTH CENTRAL): In my Parliamentary Constituency, there is a large dumping ground in the Deonar area where garbage from Mumbai is dumped. Every day, the toxic smoke from the burning garbage spreads in the Deonar and Mulund areas, affecting thousands to millions of residents who suffer from lung cancer, asthma, and other serious respiratory diseases. Extensive correspondence and meetings have been conducted to relocate this dumping ground, but the local administration of Mumbai has yet to take the necessary steps to address this issue. The dumping ground in Deonar, which spans approximately 132 hectares, needs to be scientifically closed and the area restored to greenery. My suggestion is that the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change issue directives and send the matter to the Green Tribunal to declare this area a green zone, thereby prompting the Maharashtra government to take action.

The Mumbai Municipal Corporation has deployed only 32 employees to prevent the dumping of garbage in this dumping ground. Hundreds of women, men, and children who scavenge for plastic and other useful items from the garbage come here daily and end up suffering from serious illnesses, which also affect the general public and no one cares about the law and order here. Some groups of contractors are illicitly profiting from this garbage.

It is imperative to take measures to protect the residents of this area from the harm and illnesses caused by the spread of this garbage in my parliamentary constituency. Therefore, I urge the Government to form a Central team to visit the Deonar dumping site. Additionally, I request the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs to appoint para-military forces to halt dumping at the Deonar dumping site and to prevent illegal scavenging activities.

(xviii) Regarding drinking water scarcity in Telangana

[English]

SHRI CH. MALLA REDDY (MALKAJGIRI): There is an alarming depletion of groundwater table from 6.83 ft to 24.57 ft in most parts of the Telangana. The depletion of water table has been found alarmingly high in Karimnagar, Nalgonda, Ranga Reddy, Mahabubnagar, Nizamabad and Medak districts. This has strained the drinking water sources.

The deficit in annual average rainfall till January-end in these districts, which was ranging from 27 per cent to 50 per cent, has taken a heavy toll on the groundwater table as well as on water bodies such as tanks and reservoirs.

Singur, Manjira, Nizamsagar and Sriramsagar reservoirs are going dry and has affected the water table in their catchment and service areas badly.

Official sources admitted that drinking water scarcity is likely to stare at more than half of nearly 23,000 habitations in the State before summer season itself due to strain on the groundwater sources of protected water supply schemes and groundwater table in case of hand pumps.

The Government has already commenced supply of drinking water through tankers to some habitations in some districts. But it is not reaching all households.

Meanwhile, the State Government has recently released Rs. 55 crore from State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) to Collectors of the affected districts to mitigate drinking water problem in 231 drought-hit Mandals.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to prepare a contingency action plan and release substantial funds to Telangana Government to tackle the drinking water problem during this summer.

14.11 hours**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (General), 2016-17
Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region***[English]*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: The House will now take up discussion and voting on Demand No. 24 relating to the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.

Hon. Member Shri Jitendra Choudhary whose cut motions to the Demand for Grant in respect of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region for the year 2016-17 have been circulated may, if he desires to move his cut motions, send slip to the Table within 15 minutes indicating the serial numbers of the cut motions he would like to move. Only those cut motions, slip in respect of which is received at the Table within the stipulated time, will be treated as moved.

A list showing the serial numbers of cut motions treated as moved will be put up on the Notice Board shortly thereafter. In case the member finds any discrepancy in the list, he may kindly bring it to the notice of the Officer at the Table immediately.

Motion moved:

“That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the fourth

column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India, out of the Consolidated Fund of India, to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 2017, in respect of the head of Demand entered in the Second column thereof against Demand No. 24 relating to the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.”

Demands for Grants (General), 2016-17 in respect of Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region submitted to the vote of Lok Sabha

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	[Translation] Amount of Demands for Grants on Account voted by the House on March 2016		Amount of Demands for Grants submitted to the vote of the House	
1	2	3		4	
		Revenue (Rs.)	Capital (Rs.)	Revenue (Rs.)	Capital (Rs.)
24	Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region	325,17,00,000	108,17,00,000	1625,84,00,000	540,83,00,000

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (INNER MANIPUR): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I rise to debate on the Demands for Grants, General Budget, 2016-17 under the control of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER).

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Since this deliberation, the Demands for Grants, is for the North East, the Chairman is also from the North East and the initiator of the Debate is also from North East.

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA: Thank you for your kind interruption.

The Ministry of DoNER is responsible for the matters relating to planning, execution and monitoring of development schemes and projects in the North Eastern Region. Its vision is to accelerate the pace of socio-economic development of the Region so that it may enjoy growth parity with the rest of the country.

Sir, why and how the Ministry of DoNER came into being? I would like to go a little back to the history. Previously, the North Eastern Region comprised seven States. Now, we are eight States – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. They have special features. The seven States of the North Eastern Region barring Sikkim are linked to the rest of India through the 26 kilometres long Siliguri Corridor commonly known as Chicken's neck. They, therefore, form an integrated geographical unit.

Sikkim became officially a part of the North Eastern Region in 2002. Around 98 per cent of NER's border is bounded by India's international neighbours. The region offers great diversity of topography, climatic conditions, language, religion, ethnicity and yet has common developmental challenges. Barring Assam, the other States are hilly. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram are overwhelmingly tribal. The other four States also have substantial tribal population. Infrastructure deficit in the region, particularly, connectivity in all forms is acute. Some States are yet to be connected by trains. The economy of the region is overwhelmingly agricultural. For the above reasons, the development challenges for these eight States require special attention.

Therefore, the Union Government had set up the Department of Development of North Eastern Region in September, 2001 and upgraded it to a Ministry in May, 2004. Since it has become a full-fledged Ministry, we wish that the Ministry of DoNER is to be headed by a Union Cabinet Minister.

The North Eastern Council consists of the Governors and the Chief Ministers of the region. When the North Eastern Council meet, the DoNER Minister, being the Chairperson of the Council, has to preside over the meeting. He is having some problems in taking decisions on certain points.

The Ministry of DoNER is a unique Ministry in the Union Government as its activities are regional and more importantly advocating the special needs of the region to the other Ministries.

Sir, let us also know as to what the North Eastern Council is and the North Eastern Council *vis-à-vis* the Ministry of DoNER. The North Eastern Council is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the North Eastern Region. The North Eastern Council was constituted way back in 1971 by an Act of Parliament. The constitution of the Council has marked the beginning of a new chapter of concerted and planned endeavour for the rapid development of the region.

Over the last 45 years, NEC has been instrumental in setting in motion a new economic endeavour aimed at removing the basic handicaps that stood in the way of normal development of the Region and has ushered in an era of new hope in this backward area full of great potentialities.

Sir, the budgetary allocation of this Ministry – with all humility I would say this – is not very encouraging. The amount of Demands for Grants submitted to the vote of the House stands at Rs.540.83 crore Capital as against Rs.1,625.84 crore Revenue.

Let us refer to the Budget at a Glance 2016-17. On page 14 under the Head ‘Central Plan Outlay by Ministries/Departments’, the figures indicate a mere routine type of budgetary allocation for the DoNER Ministry. The Actuals for 2014-15 was Rs.370 crore. The BE for 2015-16 was Rs.537 crore. The RE for 2015-16 was Rs.430 crore. The BE for 2016-17 is Rs.800 crore.

Again on page 18 at Sl. No. 24 under the Head ‘State and UT Plan Outlay by Ministries/Departments’ similar statistics have been provided for the Ministry of DoNER. The Actuals for 2014-15 was Rs.1,325 crore. The BE for 2015-16 was Rs.1,798 crore. The RE for 2015-16 was Rs.1,543 crore. Now, the BE for 2016-17 is only Rs.1,600 crore. I repeat that it is only Rs.1,600 crore.

So, again under the Head ‘Major Programmes under Central Assistance for State Plans’, the amount allocated under the Central Pool of Resources for the North Eastern Region stands at Rs.900 crore only.

The amount allocated under the Scheme for the North Eastern Council is less than Rs.800 crore, that is, Rs.795 crore to be exact. The amount allocated under the Border Area Development Programme is Rs.990 crore. The amount allocated under the Special Accelerated Road Development Programme for NER – this is very much important and I have mentioned already that there is no connectivity at all – stands at a mere Rs.5,000 crore.

Now, I come to the Schemes of North Eastern Council and NLCPR, Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources. The fund allocation for these Schemes is too less. I am afraid that it may not be able to serve any purpose at all. It appears that this Government is not at all interested to develop the North Eastern Region.

The Ministry of DoNER and NLCPR have a long history. We have been given at least 10 per cent of the Gross Budgetary Support from 52 non-

exempted Ministries. This 10 per cent is accumulating. Of course, they made another change in the NLCPR and they call it as the new NLCPR-Central. In that new NLCPR-Central, they deposit this money and use that. I wish that this money will be spent. While talking about spending money in that part of the country, there is always a problem. It has always been reported about the non submission of the Utilization Certificates. I do not know how we have to monitor it. Now, with the help of advanced technology, perhaps, we can monitor it through the electronic way, and we can always monitor it from here. So, seeing that, I think the Utilisation Certificates will not be a problem for spending money.

Coming to this important area of spending, there is another reason attached to it. It is about law and order situation. The law and order situation in that part of the country has been known to us for a long time. Particularly, I come from the State of Manipur. As you know, we became a Princely State when the British suzerainty lapsed.

There are many provisions in the Constitution of India relating to NER. I would refer to three Parts.

In Part IX of the Constitution of India, the Panchayats are being controlled under Article 243 wherein every village/rural area will be covered by the Panchayats.

In Part X, the Scheduled and Tribal areas are being controlled and protected under Article 244 and 244A of our Constitution.

In Part XXI, Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions are there. Article 371A is for Nagaland; Article 371B is for Assam; Article 371C is for Manipur; Article 371F is for Sikkim, Article 371G is for Mizoram; and Article 371H is for Arunachal Pradesh.

These are the protections given under the Constitution of India

All the more, above this, there is the Sixth Schedule of Article 242(2) and Article 275(1) wherein the Administration of the tribal areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram are controlled.

So, this is very interesting part. In some of the areas, there is Sixth Schedule and in other areas, there is no Sixth Schedule.

As I mentioned earlier, my State and the other parts of the North-Eastern Region of the country have been often in the news allegedly for wrong reasons. This is perhaps because of the fact that the history of the region has not been fully understood in this country. There is nothing wrong in it. Our looks are different, our traditions are different and our foods are very deliciously different.

When we describe our country, we often mention from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Gujarat to Bengal. Beyond Bengal now, it has been Bengal Eastern Frontier and still it is. Even the national anthem does mention only up to Banga, that is, Bengal. Now, I would humbly put in this House that Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram form the easternmost boundary of this country.

Sir, I would now confine myself to my State, Manipur because of the law and order problem. What is happening there, we have to go to the history, at least. I would not take more than five minutes in narrating the history.

My State was an independent kingdom till we lost our independence to the British in 1891 in our Anglo-Manipur War. After this, Manipur remained a Princely State. None of the freedom fighters including Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru did reach Manipur during the Freedom Struggle because we did have a regulatory system requiring outsiders to obtain a permit for entry into and exit from Manipur. This regulatory system was recognised by the then Government of India in 1948; and after Manipur was merged into the Union of India in 1949, this permit system was abolished by the then Chief Commissioner of Manipur in 1950. As a result, Manipur is now facing a huge demographic challenge, which is very, very important in understanding the law and order.

Sir, with the lapse of the British suzerainty following the adoption of the Indian Independence Act on August 15, 1947, Manipur regained its sovereign independence. Manipur became independent legally and technically notwithstanding the signing of the Instrument of Accession and the Standstill Agreement on August 11, 1947.

Sir, during this transition period before the lapse of the British suzerainty, reacting to the changes in the world around him as well as developments in other Princely States in the Indian Subcontinent, the

Maharaja of Manipur set up a Committee to draft a Constitution of a new Government in Manipur. This task was completed in 1947, and the Manipur State Constitution Act, 1947 was passed. The Manipur State Hill Peoples (Administration) Regulation, 1947 was made. The Rule for the Administration of the Manipur State, 1947 was promulgated; and it came into force from 1st July, 1947 overriding all previous laws and rules. In early 1948, the first election of the State of Manipur was held. Thus, Manipur had a State Assembly which was elected on the basis of adult franchise in 1948.

Our Maharaja was called to Shillong, the capital of Assam and made to sign the Manipur Merger Agreement on September, 21, 1949 to merge with the Union of India on 15th October 1949. On adoption of the constitution of India on 26th January, 1950, Manipur became a part C State and then a Chief Commissioner State under Union Territory (Laws) Act, 1950 assisted by a Council of Advisors with five members, three from the valley and two from the hill areas. This continued till the election of 30 members of the Territorial Council in 1957. The Territorial Council was later converted into the Territorial Legislative Assembly in 1963, consisting of 30 elected and two nominated members. The Assembly started functioning from 23rd July, 1963. Manipur had a Legislative Assembly consisting of 30 elected members under the Government of Union Territories Act, 1963.

Manipur became a full-fledged State on 21st January, 1972 by the North-Eastern (Reorganisation) Act, 1971. The structure of the State Legislature is unicameral. The State Legislative Assembly now consists of 60

members. Manipur has two Lok Sabha Members and one Rajya Sabha Member. Now, Mrs. Mary Kom is nominated to Rajya Sabha and she took oath yesterday as Rajya Sabha Member.

Manipur is credited with introducing polo to the world and also the famous Ras Leela of Manipur. The UNESCO recognized Nat Sankritana of Manipur. The freedom fighters like Bir Tikendrajit, Thangal General, Paona Brajabashi, Rani Gaidinlu to mention a few and of course, Olympic medallist Mary Kom.

I come to the most interesting part of Manipur history. That is, Manipur's position in the country vis-à-vis the constitution of India. We the people of Manipur feel that had Manipur been merged into the Union of India as a full-fledged State at the time of the merger in 1949, most of the problems the State is now facing might not have occurred.

I repeat again that had Manipur been merged into the Union of India as a full-fledged State at the time of the merger in 1949, most of the problems the State is now facing might not have occurred.

The fact that it remained a part-C State with an administrator till 1950, a Union Territory till 1956 and the Statehood has come really very late in 1972.

Sir, in 1963, when the erstwhile autonomous District of Naga Hills of Assam was granted Statehood, the two princely States of Manipur and Tripura could have been granted Statehood. Unfortunately, this did not

happen. These demand driven actions of the Government of India do more harm than good.

We know that till Manipur attained Statehood, the people did not have any say whatsoever. But in 1972, when Manipur was granted full-fledged Statehood, all that Manipur had before its merger into the Union of India could have been restored to Manipur by the Union Government.

These include the protection of territorial integrity of the State, the regulatory system of entry into and exit from Manipur by outsiders, the Tribal status for all the indigenous people of the State, the redeeming and renewal of Rs. 500 tax/tribute for Kabaw Valley by the Burmese Government under the Treaty of Yandaboo. Unfortunately, these things did not happen. Even the merger agreement had not been implemented at all and had been completely forgotten. What a tragedy!

Sir, Article 371 C of the constitution of India pertaining to Manipur was also introduced through the 27th Constitution Amendment, 1971 and became effective only from 15th February, 1972 which is very late and insignificant.

The State of Manipur and other North Eastern States had been facing a serious insurgent movement around the beginning of 1960s which in my opinion, requires a political solution. Instead, the Government of India promulgated Armed Forces (Special) Powers Act, 1958 (AFSPA).

During the promulgation of this Act, many lives were lost, many people disappeared, crimes against women including rape were rampant, and many women became widows. This AFSPA is really draconian and a black law.

Many committees, commissions, conferences including most recent Justice Verma Committee and UN agencies recommended repeal of the Act. In my State Manipur, one lady Irom Sharmila Devi has been on fast since 2002 demanding repeal of this AFSPA. Nothing concrete has come out so far except the fact that the Government of Manipur had lifted AFSPA in the seven Assembly segments in the capital Imphal of Manipur. I have been always urging the Government of India for the immediate repeal of AFSPA but of no avail till date.

In order to safeguard the territorial integrity of Manipur, I have moved a constitution amendment Bill twice to insert an extra Article 371 CC. The Article states that "Article 3 of the Constitution of India shall not apply in respect of the State of Manipur". Till now, this Bill does not get the space for consideration.

Sir, at the moment there have been three Bills passed by the Manipur Assembly and they are waiting for the assent of the President of India. These Bills are good Bills and will help protecting the indigenous people of Manipur for all times to come. I hope, very soon the President of India will give his assent.

We are all very serious for a peaceful settlement to the vexed Naga issues. Unfortunately, in 2001, the Indo-NSCN (IM) ceasefire agreement was extended beyond territorial limits. Because of this, in June 2002 there was a huge upsurge/uprising in the State of Manipur. Sir, 18 innocent people died and the State Assembly building and many other Government offices were burnt down and this happened during the NDA regime.

Last year again on 3rd August, a framework agreement was signed between the Government of India and NSCN (IM). What was there in the framework, it appears, nobody knows. Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh Governments are demanding the details of the framework agreement without much success. Is it not something really very serious? It is because the NSCN (IM) does speak, among others, of including the demand of some sort of integration of Naga people of the neighbouring States by expanding their territory and also of shared democracy with the Government of India. Solution of Naga problem should never be against the interest of the neighbouring States.

Sir, considering all these aspects, I do urge upon the Union Government to take all possible steps within the framework of the Constitution of India to meet the aspiration of the people of Manipur, the erstwhile princely State, at the time of its merger with the Union of India in the best interest of all concerned. Thank you very much.

CUT MOTIONS

(TOKEN)

*[English]***SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY (TRIPURA EAST):** I beg to move:

THAT THE DEMAND UNDER THE HEAD MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (PAGE 116) BE REDUCED BY RS. 100.

Need to allocate adequate funds under the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) for speedy development of North-Eastern Region. (1)

Need to set up more 'Border Haats' at the Indo-Bangla and Indo-Myanmar borders. (2)

Need to set up 'Border Haats' at Indo-China Border. (3)

Need to allocate adequate funds to augment the infrastructure of all Land Custom Stations on the international borders (4)

Need to set up an Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Sabroom on Indo-Bangla border. (5)

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY (GUWAHATI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, according to my opinion, concept of the country is not the boundary of the country alone or its landmass. India has got 32,87,263 square kilometres of landmass and we have a population of nearly 128 crore in the country.

The Prime Minister, who cares for the people, is the best Prime Minister. So, in this regard I must say that the hon. Prime Minister is the best Prime Minister in the country. He cares for the nook and corner of the country, including the North-Eastern Region.

All the years after Independence till the NDA Government came to power, the North-Eastern Region was considered as a liability for the country. No successive Governments, I mean the Congress Government, never cared for the North-Eastern Region. Even you will be surprised to know that with regard to those officials who are transferred to the North-Eastern Region, their transfer is considered as punishment transfer. If they work in this way, then they never care for that region. They simply pass the days and after six months, they again come back to Delhi or to other good places.

The North-Eastern Region is connected by greater landmass of the country by only 22 kilometres. Only 22 kilometres of landmass joins the North-Eastern Region with the rest of the country. So, this transport bottleneck has created great hardship connectivity. As such, the entire North-Eastern Region remained an isolated one. It simply became a patch of land without people. I think, probably, the previous Congress Government thought

so in that way. All these years, except during the NDA Government, this stark reality was slapped on the face of the North-Eastern Region due to utter negligence, absence of road network, only patch up of rail lines and absence of industry--small or big. No work cluster has been there. Absence of all these has resulted in a very weak economy of the region. Underdevelopment of education system and absence of sustainable and continuous growth left the region high and dry. Presently, there are more than a crore of unemployed people in the North-Eastern Region. In Assam alone, 75 lakh people are unemployed. These people have got no work at all. Every opportunity is there for these people that they may go astray; they may join anywhere; and they may create something which is not wanted, and that happened in the North-Eastern Region. Dangerously, a huge negligence by the previous successive Governments eats the very vitality of the region. What is not there? There are huge forest resources including hundreds of rivers, rare medicinal plants and rare species of animals. There is huge potentiality of development of tourism circuit. But nothing has been done.

The reality is that in 1962 during the Chinese aggression, NE region had been *bade adieu* by the then Prime Minister. Luckily, the Chinese troops had themselves retreated. Otherwise, I think, by this time, the North Eastern people have had to live under the Chinese clutches. Thus, this region had been taken for granted by the successive governments except NDA. Even the officers, as I mentioned earlier, when are transferred to NE region, think it as

a punishment posting. That is why they never work as they should do when they are transferred there.

In the earlier part of the independence, lakhs of East Pakistanis, who are now known as Bangladeshis, had been inspired to enter the NE region to grow more food. I would repeat the words 'grow more food'. They were given land and citizenship rights with an eye on creating a huge vote bank. You may remember the famous saying by the then Congress President: 'So long Ali's are there, the Congress is safe'. Ali means the Muslim people. That is why I say again that the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act was imposed not to drive out infiltrators but to protect them. It is because of this heinous move by the Congress Government, the hills, the grazing lands, provincial grazing reserves (PGRs), riverine areas have been occupied by these people. Now, they are taking inroads into the city areas of the country. Because of the protective attitude of police and civil authorities, they are getting everything from the Government. Thus, there is a huge population imbalance in the region.

I must appreciate that the creation of DoNER Ministry under the leadership of Atal ji in the NDA Government came as a blessing for the region. After the NDA Government, ten years of UPA rule rendered this Ministry worthless. No visible project or work had been undertaken by this Ministry. It had become a skeleton Ministry because no proper fund was allocated, no project had been started and nothing had been created by the Ministry under the leadership of the previous Government. What I am saying

is a fact. You cannot mention any major project that has been completed during the leadership of Shri Manmohan Singh. This Ministry was created by Atal ji and is nursed to the full scope by our visionary and workaholic Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji.

The objective for creation of the DoNER is to ensure integrated socio-economic development of eight States of the NE region – Assam, Tripura, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Sikkim, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. It is the balance development of the region which is seriously wanted. The region as belongs to the eastern part of the country, it is said that the sun rises from here. It is said that India is a land where the sun rises in the East.*[English]*

Bhupen Hazarika, one of the famous singers says: “*Asom amar rupahi Gunoru naai xexh. Bharatore purba dixor xurya uthaa dexh.*” Sun rises in the East but because of the previous Government, there is no brightness on the faces of the youth as no development has taken place.

Our Prime Minister has inspired all the Ministries – not only the DoNER Ministry – to work utmost in this region by allotting their part of fund for it. Only a *deshbhakt*, a genuine lover of the country, who loves the people of the country by heart, can think in this way for the development of each nook and corner of the country.

The present DoNER Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh, visited North-Eastern Region almost once a week to monitor the schemes and to push forward each

and every project so that due to negligence, these projects do not get stalled. ... (*Interruptions*) I am not talking about Assam. Just now, hon. Member from the Manipur spoke. He should demand here to bring back the Kabaw Valley, the famous beautiful valley of Manipur – probably you know it – which the then Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had donated to the Burmese Prime Minister, U Nu. It was I who demanded in this House that this Kabaw Valley should be brought back to the Manipur, to the country because a Prime Minister cannot gift away a piece of land.

Hon. Prime Minister knew it very well that for a highly neglected North-East, it is high time to grow first the economic activity by timely completion of each and every work and project there because timely completion of the projects is the best way for the development of the North-Eastern Region. A sound road network, rail network, electricity, drinking water and water for agriculture, education and brisk industrialization only can bring North-Eastern Region back on the road of development.

It is heartening that scheme-wise, Rs. 33,097 crore have been allocated by the DoNER Ministry. I am grateful to hon. Jitendraji who has really given largesse to the North-Eastern Region. The Budget has restored 90:10 funding pattern for schemes.

A new industrial policy is in the offing and it is coming. I think this policy will help there to establish more industries so that people and youths are able to get jobs and get into different services.

Apart from these, for the overall benefit of the North-East farmers, Organic Farming Mission has been created. It is not only for Sikkim, but for the entire North-Eastern Region. With the introduction of organic farming, people will be benefited. They will not only be able to sell their farm produce at a better price, but they will also be able to export their goods. In the process, they will gain economically also.

According to the hon. Minister for DoNER, under NLCPR, 183 projects have been completed at the cost of Rs. 188 crore and another 54 projects are going on. Similarly, under NEC, 54 ongoing projects are there worth Rs. 722 crore.

For the first time, a green airport is coming up at Pakyong which is the highest place in the country. It will be completed within two to three years. This is a landmark success on the part of the DoNER Minister and on the part of our respected Prime Minister.

Another landmark achievement is a 45 kilometre Savok-Rangpo railway line. There will be 14 tunnels and more than 28 bridges in that area.

Besides, the DoNER Ministry has given emphasis on the skill development and road sector. Hon. Dr. Jitendra Singh has taken a huge initiative on Act East Policy, not only Look East Policy. I think, if proper activities are done, then only the North-Eastern Region can grow properly.

Moreover, a sum of Rs. 33,097 crore has been allocated for NE Region under 56 Ministries. Every Ministry has given the required funds to North-Eastern Region for different projects in different areas.

In Assam, there is already an imbalance so far as population is concerned. Already there are topographical concerns in the country because of the huge number of infiltrations taking place. The Assam Government is not taking any steps to drive out the infiltrators even from the heart of the city of Guwahati. I have trust on my part that the hon. Minister for DoNER, Dr. Jitendra Singhji, will surely take care of it and have a thorough record of the infiltrators who are intruding into the North-Eastern Region, especially in Assam. I think, it is high time to do so. Otherwise, there will be no place like Assam, no place like North-Eastern Region. *[Translation]* The situation has escalated due to the Congress, what more can I say? There are no words to express it.

[English]

Sir, I am just concluding. In spite of the fact that the hon. Prime Minister asked all the Ministers to visit the North Eastern Region for speedy development of projects, even then, a strong mechanism for reviewing and hard initiatives are necessary. Else, the habit of delay will cripple those who are at the helm of affairs.

Even the explanation statement has not been submitted by the concerned Minister in Assam. Hence, it is very difficult for the hon. Minister

of DoNER and the other Ministers to give sanction for different projects. There is a lack of commitment there on the part of the Ministry of North Eastern Region and as a result 17 major projects have got delayed. I hope that the hon. Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh, at the behest of the hon. Prime Minister is moving very fast and surely the North Eastern Region will wipe out the shameful feeling of neglect and there will be full-fledged development in every aspect of the human life in the North Eastern Region.

Large planned investment and focus on infrastructure development will surely help the overall growth of the region. I am grateful to the hon. Prime Minister and hon. Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh, who is bringing back hope for the people. I hope that every youth will get job; every girl who is working here in Delhi and other places will be safe; and there would be a bright smile on each and every face of the youth. It will happen and you will see it because just like our Prime Minister, our respected hon. Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh, has a smiling face and this smile will get reflected in each and every face of the North Eastern Region. Thank you very much.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (DHENKANAL): Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on a very vulnerable and critical part of the Union of India that has been historically neglected and the apathy of the Union Governments over the decades has been very very bad.

Sir, I would like to just start with what the Department concerning the development of North Eastern Region has said that this year an overall amount of Rs. 33,097 crore has been allocated across 56 account heads over last year's Rs. 29,087 crore. The Ministry has said that this is a quantum jump. But Sir, as you know, the total amount that has been increased is a mere Rs. 4,010 crore divided by eight States and it comes to around Rs. 500 crore per State for such a neglected area. So, calling / naming / terming this as a quantum jump is very far from the mark and it is a pity that we even think of saying this. It should be taken back.

The Seven States -- I will not count in Sikkim right now -- or the Seven Sisters of the North East sadly remain united with India only on pen and paper and only on the map. It is necessary for us that we make extra and sincere efforts to culturally integrate the youth of that Region with the rest of the country. While saying this, I have read a few books on the North East because the North East interests me. I have traveled to a few places and not being a military person I am a little scared now. You know, Sir, that if you say something in the House, suddenly somebody will get up and say Bharat Mata Ki Jai and boom, you are off with your head. If you have read *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the Queen used to say, "Off with your heads!"

[English] Now, we have come to that stage where every slight comment or an opinion that you cite, if it is not approved, it is “Off with your heads!” There is no other punishment.

This is a book that I thought would be appropriate to quote. I am not going to quote, but I have marked out some pages in this book “*Blood on My Hands: Confessions of Staged Encounters*” by a writer called Kishalay Bhattacharjee, who is a North Easterner himself, and I guess he is from one of those States, Tripura or somewhere. There are numerous books like this, and I have read about three or four books which are actually eye-openers. Far from Delhi, it seems that the area has become ‘out of sight, out of mind’. It is one of the most beautiful places that you have in India. The people are very advanced, very articulate, very sensitive, but extremely poor, except a few who are extremely rich as is everywhere else in every State in India. The people in general are very poor. They have been kept ‘out of sight and out of our mind’.

What has happened is when you go to many States in the North East, people ask you “Are you from India?” This pains me a lot because it is not their fault; it is not something that we can look down upon them for -- it is us, we who sit in this House. Governments come, Governments go; parties change, but our attitude towards the North East has been very convoluted, very perverted over a long period of time. Historically, if you see from Sher Shah Suri’s time, Mughal times, the border of India ended at Bengal. Beyond Bengal, there was no vision. If the British would not have come here, I guess

the North East would not have possibly been a part of India; it could have been a part of maybe China, Burma or some other country.

So, we are lucky in a way that colonialism gave us such a beautiful part of the world and yet we are unlucky because we have not had the courage, we have not had the vision to appreciate those people, appreciate that terrain, that geography and to invest there in such a way that development at the ground level is visible. As you are aware, road conditions are very bad in the North East.

Two things that bother me -- and I will end up before you can ring the bell – one is for 50 long years, and here *Bharat Mata* can probably intervene, we have clamped the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in that area. Our forces have killed 50,000 plus civilians in the North East. These are all statistics. ... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL (DAMOH): In States like Manipur, there are no Government programs or national anthem in schools, then you may also refer to this.

[*English*]

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY: Sir, if that be the case, if you would have seen, recently, a lady Chief Minister was sworn in, and while swearing in, there were two flags flying at the back – one was the Indian Flag, and another was a State Flag, which Assam does not have; which Odisha does not

have; which Bihar does not have; which Karnataka does not have and nobody else has it. Even Maharashtra does not have it; they simply say *Jai Maharashtra* because they do not have a flag. We are Indians. So, raising this point is probably not relevant.

AFPSA has been the biggest deterrent for integrating the youth of the North East with the rest of India. You have records of what has happened in the last ten years. Probably in the past ten years, I have read in the newspapers how BSF and Army trucks – again *Bharat Mata* should not jump in here – have been seized in Bihar, have been seized in UP travelling from the North East with opiums and opiates carrying drugs. What do they give in exchange? They give sleeping tablets, timber as *quid pro quo*, as payment which goes to Burma, which is Myanmar and which is used to produce other kinds of drugs. This is the form of payment. It is all barter system. I am not condemning our security forces. Their sacrifices, their devotion to this country is unimaginable. But there is always a small bunch in every group including people here, we have people whom we may not like to be associated with. Similarly the security forces also have such people. Otherwise, why do they have a court martial system? Why do they punish their own members? So, there have been people who have created a nexus....

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It is there on record. That is the sort of income that happens. But not everyone is corrupt. Our Army is one of the best armies in the world. It is a

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair

devoted Army; it is an Army that loves its country; it is an Army where the common jawan lays down his life for this nation. It is not the common jawan that we are blaming. It is a few people only. It is our responsibility as guardians of this country to ensure that the morale of the Army is kept very high. We have to ensure that. Till 2008, if you would have checked the names of the Governors of the North Eastern States, most of them were from armed forces. It is only after 2008 that a qualitative change has taken place.

I would like to quote the name of Irom Sharmila here. I personally feel that she deserves to be given a Padma Award. If you sit and analyse the Padma awardees of this year, I do not think how she in any way is inferior to any of them. Her sacrifice, her perseverance of 16 years of hunger strike is something that she is somebody to be admired. I admire her personally. I have never met her but I admire her personally. She is a young woman with so much perseverance. Is it not our duty to change our attitude to the North East? How can we do it?

This money should not be spent across 56 account heads. This money should be focused. What do you want to do? You want to integrate the North East. Build up the infrastructure. They have some 23 or 27 airports, airstrips and aerodromes. Build them up. Give Instrument Landing System. Except Guwahati, there are six or seven other airports which have Instrument Landing System (ILF) where aircrafts can land at night. All of them open after 10 a.m. and shut by 4.00 p.m. That means that passenger flights are not possible. The beauty from Arunachal in the North to Mizoram in the South is

amazing. Can we not build up tourism there? Can we not give better air connectivity? Can we not think like this? In Assam, there is Manas, there is Kaziranga. Kaziranga was affected negatively because of the Bodo agitation. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: It was not because of the Bodo agitation. It was because of the Bangladeshi infiltration. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY: O.K. it was not because of the Bodo agitation. I am sorry. I take back whatever I said. I express my regret. I am withdrawing all that I said about Kaziranga. You are right and I am wrong.

What I am trying to say is that Kaziranga went down the hills because of various factors. I am not naming any factors. You would know and she would know better. But there are so many beautiful places. The plant life and the animal life in Arunachal is there; the trout fishing in Arunachal is there. We have such a young Minister.

15.00 hours

He is such a bright man. These people are being wasted. Their talents are being wasted. You see people from the North-East coming here and working only as waiters and waitresses. Why cannot we have a bunch of educational institutes coming up in the North-East? Why not make doctors, lawyers, engineers, entrepreneurs, all from the North-East? In a very concerted move, why not encourage MSMEs in the North-East?

The first thing is connectivity. I talk about air connectivity because it is easier. ... (Interruptions) Our Governor is from the North-East and he is a wonderful person although I have never ever had the good opportunity, the lucky feeling of ever having met him. But he is a wonderful person. That is our connectivity with your region.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI KIREN RIJITU): With East also North-East is disconnected.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY: The Minister has never bothered to take a group of MPs and show the beauty of the North-East. Unless our eyes are opened by the hon. Minister of State for Home Affairs and the hon. Minister Mr. Singh, how will we expect Indians to know what the North-East is? It is a part of this country. How will we assimilate with them? They should be brought in larger numbers into our States and we should be facilitated to go to those States.

A system of building up airports and building up tourism alone can change the North-East. And it is time, Sir, historical mistakes are ignored. We cannot blame each other. You cannot blame the Congress, the Congress should not blame the BJP. It is time we thought of India as a whole. The North-East is an integral part of this Union. And it is time AFSPA is removed without any conditionalities. Insurgency is dying out a natural death, which the Home Minister will also agree. The young in the North-East would rather speak Korean, they would rather sing the blues and rock and roll than go and

tote a weapon and hide in a jungle and shoot their own brethrens. They do not wish to do that.

We have to rethink, we have to change our attitudes sitting in this House. What is required to integrate the North-East with the rest of the country is a change in political will and a change in political thinking. It is not the Army which is to be faulted, it is not the BSF whom you offer lucrative postings making money that are to be faulted, it is these politicians who are at fault.

Before sitting down, Sir, I would thank you that you have given so much time to me. I hope that you as a leader of that region will take concrete steps, with Madam here and everybody here, and we will join you because we are from the South-East. With my able leader Shri Mahtabji we will join you in your fight, we will go to the Prime Minister with you. Let us withdraw AFSPA. Let us build up the tourism industry. Let us build up MSMEs there. And let us help them come up with educational institutions, better roads, better irrigation projects and drinking water projects so that they have a respectable life. They love India and they feel that they are Indians and we are not asked, 'Are you from India?'.

Thank you, Sir.

15.04 hours (Shri Hukmdeo Narayan *in the Chair*)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU (SRIKAKULAM): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

I feel immensely proud to stand here as a South Indian and speak about the North-Eastern region. The North-Eastern region is an integral part of India. If I want India to progress, then it is also my responsibility to ensure the development of every corner of India. Therefore, I wish to bring to the Government's attention the small issues related to the North-Eastern region that I have observed.

[English] To start with, the northeast region has been a huge victim of lot of different things, starting from bad governance, bad policy-making, and bad political will. *[Translation]* Furthermore, issues like extremism and the need to unify tribal cultures, etc. due to which there were many hurdles to move ahead from the point of view of development. Therefore, the region had to face a very difficult situation. I want to bring these issues to the attention of the Government through you. *[English]* But I would like to give complete credit to today's Government and the Prime Minister of today Shri Narendra Modi for taking excellent steps for having the mission and the vision to develop as a very integral part of this country. Some of the steps that have been taken by this Government are really very appreciative. Nobody has spoken it till now, but the steps that have been taken towards

Naga Peace Accord and in realizing the potential of organic farming in Sikkim and making it spread throughout the north-eastern region or helping the youth in giving sufficient skills so that they can advance in their lives and they can make a livelihood for themselves. So, there are different streams.

Other than that, there are some of the problems that the region has been facing which I want to bring to the notice of this Government. One of the major things about the place is about the DoNER Ministry. *[Translation]* The headquarters of the DoNER Ministry is currently in Delhi.... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI VIJAYA CHAKRAVARTY: The secretariat of the DoNER Ministry is currently located in the North-East, specifically in Assam.

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU: Yes, that's fine. All departments of the DoNER should be located there *[English]* All the important people have to sit in the northeast. *[Translation]* I come from a region that is a coastal area. There are many fishermen in my region *[English]* I see that the fisheries board is sitting in Hyderabad which is on an overnight journey from there. *[Translation]* Our fishermen do not have the financial means or the mindset to travel there and discuss their issues. *[English]* I see a similar situation happening in North East also. *[Translation]* if they face any problems or need to communicate with someone, it should not be necessary for them to come to Delhi. There should be sufficient facilities such that all officers working in this domain are available either online or onsite there. The Government must take appropriate steps to ensure this. *[English]* As the Madam had earlier spoken, one of the

issues that she has raised is that if someone underperforms or is suspended or if you have to punish them, they are sent to North East. But that is an ideology which has to change now. *[Translation]* officers going to work there should not feel they are doing us a favour; they must work there responsibly. This Government will have to work with full responsibility for whatever steps it takes for development there. The way utilisation certificates are delayed or the delays that occur in communication between the Central Government or State Governments. It has been so many years since the Ministry of DoNER was established, and we have so many experienced administrative officers. *[English]* All these little factors which are trying to pose like bottlenecks in this system have to be overcome and this is the right time to be thinking over that. I would like to say that the officers have to take utmost responsibility in dealing with these issues.

Comparing the disparity of the northeast region with the rest of India, we see that the *per capita* income of the people in the northeast is Rs 6,600 whereas the national average is about Rs 10,000. The BPL percent in northeast is around 35 but the national average is 26 percent. So, there is a lot of disparity happening and there are a lot of things that the Government has to do in minimizing the disparity between the mainland and also the northeast region. *[Translation]* if I repeat the words of Mr. Tathagat, I fully agree with him, especially with regard to the people there, particularly the youth., *[English]* they certainly feel that they are someone different from India. The question has been asked many times when people travel from the mainland to

the northeast, have you come from India? We have to keep in mind that these kinds of questions cannot be solved with only a political mindset but we need much more than that.

We have to go deeper into the culture and look at a wide variety of things to deal with this problem. For that, education needs to be targeted and connectivity to the place – road connectivity, air connectivity and also telecommunication connectivity – needs to be targeted. All of them have to be improved. There are a lot of projects which have been going on for fifteen to twenty years. It is time they are all funded very well.

All these eight State have been given special category status. *[Translation]* Whenever I have had the opportunity to speak in this House, I have consistently raised the demand for special status for Andhra Pradesh before the Government. *[English]* But I see that that *[Translation]* they have had special category status for so many years. If you combine all eight States, their population is about the same as that of Andhra Pradesh. However, how much development has occurred there until now? If they are backward, then the Government allocates funds to them. *[English]* But the equation should not just stop there.

[Translation] We also need to consider how much of the allocated funds have been converted into development, this factor is also important for us to assess. We are spending thousands of crores of rupees in the North-East. *[English]* But how much of that money is being reflected in terms of development. That is the factor we are missing in the whole equation. In

terms of development, there has to be proper accountability so that when we ask for Special Status, we will have accountability.

[Translation] If we are also given funds, then there should be accountability here as well, according to that...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI VINCENT H. PALA (SHILLONG): There is no Special Category Status to the North-East. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KIREN RIJJU: Shri Naidu, you are right.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU: It is currently ongoing. They are not granting it to the new state.

I would request that Andhra Pradesh also should be given Special Status. Andhra Pradesh also deserves Special Status. The population is almost the same, and to some extent, we also have backward regions here.

[English] There has to be the accountability factor which should relate in terms of development to the funds that are sanctioned.

Other than that, you see that Sikkim has become the first organic farming State in the country. From this House, all of us should together really thank the Government and appreciate the efforts taken by the people of Sikkim, the farmers of Sikkim. I also see that the Government has put it on a priority that organic farming should be taken up by other States of the North-East also. *[Translation]* If we look at it, the Government of India has recently

allocated 115 crore rupees for eight states. *[English]* This works out to Rs. 14 crore per State which is very minimal. I wish the Government increased the funding at least in terms of organic farming in all these States.

Another request from me would be the restoration of the North-East Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy. *[Translation]* It was initiated in the year 2007 and included subsidies of 30 percent on capital investment, *[English]* three per cent interest subsidy and reimbursement of insurance premium. These are some of the benefits which the people of the North-East would have enjoyed if this Policy had continued. This has stopped. There is a lot of request from the people of the North-East to re-start this Policy. So, I would request through you, hon. Chairman Sir, that the Government of India should think about re-starting this Policy.

Whenever we talk about the North-East we have to remember the great leader Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee who wanted ten per cent from each Ministry to be set aside for spending for the North-Eastern region. It has been a very great move. Here also, if you see, from 1997 to 1998, Rs. 1,400 crore per year have been spent. Till now, only Rs. 10,000 crore have been spent and an amount of Rs. 15,000 crore are still lying there in the Consolidated Fund of India. *[Translation]*

We also need to bring plans to utilize this expenditure. There is a lot of delay happening in this regard. More is being diverted to the Consolidated Fund than what we are spending. *[English]* So, there has to be a proper utilisation of these funds also in the North-Eastern region.

If you see the tourism potential, the human resource potential and the natural resource potential in the North-East, it is not just a pride for India but also the whole world. Some of the benefits that we have like the Buddhist tourist circuit are not just helping India but all the Buddhists across the globe. If you see the natural beauty there, all tourists across the world can come and enjoy the scenic beauty that is available there. For that, a lot of steps need to be taken. The right people need to be connected with the right things so that the true potential of the North-East is visible not just for Indians but also for the rest of the world. If we have to do that, the youths of the place have to be skilled. I see that a lot of people from the North-East speak English very fluently. If you look at the other developed States, sometimes it is very hard to find people who speak English. They have to be rightly skilled so that they are placed in the right jobs.

At present, they are in the hospitality sector, air sector but there is a lot of potential for them to go into better jobs had the right skills been given to them. For that I would just like to point out that Rs.233 crore has been provided for livelihood and skill development in the Northeastern region. It is just Rs.28 crore per State. That also needs to be increased so that the youth can be better skilled in future and can be related to the development of the Northeastern region.

I would like to say that there has been a lot of problem in Northeast. There is collusion between the tribal culture and the extremism. When we talk of development, it is our responsibility to look at these two things also.

As Tathagata Ji and other Members have mentioned, the AFSPA needs to be given a rethink in terms of the development and also the Central Government has to keep in mind the sensitivity of the issue. It can take the opinion of all the leaders who come from that region, have different kinds of discussion and do what is best and necessary.

Another historic move of this Government being taken by Shrimati Sushma Swaraj was with regard to land swapping that happened between Bangladesh and India. We can take a step ahead. States like Mizoram, Manipur and all the lower lying States across Bangladesh can get some kind of benefit from Bangladesh on mutual exchange basis. We are doing good in terms of having international discussion with them. If they want some kind of connectivity, let it be a road, rail or mobile connectivity, we can take help from that country on business level. Those kinds of discussions can also be initiated as we have already done a historic deal with them. We can take that ahead in terms of providing benefits to the four corner States in the Northeastern region.

Over all, I think, at the Centre we not just have people from northeastern States but also people from different States are here. Everyone should take the responsibility in giving good treatment to people coming from Northeast to our States, to work in our conditions, as it is our responsibility to make them feel like they are at home, in India so that they can reciprocate it. When they go back to their own regions, they can say that they had been to the best part of India. That is the responsibility of the people

coming from different States over here. I hope that they take it in a good way. The discussion that we are having here should not just be a good discussion for integrating Northeast with India but also for integrating different backward regions in India and putting them into an integral part of the country. Thank you so much, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI ARVIND SAWANT (MUMBAI SOUTH): Hon. Chairman Sir, I am grateful to you for allowing me to speak on an important subject. The North-East region is an essential part of this country. Today, Assam is experiencing floods, and in such a situation, we are discussing the development of the North-East region and deliberating on its grants. When we roam there, these valleys and breezes call us, and we get to see such sights there. The entire hilly area can be found there, whether in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, or Shillong. When discussing its development, all our Parliament members have spoken here about them. Earlier these used to be called the Seven Sisters, but now they are eight. These are eight states. These eight states are Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. The particular issue that stands out to me in this discussion is that Arunachal Pradesh shares its border with China. China is constructing roads all along its border, and all these roads up to the border are now solidly built with cement and concrete. If something happens tomorrow, our army won't be able to reach there immediately because our roads still haven't been constructed. We do not wish to dwell on what previous Governments have done or what the current Government is doing. On the contrary, I would commend that since our Government came into power, it has been actively focusing on the development of the North-Eastern region, something the previous Government didn't pay much attention to, they viewed it more from a political perspective. Today, we are looking towards its development. The

roads along the China border are being constructed because they are providing funding at the right time. I'm not saying that our Government has not provided the funds. The Government allocated funds in the previous budget, and they are also allocating funds in this budget, but what is the outcome of that? It's not evident. Whose responsibility has been fixed for this? Has a deadline been set? Has a restriction been placed on the completion time for the roads? Since it hasn't been specified, there should be monitoring in place; that seems to be the most crucial. We are providing the funds, but we also need information on how that money is being utilized. *[English]* These are valleys.

[Translation] Today, we see that if we have to travel from one State to another, we have to go via Assam. The required routes through valleys that should connect one State to another are still not in existence. Attention should be drawn to ensuring that our roads pass through there. Especially the Border Road Task Force, which is constructed by the military, if we talk to defence, we will find out how long they have been striving to build roads there. They are not happening, and still not happening today. We have recently finalized the borders between Bangladesh and our country. They have left the villages there and taken the villages here. The work relating to fencing the border area of Arunachal Pradesh has been continuing for the last 20-25 years. My request to the government is that if you do something on priority, then first do the fencing work. If there is no fencing, there will be infiltration. Infiltrators are approaching. Now infiltrators are coming for their livelihood, I understand

that, but what is the situation in Assam? The ongoing conflict in southern Assam is due to all the Bangladeshis who have infiltrated there. They have come there, hence the conflict. Now they have already entered, they have obtained ration cards, and they have become citizens of this country. The struggle that is happening is because of the initial act of infiltration. Increase the strength of the BSF on the border, increase their confidence, but also account for how they come in, from where they come in. Don't they know? The Government knows, the police know, and the BSF knows. Despite all this, security within the country remains a concern. The development of the North-East region goes hand in hand with security. When internal security is compromised, development cannot thrive.

I just mentioned about the flood. How beautiful are the rivers there, which later merge into the Brahmaputra? We haven't been able to conduct dredging for so many years. Why do floods occur? We did not dredge and did not remove the silt. If that is not done, how will the river water become deeper and how will it be contained? My request to you is that whatever our government is doing, they should first complete the Arunachal Khorla and the valley routes. Instead of roads from Assam, there should be valley-through routes to travel from one state to another. There should be inter-valley roads. I suggest that the Standing Committee on Defence should visit once to find out what is happening there, we proceed, and the discussion turns to the railway line. The valleys of Lohit, Siang, Tawang, and Subansiri are the sources of rivers that eventually converge to form the Brahmaputra River. We need to

dredge these rivers. We need to transport water, but the bridges over it are still not being constructed. It has been many years since bridges have not been built. Our government has started the construction. But my demand is that *[English]* let us do it in a time-bound manner. We have to do it. Unless we do it on time, the development will not occur. *[Translation]* What is needed, what does development mean?

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the State of Sikkim for its commendable efforts. It is indeed commendable that while the world is shifting towards chemical fertilizers, our entire State is engaged in organic farming. It tells the entire country what needs to be done. Yesterday, our esteemed member, Mr. Dushyant Chautala ji, was sitting here. He mentioned that with the advent of chemical fertilizers and upcoming innovations, BT cotton seeds have been developed. In the beginning, BT cotton seemed promising. When certain diseases emerged, the impact was such that BT cotton couldn't survive. The traditional farming style from our old village continued to thrive. Cow dung farming, where are the animals? Where will we get cow dung from? Sometimes it seems that later you will have to tell the children that it is called a bull and it is called a cow. Machinery seems to dominate everywhere, where are the anchors? They won't even know about them. When it comes to development or organic farming, land, water, rainwater, and technology, about which my friend Ramanaidu said, BSNL towers, I say that give money from the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources Scheme, BSNL people do not have money, recently they are

coming out of a very bad condition, So you pay for the towers. I have observed that there is a significant amount of funds and provisions available. I am not delving into the figures, so I request you to allocate funds for the towers. Initiate our 4G service. Sometimes we see advertisements for their services, we can also do a good job. This needs attention.

Hon. Speaker, I was speaking of dredging, similarly, I also talked about infiltration. These infiltrators come with drugs, counterfeit currency, weapons, bombs, etc., all the things they need, they bring them inside. First, provisions should be made to seal the border between India and China, as well as between India and Bangladesh. Take up this work on top priority. We will continue to work on water transport bridges and all these things.

I am making one more demand. We establish universities, Mary Kom hails from there. Let us set up a sports university there. They excel in hockey, football, and boxing, which are popular sports there in addition to cricket. Why not consider establishing a sports university so that our children from the North-East, especially those who excel in archery, If we pay attention to this direction, *[English]* we should create a Sports University in the North-Eastern Region so that the children from the North-Eastern Region will get a chance? *[Translation]* All Hon. Members agreed on tourism. We are also saying the same thing. There are 13 monasteries there. *[English]* Around 13 big monasteries are there in the North-Eastern region. These can be used for tourism. People from all over the world will come to see them.

[Translation] I appeal to the Government to promptly pay attention to these matters. I request that the funds you are allocating to the Northeast are utilized appropriately and promptly, especially addressing the issue of infiltration that I am discussing, drawing your attention to the concerns regarding Bangladeshi Maoists. Jai Hind.

[English]

SHRI RAMEN DEKA (MANGALDAI): Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. At the outset I would like to correct my learned friend Shri Tathagata Satpathy that the undivided Assam was not a gift of colonial regime. Rather, our great Saint Sankardeva visited Lord Jagannath 540 years ago. So, there is a cultural relation between the State of Assam and the rest of India.

Secondly, we felt alienated for many years. We were the fourth developed State during the British era and even after our Independence. But now we are at number four from the bottom. So, we feel alienated. Our great leader Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee thought about the people of the North-Eastern region and found this Ministry of DoNER. During the regime of the last two successive Governments we have seen nothing has percolated to the people of this region. Now, under the leadership of hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Minister-in-Charge, Dr. Jitendra Singh, things are percolating down to the ground level. But there are many more things which have to be done by this Ministry, especially, the monitoring of the schemes. It is because the different States are not executing the projects as desired and as per the

monitoring of the schemes. It is because the different States are not executing the projects as desired and as per the schemes. I would like to ask the Government to increase the Budgetary provisions for this Ministry so that the under-developed States can be at par with the other States of the country. We should insist on the development and completion of the micro level projects and not macro level projects.

There are other Departments who will look after the macro level projects. The basic mandate of DoNER is to develop community-oriented projects by which the community will be benefited by way of interconnectivity of backward regions with the States. We have got the Ministry of Water Resources. The Ministry of DoNER says that they will not take up erosion projects. Why will they not take up erosion projects? We have many rivers and erosion is a major cause of loss of land. I would like to request the hon. Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh, to take up erosion projects. He may take up small erosion projects and not big projects like the Brahmaputra project. Different tributaries are there. My friend is sitting here who worked in my constituency. He saw the situation when floods were there and how erosion took place. He was a Minister and he himself saw these things.

So, I would like to request the hon. Minister to take up small projects which can result in development at a micro level. Especially the north bank of Brahmaputra is not developed. A very few projects have been taken up by the Ministry DoNER in the north bank of Brahmaputra. North bank is connected with Arunachal Pradesh and it is a very strategic point. Congress

has said good bye to us in 1962. I would like to request for the connectivity of the North-East by focusing on the north bank of Brahmaputra through Arunachal Pradesh so that small roads may be built by which villagers can travel. Shri Pala is present here. There are many difficulties in connectivity of Khasi Hills also. But we are not focusing on that type of roads. We are focusing on big projects. For doing those big projects, PMGSY and CRF are there. But the main mandate or the focus point of the Ministry of DoNER should be on the micro projects.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): Sir, with your permission, I would like to speak on the Demands for Grants (2016-17) of the Ministry of Development of the North-Eastern Region.

We are from West Bengal and West Bengal is the gateway to the whole of the North-East. We are concerned with what happens in the North-East. North-East is essentially our eastern international border. Sikkim has a border with China. Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram have a border with Myanmar. Arunachal Pradesh has a border both with China and Myanmar. Tripura is surrounded on all sides by Bangladesh. Assam has a long riverine border with Bangladesh. So, development of North-Eastern Region is very strategic in maintenance of the internal security of the country.

As you know from history, there has been a tradition of militancy in the North-East. In the North-East, the Naga rebels fought with the Indian Army for a long time. We first had a Shillong Accord with Naga rebels in 1975. Recently, the Government of India had a new Accord with the NSCN (Issac-Muivah group) who have been staying in Lodhi Estate for a long time. Earlier, they used to meet the Indian interlocutors in Holland. They now prefer Lodhi Estate to Holland.

Under Laldenga, in 1965, Mizoram was taken over by the rebels. But Rajiv Gandhi was able to achieve peace with Mizo rebels. Tripura had a tradition of militancy. But during Rajiv Gandhi's Prime Ministership this militancy was resolved. Now, Tripura is one of the stable and peaceful parts of the country. Manipur, where our Professor who initiated the debate comes

from, has a different sort of militancy, that is militancy in the plains and militancy in the hills. We have militancy among Meitei people. We have also militancy in the hilly areas of Churachandpur where the Kuki rebels create problems. So, in the North-East, Sikkim is the only peaceful State where there has never been any militancy. Meghalaya has been a relatively peaceful State, but recently some Garo boys have gone in for militancy. So, this is an area which needs to be looked at with all attention by the Government.

That is why it was a very good idea to start the Ministry of DoNER, which was done in 2001 during Vajpayee ji's Prime Ministership. The first important step was taken by Indira Gandhi when she gave statehood to all these seven sisters, like Mizoram, Manipur, Arunachal, Tripura. All of them got their statehood during Indira Gandhi's time. Vajpayee ji took an important step in setting up the Ministry of DoNER.

[Translation]

I don't know if you have extensively travelled, but I am from the North-East. I was born in Shillong, and I spent my childhood there in the constituency of our Vincent Pala Ji. People who have come from East Bengal, *[English]* part of our population has settled in the North-East, in Tripura, in Meghalaya, and, of course, in Assam, and other places.

The major problem is the lack of economic development. The other major problem is lack of connectivity. I went to Arunachal Pradesh some years back. I went to Itanagar. I wanted to go to Pasighat from there. They

said you cannot go to Pasighat as there is no straight road. You have to go down to Lilabari, then you go to Dibrugarh, then you cross the river and then you reach Pasighat. So, road communication is a big problem.

The main highway to Assam passes through West Bengal, NH 31 and NH 34. But not enough development has taken place in terms of road connectivity. Now, what I want to say is that, in spite of formation of Ministry of DoNER and of the North-Eastern Council, there has not been a holistic development of North-East.

The money you give for the Ministry of DONER is not sufficient to any extent. Last year, the Budget Estimate was Rs. 2,334 crore and the Revised Estimate was Rs. 1,973 crore. That means you could not spend the full plan estimates last year. Again you have given a Budget Estimate of the same amount. Now, the Government is not able to spend the money allotted to it. Without that, how will development take place?

In Public Undertakings Committee, we took up these two public sector undertakings, which are under the Ministry of DoNER. They both are in a pathetic condition. There is a North-East Development and Finance Corporation and there is some Agricultural Handicraft and Handloom Development Corporation.

There is a NERMARK which is supposed to develop agricultural product marketing. They are in a pathetic condition. We gave a Report from the Public Undertakings Committee but nobody is giving enough attention to

revive this organisation. There is tremendous potential in the area which has not been properly harnessed. Leave aside Assam; Assam is a big State; Assam has large tea garden; Assam has timber but Assam has the sorrow of being flooded by Brahmaputra every year. So far in 69 years of Independence, we have not been able to do anything to control floods in Brahmaputra. But in spite of that, Assam has good agricultural production; Assam has good tea production.

Look at Meghalaya where Mr. Pala comes from. Meghalaya has two distinct parts – the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Garo Hills. They are not connected though they have a road now. Khasi Hills has got coal and uranium; it has also got limestone. You know from Khasi Hill limestone near Dauki they are making cement in Chatak in Bangladesh. We have not been able to develop that.

Look at Arunachal Pradesh. Arunachal Pradesh has five times as much hydroelectric potential as Switzerland but how much have we been able to harness the hydroelectric potential of Arunachal Pradesh? You look at Mizoram and all these States, they produce a lot of bamboos - but how much of the total bamboo production has been productively used in this country? Now, you are trying to develop Tripura, which has access to gas from Bangladesh. It has been marked as the gateway for Internet connections from the Chittagong port. The main thing is connectivity. For that, two things have to be done.

Firstly, we have to have a trade and transit treaty with Bangladesh so that you can go straight from Kolkata to Agartala. Secondly, in the olden days, there used to be a riverine service from Kolkata to Karimganj in Assam through the river Kushiara, that has been now stopped and disbanded. No serious effort is being made to revive all this. The Government and the Department is sluggish.

[Translation] Sir, please read the report of our standing committee. *[English]* The Committee finds allocation under SID a classic example of *ad hocism* in budgeting and role of the Ministry in dealing with this fund is very casual. This is what the Standing Committee has said. The Committee learnt that the Ministry has asked for around Rs.3,850 crore and was given only Rs.2,400 crore. So you are not even giving the money required for developing this area. Then, they say that we are not getting the UCs. The Committee has also advised that the Ministry must continually exhort States to ensure timely submission of UCs, requisite documents for timely release of funds for the projects.

[Translation] Sir, our committee has said this. The ministry does not react to it. I know that Dr. JITENDRA SINGH is currently in charge. He is also the right-hand of the Prime Minister. *[English]* He is the Minister of State in the Prime Minister Office. He replies to all questions on nuclear energy but I feel the DoNER needs a dedicated Minister, who would spend seven days in a month in the North-East, go to all these States, and see that

the budget allocations are utilised, and then improved so that the public sector undertakings under the Ministry is made up.

Sir, these hill people are very peaceful. They are nice people. But the need of the hour is development so as to bring them into the national mainstream. That approach is not there. My friend from BJP was saying that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi we have done this, we have done that etc. All you have done is to topple the Government in Arunachal Pradesh. Northeast is not the place for political manipulation. You have to deal with it in a sensitive way so that the people of the Northeast feel that they are not ruled from Delhi and they have some say in what is happening in Delhi.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI KAMAKHYA PRASAD TASA (JORHAT): Sir, there was a discussion on the North-East Donor Ministry. On behalf of all the MPs and the people of the North-East, I am extending my gratitude to everyone. I also extend congratulations to the Minister of Donor, Mr. Jitendra Ji, who is present here, on behalf of our people. We especially thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji, because during this time, when we have come to power, the Central Minister has visited North-East 210 times. After visiting the Northeast 210 times, in the Assam Government, there is a hoarding saying, Why are you coming 210 times, what work is there to come to the North-

East? The Assam Government has put up this hoarding. It means that those who are now speaking, my sister and Hon. MP, Vijaya Ji is also speaking, it means that no one should go there. It means that they should not go, it means North-East should be kept separate, that's what it means. We, the people, from the Northeast, from Assam, elected the Prime Minister. Dr. Manmohan Singh was the Prime Minister from the Rajya Sabha. He served as Prime Minister for ten years. Even after his tenure of ten years, there is no discussion about the DoNER ministry. After 15 years of the formation of the department by Atal Ji, today this matter is coming in Parliament, I am thanking everyone. When Narendra Modi Ji talks about the North East even in foreign countries, mentioning it feels like we were suppressed during the Congress era. We have known that since we came from school, Assam agitation has taken place, Assam agitation has been followed by ULFA after ULFA came insurgent groups in the North-East. Why did these insurgent groups come to the North-East? This needs to be looked into. They emerged in the Northeast because the promised development in the region did not materialize. Hon. Member of the Congress party, Meinya Sahib, was saying that what is the point of discussing now? It means that the North-East has been cut off from the rest of India.

Former Nagaland and MP Chief Minister, Mr. Rio, is also present here. He knows what Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru Ji had said to Nagaland. During the China agitation, the Hon. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru Ji said, *[English]* my heart goes out to the people of the Northeast.

[Translation] Exactly as Madam Vijaya also mentioned, the North-East has been greatly neglected. Despite being rich in natural resources, the Northeast's development has been suppressed. The region has abundant water, tea, coal, and oil. Furthermore, there is significant potential for double cropping in the fertile lands, yet this potential has been completely stifled. What is the current state of Tripura today? You see. In our region, Sikkim has made some progress. After that, we are completely dependent on the Central Government. Therefore, the Ministry of DoNER holds great importance. Thanks to Atal Ji.

Hon. Narendra Modi Ji visited the Northeast many times. We are currently questioning what your Government is providing for us. Most of the prominent Members of the Congress, who are part of the Assam Government, the MLAs from Congress, claim that your ministers are coming here. We will see our ministers, including the DoNER Minister and the Agriculture Minister. Today, the situation is such because the Central Government is not providing fund utilization certification. Right now, we feel good because there are two Ministers from the North-East. It feels good when someone from the Northeast sits in the chair like Ramen Deka ji, who is the Home Minister and also the Sports Minister. Northeast feels so, as there's a strong sense of regionalism because it's geographically cut off from the mainland. One Hon. Member has just stated ... *(Interruptions)* We have asked them to settle there in Guwahati. They said that we will go to Kashmir. We have requested several times. He also said in front of the Prime Minister to

build houses here. Like Manmohan Ji used to live in a rented house, you should build a permanent house there. Manmohan Ji never went there.

The reason behind criticizing us is that we don't know how many young boys died. Many were shot dead, and the situation there is very bad. The medical team is still there because the money sent from Delhi is not being properly utilized there. The Assam-Bangladesh border is open there. Unfortunately, there is a lot of interstate conflict. Why has interstate conflict arisen there? What enmity do we have with Nagaland, and what enmity do we have with Arunachal Pradesh? Why has interstate politics escalated so much now, who did it? We have never ruled there, why has such a situation arisen there, what is the reason for it? The development that should have happened in the border area did not occur. You would feel as if you are in India or somewhere else, it's not clear. Assam is submerged in water, here the water is flowing at 45 degrees, but it's calm there.

There exists a significant abundance of natural resources in the region, fostering an environment conducive to self-employment. There is great potential for tourism there. Perhaps Mr. Sawant Ji is unaware that the Government has declared a sports university there. Ms. Mary Kom Ji has also been appointed as a member of the Rajya Sabha. While working on such initiatives, they are currently carrying forward the initiatives taken by Shri Atal Ji, for us. This means that 15 years ago, during the Congress era, the situation deteriorated significantly. It is crucial to take special initiatives for the DoNER now.

Currently, the DoNER Minister is present here. I would request him, under the leadership of Hon. P.A. Sangma, the road connectivity and flight connectivity, about which Mr. P.D. Rai might elaborate, we have determined 10 points in the North-East Forum. There is immense potential for road infrastructure and small industries there. Direct funding from the DoNER is essential in this regard. If there is no direct funding, the project will come to a halt. The State Government is not providing the mandated 10 percent. As a result, many projects have been stalled there. Major feasible projects should be undertaken. The role of the North-East Council is also important. There should be a higher allocation of funds. Land acquisition is excessive, inflation is high, and the problem of unemployment has escalated. Due to these reasons, we are concerned that Maoist activity may increase in the area. In Assam alone, there are approximately 25 lakh unemployed people. Mr. Satpathi Ji has rightly said that graduates from there are working at petrol pumps here, some are working in garages, some are doing odd jobs. It is very important to call those people back to Assam and establish a Human Resources Hub. We have requested the Minister many times, and he has also acknowledged those requests. What is the utilization of the 30 thousand crores or 50 thousand crores of rupees that have been allocated? We have also said in the meeting of the Consulting Committee of the DoNER Ministry that utilization should be looked into. Where has the DoNER's money gone? Where has the North-East Council's money gone? Why is the situation in Arunachal Pradesh like this? Why isn't there road connectivity there? Why

aren't the people living on the hills in Nagaland getting water? Why hasn't the solar system been implemented there? It is crucial to examine all these issues. Assam has developed somewhat, but the condition of the other Northeast states is very poor. To improve the situation there, the DoNER Ministry plays a significant role, which role it should play.

I will request the Hon. Minister to also consider the Deendayal Upadhyay Electricity Scheme that has been provided to us there. The DoNER Ministry should not merely function as a funding agency. The DoNER Ministry should operate at full capacity. The little paralysis that was done should be awakened a little. After the Prime Minister's directive, when ministers visited there between two to ten times, we realized that the Government was very serious. All Hon. MPs from the North-East are present, and they say that when they visit Kamakhya Mata for blessings, it feels like everything is forgotten after reaching the airport. Currently, Prahlad ji is seated here, he was stuck at the airport for seven hours while going to Manipur. The arrangement of private air agencies is such that they don't operate flights. It is most unfortunate that even Air India has abandoned the North-East.

The handling agent only brings it back to Guwahati, their flight only reaches there. Such unfortunate situations should not be allowed to occur. The unemployed youth are very distressed there. The implementation of NREGA is also very poor. If the implementation of NREGA were good, there would have been significant development. This pertains to demands for grants. I

support the Government. Shri Jitendra Ji, I urge the Hon. Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance to allocate greater funds to the DoNER Ministry in that region. Direct monitoring should be established here for the funds. Previously, the DoNER Ministry was synonymous with a corrupt Ministry. Money wouldn't flow here without giving 10 percent, that was the prevailing sentiment. Hence, Former Minister General Singh Sahab did not leave a single penny there. We made several requests to him, but he said that money gets pocketed there, and everyone is corrupt. Based on this assumption, he did not release any money there. We pleaded with him. he said, No, the money will be embezzled, we won't give you the money. Please provide the utilization certificate. No matter how much we try, we put in so much effort, yet they just laugh that away. They will give, we have thought, I also have a lot of work there. In my constituency, there is a Chief Minister. The Chief Minister boasts so much. When Modi Ji visits there, the Chief Minister of Assam praises Modi Ji so much, showering him with flowers upon arrival. It shouldn't be like this. The Government's cooperative attitude should reveal whose Government it is. The State Government may be different, but there should be cooperation with the center. I request the DoNER Minister to ensure that the NDA Government allocates as much funds as possible for the North-East. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY (TRIPURA EAST): Sir, first of all, I would like to thank all my colleagues from various parts of the country who have spoken on this issue. Their contribution and observation is really very constructive. This attitude will definitely sustain.

[Translation] I will do congratulate the NDA Government because this Ministry was established in the year 2001. However, I would also like to mention that when the ministry was established, it was stated that *[English]* 10 per cent of the funds from every ministry would be allocated to it. However, some Ministries do not operate in the North East, such as the Ministry of Ocean Development. If we look at the allocation for this year, it amounts to about Rs. 33,097 crore from 56 ministries. If we consider the total plan allocation for this year, it is Rs. 5,50,010 crore. If we calculate, 10 percent of Rs. 5,50,000 crore is Rs. 55,000 crore. Even after 15 years since the formation of the Ministry of DoNER, that commitment has not been fulfilled. This commitment has not been fulfilled by the current Government this year either. This year's allocation altogether is Rs. 33,000 crore.

15.59 hours(Shri K.H. Muniyappa *in the Chair*)

Now, I am coming to the allocation of the Ministry of DoNER for this year which is around Rs. 2,400 crore. I am not talking about the allocation. I would like to know as to why the North Eastern Region is lagging behind. Why is there backwardness? *[Translation]* Today, a colleague here said North-East, etc., etc., NSCN, TNV, and so on. Yes, that's right. But that wasn't the case. A colleague, Mr. TASA, also said the same. The population of the North-East, predominantly indigenous, residing in the plains, has never been witnessed in history. *[English]* They are law-abiding people. They are very much faithful to their religion also.

16.00 hours

In their culture, there has never been *[Translation]* such violence and nothing like that, but *[English]* it has dragged them to this situation today because of their backwardness, under-development, and neglect since Independence. It is very unfortunate. That is why, the total attitude has to be changed. Of course, the flow of funds is a vital issue, but the flow of funds is not the only issue. The attitude has to be changed. Unless policies and programs are prepared together with a new attitude, the desired goal will never be achieved, and it is not possible to achieve that.

[Translation] Here, Shri Tathagata Satpathy Ji is not present. I would like to inform him of his apprehension that the Mughal rule ended in Bengal

the independence of Hindustan did not reach here, and the INA did not reach here, so it could have been a part of China and Myanmar, this is absolutely wrong.

[English]

Every Indian knows that the first Indian flag was hoisted in Imphal, which is a part of the North East, under the leadership of Shri Subash Chandra Bose and INA. Definitely, INA is not alone. The Nagas, Kukis, Manipuris and tribals all joined together, fought and laid down their lives, and they hoisted the tricolour first in that part of the country. There are a number of ethnic groups. They were never against India. They were never against the *Bharat Mata*. For having showed this commitment and loyalty, they should have been paid back with certain positive responses.

Before going to the negative perspectives that have been given, I am giving some other facts also. Sir, now I come to the potentialities of the North East. *[Translation]* Here, in the second part, there are certain colleagues. When this DONER Ministry was established, someone might have doubted that there was nothing there.

[English]

The North East comprises eight per cent of the total landmass of India. Population-wise, it is four per cent. In that way also, we have potentialities. Secondly, North East is one of the 12 richest biodiversities of the world. In all 12 months of the year, North East is green. Our forests, mountains, rivers

and hills are full of flora and fauna. We have wild animals, flowers and everything. Then, you know, we have discovered minerals; we have oil; we have coal, uranium and natural gas. There are many things which are untapped and unexplored.

Now, I come to our Zone. North East is one of the richest agri-climatic Zones. Though monsoon is there only for two months, for almost eight months, the rain is spread over. So, a number of crops can be grown. If you go to West, South and everywhere, you will find rocky soil. In the North-East, 98 per cent of our surface soil is soft and very fertile.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude, now

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY: Sir, I am from the North-East. Please give me some time. I think, I have not spoken even for two minutes.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please try to conclude.

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY: Sir, we have the mighty Brahmaputra River in the North-East. In China, Yang Tse Kiang once was the tear of China, sorrow of China; and now, it has been turned into the happiness of China. Similarly, Brahmaputra also could irrigate almost half of the North-East if a similar kind of project is taken up here.

Sir, you are from Karnataka. I am from Tripura. My State of Tripura, Assam and other North-Eastern States are growing rubber. Tripura has become now the second largest rubber producer in our country.

Then, Sir, there are huge potentialities for tourism in the North-East including eco-tourism, religious tourism and cultural tourism. There are many Hindu shrines. Out of 51 Pithas, there is one Kamakhya Temple in Assam. There is Tripureswari Temple in Tripura. We have the diverse culture, diverse language. Every State, every District of the North-East has its own variety.

Sir, as has already been said, there is huge potentiality of hydropower generation. Arunachal alone can feed almost the eastern part of the country. According to the estimation of different experts, there is a potentiality to generate more than 1,00,000 MW of hydropower in the North-East.

Sir, literacy-wise also, North-East is ahead of many States. Now, Tripura is number one State in the country in terms of literacy. There is 97 per cent literacy rate in Tripura. Similarly, Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur are also having high literacy rate.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Jitendra Chaudhary, you have not come to the point as to what exactly you want.

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY: Sir, I am coming to that.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude as the time is very short.

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY: Sir, in regard to production, everything by default is organic in the North-East. All these potentialities and resources are there. There is MDONER. There is NEC. But why is that they are not yielding the desired results? It is all because of so many constraints there. It

is mainly because of the absence of the policies. I am not blaming the present Government alone; I am blaming the previous Governments also.

All that has been done for the North-East is just tokenism. Nobody went deep and took the initiative to prepare the Long Term Perspective Plan. In 1980, the Shukla Commission was constituted, which categorically recommended so many things. Then, during the UPA-I, under the leadership of Mani Shankar Aiyar, one Mission 2020 was prepared. That Mission has prepared vision document, which are available. But that plan is absent.

So, Sir, I would like to suggest as to what should be done. The communication is a big handicap in the North-East, which has to be improved. There is a problem of connectivity, which has to be improved. We have the NEC, which was formed long back. But what is it doing? My suggestion is that either it should be scrapped or it should be upgraded.

I am not undermining the hon. Minister Jintendra Singh Ji. He is the Chairman of the North-Eastern Council. But the Members are the Governors and the Chief Ministers. So, under the Chairmanship of a MoS at the Centre, how will the NEC meet? The Prime Minister should chair the NEC.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY: The MoS should be upgraded.

Bamboo is another resource. China's resource and India's resource is same, and India is also having the similar amount of resources, what China has. According to the information, China is making more than one thousand

billion dollars out of the bamboo industry. But our stake is less than two per cent. Still today in India, bamboo is put sometimes in the Horticulture Ministry, sometimes in the Agriculture Ministry and sometimes in the Afforestation Ministry.

On 1st December, 2014, the North-Eastern Industrial Infrastructure Policy Promotion was suspended. I am just asking my BJP colleagues. They are saying, all right we are doing and our Prime Minister is very kind. There was this policy and it has now been suspended for the last more than one year. This aspect has to be taken care of. Only by spending some money, nothing will happen. My categorical suggestion is that the North-Eastern Council should be upgraded and a long perspective plan should be drawn up by the Ministry.

SHRI VARAPRASAD RAO VELAGAPALLI (TIRUPATI): I am grateful to the Chair.

Sir, the earlier speakers have very clearly mentioned that it is an extremely sensitive issue both from the racial and location point of view. For more than one reason, the North-Eastern region is extremely sensitive area. It deserves all the care that the Government could give to it. During the last sixty years, I am of the opinion that the due care that it deserves has not been given. At least in future, for more than one reason, particularly from the security point of view, due care has to be given. The sooner we realize this, the better it is.

Recently, I have visited those places. There is a lot of unrest amongst the people for more than one reason. Therefore, the sooner we realize this, the better it is for the country. The funds are inadequate. We have not considered them adequately for the last 60 – 70 years. So, either it is Kashmir or the North-East, the fund allocation should be drastically improved. They deserve much better improvements in our own interests and in the country's interest and it should be done. A lot of projects are pending to my knowledge. The roads, infrastructure, power projects - all are half-way done. Not much interest is being taken to get environmental clearance and all that. During my Parliamentary Committee visit, we had interacted with quite a few local people. So, enough thrust is not being given to implement the projects that are pending for quite some time.

The earlier speakers have mentioned about the great potential that the North East has as far as tourism is concerned. Bio-diversity is extremely high.

From child to old man, from educated to uneducated, man and woman - all kinds of people could survive. It has wonderful products. Therefore, the focus could be made on tourism so that the area could be developed fast.

It also has a lot of beauty. At least to my knowledge, the three natural beauty spots in India are the Andamans, the North-East and Kashmir. In fact, unfortunately, all the three places are getting lesser attention than what they deserve.

Culturally also, they need to have their own identity because their social life is different. They are fun loving people. They are not as serious as the other people who are here. Therefore, we have to accept that and see that how this cultural life of theirs is be improved.

As many Members have said, road connectivity and telecommunication connectivity really deserve attention. It is extremely poor. From village to village, there is no proper road. Therefore, the Government should really step into that, allocate more funds and take care of that.

Coming to youth, there is lot of unemployment. Therefore, the Government should take some initiatives. Perhaps, what it can do is, a particular percentage of reservation could be given on the mainland so that the people from the North-East could also have employment on the mainland and also vice-versa. Some special grades could be given for the people who are going to work in the North-East. That way it will be extremely helpful.

As I was mentioning, we should take enough care to bring the people onto the mainstream. Already about 60-70 years back, in fact, the extremism and insurgency started there. Although to a vast extent by force we are able to control but not by the will of the people. Therefore, the Government's will is required to take the people into confidence to bring them onto the mainstream.

The Tribal land is another extremely sensitive issue. Their lands have to be protected. Their rights have to be protected. At the same time, there is a lot

of potential for the lands to be developed. In fact, if the Government is able to do it in a big way, then there is a lot of scope as far as organic agriculture is concerned. There is a lot of scope for this. The Government of India could step in a big way for the development of organic agriculture there. Similarly, it has a lot of scope for horticulture, handicrafts, bamboos, timber, tea and minerals. Therefore, what they can do is, in the interests of the country itself, if proper attention is given I am sure it will help in a big way.

There is one more important thing that we are coming across. I come from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, in the sense I have worked in Tamil Nadu as an IAS officer for too long. Since there is no adequate health facilities, hospitals and all that, the North-East people are coming in a large scale to Chennai and also to Hyderabad. So, it is affecting them in two ways. One is, it is extremely far away. It is almost 3,000 kilometres away. The expenditure is too high. The culture is different. The language is different. They are coming in a large way. I see it in Apollo hospital. It is flooded with North-East people and people from West Bengal. Of course, West Bengal is a separate part. So, unless we adequately improve the facility of education as well as health, I think we have to go a long way. It will be extremely difficult later. In the case of education also, it is the same problem. We also see stray incidents in Bengaluru and Delhi. Whenever the North-East students come here, they are not able to get adequate protection and all that. So, it shows that still they are not able to join the mainstream. So, the Government has to take some initiative to ensure that they are also part of us and they should be

given adequate facilities, protection, development and all that. Thank you so much, Sir.

SHRI RAM PRASAD SARMAH (TEZPUR): Sir, thank you for allowing me to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of DoNER today.

The Ministry of DoNER was conceptualized and created in 2001 by our NDA Government led by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji. It is designed to develop the North-East which remained neglected for more than seven decades primarily under the Congress rule. Even the All-India Service officers deputed from here and working there would not look into the interests of the North-East. They would rather look into their own interest and that has become a sort of imposition of colonial rule in the North-East. There is a lot of work to be undertaken.

Connectivity is a major factor. In respect of rail connectivity, we still do not have double track. Still we do not have electrification on the railway tracks. The trains are not that better. The coaches are old and dilapidated. Even the Rajdhani Express does not fulfill that category for the North-East. There is no air connectivity to most parts of the North-East.

Even in my constituency, Tezpur, there is no direct connectivity from Delhi or other places of India. Water connectivity, which used to be one of the most important medium for transportation of goods and services many years back, is now an abandoned project. The new Government under the leadership of our beloved Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has taken up

various schemes for development of the North East. Double tracking of rail lines has now been sanctioned; air connectivity has been upgraded and enhanced. So also, for water transportation system, Shri Nitin Gadkari has already earmarked a plan to start water ships, hovercrafts and other modes of water transport and navigation. Road connectivity has now been taken up. We have started constructing four-lane roads in my constituency including other parts of North East.

North East is a potential reservoir and power house for the entire country. If you want to see Switzerland, go to Tawang. If you want to see Scotland, go to Shillong. If you want to see Prairies of America, go to Meghalaya. It is the most beautiful place. I must confess before you that I have never desired to travel outside India because my country, India has all the beauties of the world. We have got Himalayas, mountains, oceans, jungles, deserts, biodiversity centres and everything what the other parts of the world would show us. Go to Nagaland, it is very beautiful. Go to Kohima, you can see the entire plains of other parts of the State. Go to Tripura, it is the most peaceful State in India. It is the most developed and corruption free State in India with very high literacy rate. This is the potential of the North East.

What the Congress Government did in the last 70 years is the total neglect and Cinderella like treatment, which has led to the youth of the North East to take up arms. Almost every community has a feeling of neglect and has started taking up arms. It has become a sort of industry now and is

beyond the control. The Government of India is trying its best to control the insurgency in the North East.

I am happy that our beloved Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has sent saffron from Kashmir in the form of Dr. Jitendra Singh to energise the North East and I am hopeful that he would certainly energise the North East and bring it in the developed map of India. We have 52 rivers flowing in Assam. Water is in abundance. We have 200 rivers and streams flowing there. We have 200 communities in the North East. Assam alone has 58 communities. We do not walk there, we dance. We do not talk, we sing. That is the culture of the North East. We have 200 types of dialects, 200 types of dresses and customs, 200 hundred types of food habits and 200 types of cultures. This is our North East. But it was forlorn and forgotten for about seven decades. Now, it is getting a new life.

The NEC was hub of corruption till now. But gradually it is taking up development works. Road development should be the prime objective of the NEC. Corruption should be totally rooted out. I would request the hon. Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi ji to upgrade the post of MoS to the post of Cabinet Minister so that he can participate in the Cabinet meetings. Since he will become the Cabinet Minister, the Governor and the Chief Minister forming part of the NEC would also be under him. Otherwise, they think that MoS cannot lead us and cannot preside over a meeting. That is a feeling among the Governors and Chief Ministers of North-Eastern States.

Then, we have got problems of navigation also. We can transport many things from Dhaka to other parts of the North-East and that connectivity should be developed.

Air connectivity to the North-East must be developed because tourism has great potential in the North-East. If you want any kind of tourism - religious tourism, biodiversity tourism, adventure tourism, water tourism, wildlife tourism – it is there in the North-East. Kaziranga National Park, the centre for one-horned rhino, is facing a threat. It is the only such centre in the world. It is an old heritage centre. It must be protected. The Government of Assam, the State's Minister of Forest Department was involved in poaching of rhinos and cutting of trees, leading to destruction of forest.

Sir, I would request the hon. Prime Minister of India as well as Dr. Jitendra Singh to seriously take up the issue of NEC so that the NEC does its work and augments inter-State water connectivity. Roads in Assam are in a very bad shape. In the entire North-East, village roads are worst maintained, and corruption is the root of all causes, all cancers in the North-East.

Sir, I am thankful to you and other hon. Members who have participated in the debate and spoke about the problems of the North-East.

Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV (BANKA): Hon. Chairperson, thank you for allowing me to speak on the demands for grants of the North Eastern Regional Development Ministry for the fiscal year 2016-17. In the North East, primarily Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, and Sikkim are the extremely backward regions where the population resides amidst forests, hills, and the lap of nature. India has been referred to as the Golden Bird, but questions arise when we talk about the North East, Bihar, or Kashmir. That's why India has been called the Golden Bird. After independence, the bread of development should have reached everywhere, but that bread did not reach. That bread didn't reach, instead, it burnt. The horse of development, which was supposed to gallop, did not advance in the Northeast region and states like Bihar. There were shortcomings, but it is not a matter of blaming any single Government. We need to introspect and see how to shape everyone's destiny in this picture of India. Therefore, today we need to integrate this region into the mainstream of development.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that if you want to see heaven on earth, look at Kashmir, and it is also said that Kashmir is a piece of our heart. In the same way, the North East is also a piece of our heart. Its honour and development are indeed our development. Therefore, it is our responsibility to develop this region. The Hon. Minister is here, and naturally, everyone has expectations. The light of development should reach everyone, as our flag of

pride extends to the border areas. When we visit the Tawang region or Sikkim region, the Chinese border is visible. Soldiers from both sides stand on guard there. Sometimes, when we have gone with the committee, we have had the opportunity to shake hands with the soldiers stationed at the border. In those snowy areas, nature has bestowed upon us immense wealth and beauty. North East is our smiling garden, our orchard, our beautiful fragrant flower garden, cradled in the lap of nature. The honor of the North-East will come through work, through infrastructure development, so today we must stay strong at the border. The border has to be protected, while its respect and development have to be taken forward.

Sir, along with that, we need to pay more attention to economic development, and social development matters. The backward areas, the areas which are our backbenchers, we need to integrate them into the mainstream. Along with this, there is Bihar. As soon as we go to Kishanganj, we cross over to Siliguri and reach Sikkim. In the route of one and a half hours through the mountains, there comes a snowy area. How do people live there? There are mothers, sisters, sons, and daughters living there, so education should develop there, economic development should happen there, and hospitals should be opened there for their health. The development of the North-East should be in sync with the country's pace. Governments come and go.

I am not accusing anyone, but there has indeed been discrimination against the North-East and Bihar as well. Give special status to the North-

East, empower it. We demand justice for the North-East and Bihar alike. The fight will continue until we achieve victory in this battle. The Hon. Minister is smiling, so it seems that my path is right. There should be better roads, transportation facilities, proper management of irrigation, and lift irrigation for development to happen in the Northeast and for its respect to increase.

Floods occur in Assam, affecting the entire region either through floods or droughts. There is no clean drinking water available there. The tourism sector can be developed there. Several religious sites can be developed there. Cottage industries and small-scale industries can be established there. Fish farming can be done there. Agriculture needs to be promoted. Organic farming needs to be encouraged. The railway infrastructure needs to be improved. We need to focus on security and protection. We need to enhance the heritage of language and culture there, and we need to enhance the security of our forces that protect tourism and security at the border in that region. We must honour the development of the North-East. Along with that, we must also integrate Bihar, which is the heart's piece, into the stream of development.

I will conclude by saying that the development of the North-East has to be accelerated. The Government says inclusive growth for all. Develop the North-East, Build the North-East. Start-Up India should be everywhere, but the engine of development should reach the North-East first, and people should feel that we are starting the Start-Up from there. "Make in India", will also be made from there. We're not saying it will be made from one particular

place. Our land is not weak, but uplifts the marginalized, and empowers them. Similarly, Skill India will also be developed from there. We conclude our discussion with an emphasis on granting Bihar the status of a special State due to its distinctive attire, language, and way of life. Let us accelerate the flow of development in the North-East. Thank you.

DR. ARUN KUMAR (JEHANABAD): Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to discuss the demands for funds under the Ministry of Development of the North-Eastern Region.

Sir, several Hon. Members have expressed their views here, and Hon. Member Chowdhary Ji and other colleagues have also extensively discussed the Northeast.

Sir, the Northeast is the brain of India, and undoubtedly, during the struggle for independence, especially under the leadership of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, the states of the Northeast contributed significantly, playing a pivotal role in the fight for independence. Since independence, all the Governments at the center have only known how to rule the states. Misunderstanding the concept of a welfare state, they turned it into a ruling state, where ad hoc Government work continued. How did the money go from here, how was it siphoned off, and how were things implemented on paper? The result was that over the past 25-30 years, the common people in the northeastern states were deprived of development, which led to a climate of distrust towards the Central Government in this country. Money was looted, and development was obstructed. However, under NDA-1, led by Shri

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, concerns were expressed about the northeast, and a committee was formed to initiate action. But when the Government changed in between, the same ad-hoc rule was reinstated.

Hon. Speaker, in 1996, under the leadership of Shri George Fernandes, I visited Moreh on the Burma border. In Moreh, around three thousand socialists from across the country had gathered under the leadership of Shri George Fernandes. The way discussions were underway regarding anti-drug trafficking and the restoration of democracy in Burma, the way people were pushing the youth there into the drug trade, by engaging them in its business and consumption, the way our Governments have been complicit in exploiting the youth power and how foreign powers have also been involved, has completely devastated the entire social structure, cultural, and political heritage of the North-Eastern states.

Sir, Dr. Lohia used to assert that the primary threat to India emanates from the borders of the North-East, while the secondary border threat lies with Jammu and Kashmir's border with Pakistan. Therefore, during Shri Lohia Ji's tenure, his followers, the socialist people, were concerned about the development of the North-East. Today, Mr. Jayaprakash Ji was discussing about the region there, but he joined hands with the destructive elements of the North-East, and now he is facing backlash. However, the truth is that the campaigns led by George Fernandes ji and Dr. Lohia in that region have certainly paved the way for progress under the leadership of India's Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi today. Those who were followers of Dr. Lohia

were non-Congress individuals, they compromised only for power by keeping it at the centre and those who were leaders of the 1974 movement, too have buried all principles today just for power. Therefore, today a dedicated minister, Hon. Jitendra Singh has been appointed there for a specific task. I have full confidence that under the leadership of the Prime Minister, from the perspective of national security, from the perspective of development, and bringing the North-East into the mainstream, there is a need for a committed comprehensive structure and a path to enhance development. As we were returning from More and stayed overnight in Kohima, I felt like this was truly heaven. Therefore, by harnessing the natural beauty and resources of the Northeast, which are essential for sustainable development, and bringing the youth into the mainstream, we can make our nation a formidable power, and this is extremely crucial. Hence, with Prime Minister's progressive and nationalistic vision towards the Northeast, today the entire nation stands with him, and we congratulate the Government for this. Thank you.

SHRI BADRUDDIN AJMAL (DHUBRI): Mr. Chairperson Sir, I am grateful to you for allowing me to speak on the important issues of the North-East. I am also grateful to the Minister for attentively listening to this discussion. I am grateful to the entire House for taking the matter of the North-East seriously and for sincerely considering the need to take action. The Hon. Minister has visited Assam on numerous occasions during this period. I would urge him to visit more often; there is a need for further awareness. This area is referred to as the Seven Sisters and it's exclusively a hilly region. You've seen it yourself, so there is a need to visit that area more often. We only discuss the issues pertinent to that area. The steps you have taken are commendable. Keep moving forward and there is a need to further enhance them. When it comes to the matter of the North-East, the first obstacle we see in its development is floods and erosion. I have earlier raised the issue of the Brahmaputra multiple times in Parliament. Unless the intensity of the Brahmaputra is brought under control, any development in the Northeast is impossible. Because every year thousands of acres of land are destroyed and thousands of people are displaced from their homes.

Today, due to this very reason, according to Government reports, children from the Northeast have to go outside for higher education, up to 65 to 85 percent. I would like to say to the Hon. Minister to focus on schools and colleges. The girls from our states who go out to study, whether in other states or anywhere else in India, face incidents almost ten to twelve times a year in Delhi alone, which is a matter of great regret. If all these things start

becoming available to them in their States, then they won't have to go outside. Until you declare flood and erosion as a national calamity, the development of the Northeast is impossible. In the case of the Northeast, the most significant issue is that everyone has expressed concern about the issue of infiltration, which is a significant concern. I would like to tell the fact that it is the policy of our party AIUDF that on March 25, 1971, the Assam Accord was held, whoever came a day after that should be treated as a foreigner. I would like to draw the attention of Minister to this matter. He should clearly state that they are outsiders. You should take them to the border, and shoot them, we have no objection. Put them in jails, put them in detention camps, we have no concern about that. But a native citizen, who has been living here for generations, for over a hundred or two hundred years, should not be labelled as foreigner, should not be beaten, should not be subjected to violence. The reality is that a Governor comes and says that 70 lakh Bangladeshis have come. Someone comes and claims that the number has reached 50 lakhs.

I present the report of the assembly. You should get the report. I was also present in the assembly. There it happened [*English*] In this connection, let me give an example of foreigners in Goalpara. [*Translation*] This is a matter concerning deportees. There are more than 95 cases. Those who have contested have been cleared. Those who did not contest due to poverty or were in Bihar, Bengal, Delhi, Lucknow, and everywhere, are working. Poor people cannot reach. They cannot appear in court, so they are helplessly

declared to be Bangladeshis. But the reality is that if they can fight their case, not a single Bangladeshi should remain in Assam or anywhere in India. Our party is not in favor of this. We are strongly opposed to this. They should be sent back, and no leniency should be shown towards them. This issue creates thousands of problems for our country. Today, the issue of security is emerging as a concern for us. But I will quote just one thing, please note this: the AGP, which is currently in alliance with you, when their Government came to power, our leader Mr. Advani Ji was the Home Minister at that time. They brought them into the party, and with their support, the Government was formed and ruled for ten years. Their main issue was the issue of foreigners. We need to stop infiltration and expel the infiltrators from outside. The real fact is that they had the opportunity for over ten years. Mr. Rudy Ji, I urge you to pay attention to this. *[English]* In the ten-year-long period, they also identified only 6,724 people and deported only 521 people. During 1985-90 and in its second term period of 1996-2000, they had identified only 902 people and deported only 102 people.

[Translation] Sir, this is the assembly's report. If there are millions of people, you should catch them. It should not be that when the election comes, this becomes the biggest issue. If these are indeed illegal individuals, remove them, and deport them. I stated here that we must wipe this stain from our forehead. We want this issue to be resolved. This is our clear stance, and we stand with you on this matter. Wherever we need to go, whomever we need to apprehend, we will do so. If a Bangladeshi infiltrate, they will find shelter

in a Muslim household. We will apprehend you, and take our support. We move forward from here.

Now, I would like to address another issue. The biggest issue for Assam is crude oil, which is the major source of our income. To the best of our knowledge, we are not aware of this matter. Crude oil production in Assam started a hundred years ago in Digboi. After that, what is happening now is that by laying a pipeline of two thousand kilometers, it is being taken to Odisha. The income of Assam is being taken elsewhere.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY: There is no connection with Odisha. Pipelines do not go to Odisha.

SHRI BADRUDDIN AJMAL: Where does he go?

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY: It goes to Bihar etc.

SHRI BADRUDDIN AJMAL: Sorry. It goes to Bihar. They transport it through a two-thousand-kilometer pipeline. Sorry, you can return, it's okay, we'll take it to Bihar. This is a very serious issue. This is the largest source of income for Assam, and people's sentiments are associated with it. You should conduct it in Assam, and increase its production, and as much as you escalate it, the people of Assam will be happy, stay with you, and bless you.

The second issue is related to the tea industry. This is the largest industry in Assam. Today, the tea industry is declining day by day. Every day, one by one, tea industries are closing down. Its future doesn't seem promising. The sentiment of the people of Assam is aligned with both the

crude oil and tea industry of Assam. Similarly, during industrial development, when I was in the Assam Assembly, I asked a question. The response given on the floor was regrettable. Every day, ten, twenty, fifty, or a hundred industries are developed across India, but it's regrettable that in Assam, every day, two, four, five, or ten industries are shutting down. There are many reasons for this. We are short of time, otherwise, we would delve into its details. Industrial development, the industrialists from outside, the big industrial families, until you invite them, provide them safety and security, Assam cannot progress. Today, there is a problem of unemployment of more than 35 lakh there. Until this is resolved, the issues there cannot be resolved.

Similarly, many of our brothers have spoken about tourism. Assam is indeed a paradise. You must have visited it yourself and seen that it is a piece of paradise after Kashmir. It's a very beautiful place, but it's not being promoted. Until it is promoted, unemployment will increase. Therefore, it should be promoted, which will attract people from outside, your name will be known worldwide, and your respect will increase, so you must pay attention to the tourism industry.

Within Assam, there should be more universities, medical colleges, and colleges. There, children score between 87 percent, 90 percent, and 95 percent marks. You will be surprised, it is heart-breaking that there are no colleges, or universities in Assam where these children can go and study. Thousands of children have to go to Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, and

so on. Many people lack financial strength, forcing them to disconnect from their education. The issue of girls is most serious in this matter.

In Assam, there is a major problem, there is no permission for night flights to land. Several of our colleagues have also raised concerns about the lack of permission for night landing. This also poses a significant problem in our region. Overall, for everyone, Assam is like a beautiful garden. Many people have expressed it in the form of poetry. I don't have the words of poetry myself. Even R.P. Singh Ji has said it, and Mr. Yadav Saheb has said it, if I had the strength or had witnessed it myself, I would have composed very good poetry. But, Dr. Saheb, I have great hope from you that you will address the issues of the Northeast practically, not just in poetic terms. ...
(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI VINCENT H. PALA (SHILLONG): Hon. Chairperson, thank you for allowing me to speak on the Demand for Grant No. 34 on the Ministry of the Development of the North Eastern Region. When we talk about the north-eastern regions, we talk about the strategic location, we talk about the tourism, we talk about the culture of the people, we talk about the richness in minerals, and we talk about the rich biodiversity and everything.

Before saying all this, I would like to first emphasize how the present Government has tried to totally desert the people of northeast. The first one who has done it is the Department itself. Firstly, what they have done is that

after they have come to power, they have degraded the position of the Minister from the Cabinet level. Since the inception of the Ministry, there has always been a Minister of Cabinet rank. For a small time, when the Minister was not well, the Minister of State was in charge. Secondly, this is the only Ministry where you see that five Secretaries have been transferred in a span of two years. Thirdly, when the Prime Minister was in Manipur, he was giving a lecture about the Vastu that South means not very good luck, West means not very good luck, only northeast is supposed to be the best and most lucky place. At eleven of the clock, he was giving a lecture and at one of the clock, they issued notification to withdraw the Northeast Industrial Promotion Policy. Right from 2007, this policy has continued but they have withdrawn it.

On one hand, they are promoting northeast, on the other hand, they have withdrawn all the incentives for the industries in the northeast. Another thing is that in the northeast, we have special category status and we get 90 per cent share from the Centre and 10 per cent from the State. This 90:10 share is there but they have withdrawn the special category status for the people of the northeast. They have done many things, but since they are good in marketing, I don't know whether the people of northeast will be voting for them or not.

If you look at the utilization of fund, in 2013-14 during the Congress time, there was 89 per cent of utilization of fund and in 2013-14 it was 90 per cent. But the moment they came to power, in 2014-15 it became 76 per cent

and in 2015-16 it was 78 per cent. I think at present, it will be less than 70 per cent.

These are few things which the Department has systematically demolished and they have deserted the people of the northeast. Look at the delay in the works, whether it is because of the terrain or because of the climatic conditions. Then there is the system of processing of files in the Department. First, the State has to give a proposal and it goes to the Ministry of Development of the North Eastern Region. From the Ministry of Development of the North Eastern Region, it goes to the aligned Ministry, from the aligned Ministry it comes back to the Ministry of Development of the North Eastern Region and from there it goes to the State. The system is so complicated that they can't utilize the fund properly. So, I request the hon. Minister to simplify the system so that they can utilize the fund.

Another thing is that a majority of works especially in road construction is most difficult in two things. One is the environmental clearance and the second is the land tenure system. In tribal areas, the land cannot be acquired easily. It has to be done through a proper system. It has to be done in a quite sensitive manner. Since the majority of northeast States are full of forests, we should not apply the same law in the northeast which is applicable in Delhi. So, I request the hon. Minister to simplify the system of environmental clearance.

The choice of the contractor is another thing. I think, the Ministry should spend more money on training or skill development so that the

contractor could be skilled and the work could be allotted. What we have seen is that people who come from outside find a different culture and a lot of difficulties and therefore surrender the work. So, I request the Minister to simplify some of the conditions.

When we talk about the North-East, we have lack of connectivity be it digital connectivity, air, connectivity, road connectivity, or rail connectivity. I request the Minister to work on the Comprehensive Telecom Plan for the North-East Region. I am told, the fibre network augmentation has been started. I think, we will get it *via* Tripura and that would boost the connectivity of the rest of the North-East. I request the Minister to connect through fibre all the States so that we can get the connectivity because nowadays Internet connection is very important.

When we talk about extremism in the North-East, we should understand that it is a strategic location where 90 per cent of the area is surrounded by international boundaries. There might be influence from the outside also. But we should congratulate the Congress Government under Shri Tarun Gogoi. They have signed the agreement. I am happy that the ULFA man who was in the jungle for many years is now witting with us because of the Congress Government.

They are talking about the Naga Accord. This is not the first time they have signed a Naga Accord. There was a Shillong Accord earlier; many other accords have also been signed. But whatever accords have been signed for the first three or four times have failed because of various problems. They

have signed only the framework. The details are yet to be worked out. I request them to work seriously. If Assam and Nagaland are peaceful, the rest of the North-East will be peaceful.

With these words, I thank you for giving me time. I hope, under the present Minister, we will move forward.

[Translation]

SHRI KAUSHALENDRA KUMAR (NALANDA): Hon. Chairperson, thank you very much for providing the opportunity to discuss the demands for grants under the Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region.

The Government is committed to the development of the North-Eastern region, which is a positive step. The north-eastern region is quite sensitive, plagued by local insurgency and lack of resources, especially in terms of less productive agriculture. There is also significant poverty, unemployment, and lack of basic amenities such as schools and colleges, good medical colleges, engineering colleges, and top universities. All these fundamental issues that exist today in the development of the North-Eastern region, and the steps that the Government has taken are commendable, and I welcome them. But just now when I was listening to the speech of Satpathy Maharaj, he has studied a lot, I understand that after reading many books on the North-Eastern Region, he was putting his point here. It seems that if development has not occurred there after so many days of independence, then somewhere there is a drawback in the way money is being spent and the method of spending it that should be there. I don't want to blame any Government, whether it's been the Congress party's Government or the NDA Government. It's not like that. But especially in the North-Eastern region, which comprises eight States, except for Assam, almost all states are hilly, and there are plenty of opportunities there. There are various types of resources there, plenty of trees, it's a mountainous region, and there is natural beauty, so there is also the potential

for tourism there. I understand that all Hon. Members from different states have raised important points, and I also wish to contribute to addressing them. Whether it's about roads or any other issue, there is a need to improve them effectively. We need to improve rail services and establish air travel facilities from where people can commute.

16.59 hours (Shri Anandrao Adsul *in the Chair*)

The educated youth there are opting to work abroad, which is hindering the development of the region.

17.00hours

I would also request support for that Hon. Minister is sitting here. Their mindset and the financial assistance they have provided for the development of the north-eastern region are certainly commendable. However, they also need to pay attention to the expenditure and maintenance of those funds.

Sir, I come from Bihar. The discussion on development in Bihar is taking place across the entire nation today. Whether it is Bihar, Odisha, or the neighbouring State of Jharkhand, attention needs to be given to these backward States as well. Our leader Shri Nitish Kumar Ji has been consistently fighting for granting the status of a special State to Bihar since the year 2006. This was also the belief of the Prime Minister of this country. He also stated in his speech that the country's progress is possible only when every State progresses. The north-eastern states should be developed, but along with them, all the backward states, whether it be Bihar, Odisha, or

Jharkhand, should also be developed. Hon. Prime Minister had said that if his government were to come to power, they would grant Bihar the status of a special State. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Minister to also pay attention to Bihar. All of us MPs from Bihar cannot separate ourselves from this issue. When Bihar progresses, only then will our people progress. The future that awaits belongs to all of us. The progress of Bihar and the North-East will lead to the progress of the entire country. With these words, I conclude my remarks.

Thank you very much.

[English]

SHRI NEIPHIU RIO (NAGALAND): Thank you, Sir, for giving me time to participate in this discussion.

Sir, you are aware that Northeast is rich in resources but we remained poor because the resources are not exploited and potentials are not being pursued for economic progress. I am from Nagaland State and am a lone Member. Nagaland is a problematic State. It is known for the longest and the oldest model of insurgency in Asia. Nagaland had not participated in two General Elections; 1952 and 1957, which means we missed two plan periods. Therefore, while the Northeast remains as very backward and less developed, Nagaland remains more backward.

Sir, you are aware that because of insurgency we have faced all the problems and we could not take up developmental activities. After signing 16-Point Agreement in 1960, the Statehood was created in 1963, development of the State started but till today, after 53 years of Statehood, there is no tangible development in the State of Nagaland. There is no medical college, no engineering college and no national or regional institute worth the name and that is why all further educations are pursued outside the State.

Like the Northeastern States, only 2 per cent of the land area is connected to the mainland and 98 per cent lies along the international borders. This is a very peculiar feature. Today, when we are discussing about

the Demands for DoNER Ministry and development of Northeastern region, I am delighted that many Members, not only Northeastern Members, have participated in the discussion very keenly. We have to see why DoNER Ministry was established.

It was set up under an Act of Parliament in 1971 and it was established as a statutory body to endeavor rapid economic development of the region. However, over the years the NEC budget is virtually declining and the DoNER budget is also stagnant at Rs.2400 crore for the eight States including Sikkim. So, it is a matter of concern that while we talk about the infrastructure development and of bringing these States at par with national level, I think the fund allocation should not be stagnant and it should not be declining.

When you specifically look at the North-East Council budgets – I will not go into details – over ten five year plans as regards approval and shortfall, the shortfall percentage is 28.24 per cent. Now in the Eleventh Five Year Plan also, the shortfall percentage is 56.07 per cent and in 12th Five Year Plan, the shortfall remains 53.80 per cent. I think it is a serious concern and therefore, I want to appeal that the Ministry of DoNER and NEC are taken good care. I know the policies and intention of the NDA Government led by hon. Prime Minister, Modiji. Much has been said but we have to be very serious on the implementation part.

Fifty-six Ministries have Rs.33000 crore and if you look at the Ministry of Coal, the budget provision was kept at Rs.30 crore but the utilisation was

zero. In the year 2016-17, the budget provision has been brought down to Rs.15 crore. Now this is a mineral rich area but small amount of money has not been utilised and the budget has been reduced also. It is a matter of concern.

I also want to mention that national average of CD ratio is 70 per cent but for north-east, it is below 40 per cent. Let me cite one example. The Bharatiya Mahila Bank is a women bank. It was implemented through an Act of Parliament all over the country except Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh. Only four States were left out. I would request the hon. Minister as also the Minister of State for Finance that it should cover the whole country. Why have you left out the four States in the north-east? The Bharatiya Mahila Bank should be opened in these four States also which have been left out. The seed money was Rs.1000 crore. Since women are more sincere and committed, they have made a profit of Rs. 30 crore in two years. Therefore, I feel that we should encourage it and initially we should put in more money. Mere slogans will not do. We have to implement the vision and promise of our hon. Prime Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN (MADHEPURA): Hon. Chairperson, I will begin with a line from Vinoba Bhave Ji, in which he clearly stated that the freedom given by the British remained in their pocket. The Acharya spoke about the complexities of independent India and the appropriate absorption due to the lack of political willpower. I would like to sincerely express that I have been visiting each state in that region for a long time since childhood, to observe nature. But it seems that within India, another country resides. The influence of China's culture, diverse cuisine, the world wrapped around rivers, the longest island, snow-covered peaks of Kanchenjunga, winding roads, the world's wettest place, dense enchanting forests, torrential rain, tea gardens, traditional dwellings scattered with beauty, and the yak in the forests - such is the confluence of spirituality and nature in the Northeast.

Our historians have accepted this with great heart, mind, and action, and have always reiterated it. Sometimes a question arises of whether the chicken or the egg came first. This question has been consistently posed by politicians and political systems alongside the North-East. I believe that any problem in the country is the biggest product of politicians and the biggest contribution to the political system. The exploitation of the North-East by our own people has resulted in a situation of hunger, violence, drug abuse, and hatred in the region. The continuous efforts made by the political system to create such conditions cannot be forgotten.

Shri Jitendra Ji, you will be amazed to know that injustice and exploitation have been perpetrated in that region in an organized manner, so we urge you to look at the North-East beyond slogans, idioms, and books. Development will happen from the pages of books when you talk about peace and tranquillity. Development will happen when we eliminate the sense of insecurity among the people of the North-East. If I mention the name of V.P. Menon or other individuals, the way North-East has been divided into nationalism and sub-nationalism, by the people of India and political figures, when you look at it, whether it's Chinese or Nepali, whichever language you speak, it seems that due to our behaviour and conduct, even today there is a feeling of doubt and insecurity among them. Whether it's about Naga nationalism, the Mizo armed insurgency in the 1960s, Sikkim's status, the question of India in 1947, or the atrocities on the Kuki tribe, have you addressed these issues? The passion for independence and autonomy exists in that region.

Respected sir, we must not rush into any solution. All the remarks made about development, particularly by our Ajmal ji and our friends from Nagaland, have been noted. I would like to first appeal regarding the matter of development. I urge you to incorporate the nature of that place into your life in some way. There is such an abundance of natural resources there that the Indian Government does not need to provide any resources; it just needs to set its intentions right. The North-East could potentially become the finest State or region in the world. We may not need to provide resources, but one

thing must be remembered - actions speak louder than words, and in adversity, one must practice what they preach. As much as the British looted India from other countries, India's politicians tried to perceive the Northeast as a secondary entity. It is not accorded the singular Status of India. We have seen the Northeast as a secondary entity. So, when it comes to water, what Ajmal ji said about the river first, today stands true.... (Interruptions) I would like to talk about three or four points. Firstly, special facilities should be provided there.

We urge you to keep in mind the way the owners and brokers are exploited in the tea garden along with tourism. The process of exploitation has continued since the time of the British. We believe that by harnessing the energy potential of the rivers, water bodies, and streams in that region, we can empower the entire nation in terms of energy and strengthen it economically. ... (Interruptions) There are certain communities like Bodo and Rajvanshi in Assam and other regions. Communities that are more distressed than Dalits in Hindustan, we have repeatedly appealed to you to include us in the Scheduled Caste category. The Rajvanshi community, Bodo, particularly the Rajvanshi caste, should be included in the Scheduled Caste category in that region.... (Interruptions) Solution for flood - if there is something that can be done first, it is to address the issues of flooding and the continuous landslides and collapses in that region. ... (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN: We need to engage in dialogue with all extremist organizations that are scattered due to insecurity and make them understand that they are Indians.... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Owaisi, please start.

. . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN: India is ready to ensure its dignity and economic security. The sense of insecurity within them needs to be eliminated. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Rajesh Ji, your statement is not being recorded. Let them speak.

... *(Interruptions)*... *

* Not recorded.

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI (HYDERABAD): Sir, at the outset, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether his Minister is a coordinating Ministry or an implementing Ministry.

My second question is, why has this Government suspended NEIIP under which you have suspended registration of all new schemes thereby hampering the business potential of the North-East.

My third question is about NLCPR. Between 1998-99 and 2012-13, Rs. 23,211 crore had accrued in NLCPR out of which only Rs. 10,412 crore have been utilized. Will the Government allow the remaining Rs. 11,000 crore also to be utilized?

My fourth question to the hon. Minister is like this. In the last few years, the actual expenditure in NLCPR has been lower than the budget estimates. For example, in 2013-14, 112 projects were sanctioned, the cost of the projects was Rs. 1583 crore and funds released were only Rs. 619 crore. I can go on narrating such examples but these are the figures which I am quoting to the hon. Minister.

My fifth question is about the delay in implementing the projects in NLCPR. In Assam, 32 projects are pending for the last one year and 583 projects are pending for the last five years and for more than five years, 61 projects have been pending. So, 176 projects are pending. The cost of the delayed projects in Assam has now gone up to Rs. 1341 crore. I know that you are in power for two years. But there is a list of projects which are

pending. About 49 projects are pending for the last five years in Arunachal Pradesh. In Manipur, 54 projects are pending. Meghalaya and Mizoram has 35 and 33 pending projects respectively. Sikkim and Tripura have 29 and 25 pending projects respectively. There are a huge number of projects pending in North-Eastern States. The highest number is in Assam and then the second position is Arunachal Pradesh. Is the hon. Minister willing to examine whether the State Governments have the capacity to really make all the investigations, reports, etc. which lead to cost of escalation of projects and delay? I know that the Government has said that they have simplified the procedure. But can more be done to ensure that these projects are taken off from the ground and something worthwhile is done?

We see that many youths from the North East migrate to other States because of lack of educational facilities there. But what is this Government going to do to establish more universities, apart from one IIT and one IIM which are there? This focus only on transport, communication, power, renewal energy is not going to help though it is good. More needs to be done on the education front. Will this Government focus more on education to ensure that these funds are utilised?

My next issue is about the river projects in the North-East. China has started Zhangmu hydro power. We know that under this doctrine of prior appropriation, the first use of water will accrue to China. We have awarded 14 hydro power projects. Out of that only one has got environment clearance. From 2008 to 2010, 25 projects were putting on bidding block. Out of that

only 14 were given clearance by the Central Electricity Authority. It went to CWC. The CWC gave financial approval to one. By that time, you have run out of money. Now, what are we going to do to protect our rights because China is hell-bent on creating that Zhangmu project? So, what steps is this Government going to take?

My next question to the Minister is regarding de voters. In Assam you have 1,36,448 de voters. Surprisingly, 62 per cent are women. This Government has decided to give citizenship to all the Hindus who are there. The remaining names of Muslims are reflected in 1951 NRC. Why is this disparity? Why is this dual application? As I said, 62 per cent are women. As per Section 4 of the Foreign Tribunal Act, any one who does not appear in front of them, *ex parte* judgement is given. Will the Central Government take a definite look into it and ensure that these 1,36,448 cases are dealt with quickly and clearly? Thank you.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, those who want to lay their written speeches on the Table can do so. It will be treated as part of the proceedings.

SHRI PREM DAS RAI (SIKKIM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you. I rise to speak on the Demands for Grants 2016-17 of the Ministry of Development of the North East Region.

We have heard many Members speaking on this subject across the board and we have already discussed it for more than three and half hours.

The sense that prevails in the discussions that have ensued is that the potential of the Ministry of DoNER has not fulfilled the aspiration or the vision which our then hon. Prime Minister, Shri Vajpayee ji had had when this particular Ministry was formed in 2001.

There are just three more years left for the Government in this term to realise that particular potential. That potential really has been articulated by Members from all sides of this House. Under the leadership of our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, this impetus for looking at the North East from different perspectives, especially from the development perspective is right now on. But let us look at just one issue which will tell us what is the real difference. Say, for instance, today there are floods in Assam. There are landslides happening in different parts of North East because of torrential rain that is happening over there.

On the one hand, rest of the country is reeling under 40 degrees plus. On the other hand, we actually have a train carrying water from different parts of the country to a place like Latur. What will it then take for the North-East to be actually delivering the water, which is in excess, to the rest of the country? *[Translation]* This is just a point; not that it will get done but perhaps the difference is so stark. The North-East is blessed with a lot of water but if the railway lines, communications, road networks, pipelines do not exist, how will that really happen? This is just to show you that there is this particular difference.

There is another thing which we must credit the NDA Government with, and that is the reduction in the kind of atrocities that have plagued New Delhi for the North-Eastern students and the North-Eastern community in general. I think, steps have been taken both by the Delhi Government and the Home Ministry, especially Shri Kiren Rijiju, who is there from the North-East. This matter has not been reflected in this House today, and it shows that there has been a substantial decrease in that. We do hope that the mechanisms that have been set up will actually fructify further gains in this direction.

Let me get on with the task of actually stating that the DoNER, as I have already started saying, has not realised its potential. I will conclude, Sir.

Sikkim is the State for organic farming. As many of the previous speakers have already said that the amount that has been given or allocated to the Ministry in general and to the NEC is very poor. If I am not mistaken, we have been talking about this, especially a presentation has been given to the hon. Prime Minister from the North-East MPs Forum in which we had actually articulated how is it possible to now rise the level of development or accelerate it to a level so that we will be able to achieve visible and credible progress within the next three years. The crux of the matter today is as to how we are going to reach that. Some of the mentions made by different colleagues in this House are there. But I would like to touch one or two aspects.

One is an issue related to bamboo. Bamboo is such an important resource; it is a renewable resource; and it is also a resource where the carbon

sequestration is the highest. We are able to utilise it for a variety of purposes. It is well known. We are not able to do that for the simple reason that the Ministry of Environment & Forests will not remove it from the Act; definition of it has to be changed from a 'tree' to a 'grass'. I would request the hon. Minister, through you, that you need to do that.

Finally, let me make one other point related to DoNER, which is related to organic farming. Organic farming is there in Sikkim across the board. Sikkim has already got the branding, thanks to the Prime Minister, who came on the 18th of January, 2016 to celebrate with us the formation and declaration of Sikkim as an organic State. This has been received with great interest right across the North-East. I think, the DoNER can do a lot by way of supporting this venture. Thank you very much, Sir.

[Translation]

***SHRI AJAY MISHRA TENI (KHERI):** India is a multicultural country with diverse languages and cultures, enriched by various languages and cultures. The north-eastern region of the country is also an integral part of culturally and civically rich India. However, it is true and should be acknowledged that the people of this region have lagged politically, educationally and economically, and due to the lack of attention from previous Central Governments, there is a lack of roads, transportation,

* Speech was laid on the Table.

healthcare, and electrification in this region. The impact of this has also affected the mental state of the people in the North-Eastern region, leading to dissatisfaction in some areas and also dissatisfaction towards the Government.

NDA government has allocated Rs. 5000 crore in the budget for the development of the North East Region. The government is serious and committed to bringing the people in the mainstream by providing education, medical facilities, road connectivity, and employment opportunities. Undoubtedly, with the Government's efforts, this region will develop.

[English]

***PROF. RICHARD HAY (NOMINATED):** At the outset, I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Development of the North Eastern Region. The Government of India led by a charismatic leader, Shri Narendra Modiji who stands for inclusive growth. Hence, the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region have come out with a bevy of well conceived projects that would definitely result in the balanced development of this important region, which is strategically and resource wise so important. Lot of solid measures have been projected for not only for capacity building, but also to bring this beautiful necklace of eight States into the mainstream.

* Speech was laid on the Table

North-east is blessed abundantly by nature. It can be showcased as one of the brightest spots of tourism in the world. In fact, once you travel in North-East one can easily understand that the real potentials of North-East tourism has not been explored at all. There is tremendous scope for Nature, Culture, Wildlife and river tourism even rain tourism.

North-East is famous for its well flavoured tea, spices. Tea tourism is yet another area which could be promoted with other area of strength.

The beauty of North-East lies in its confluence of civilization- Indian, Tibetan, Burmese and others. The culture is unique and varied with 220 tribes, now co-existing in harmony. The festivals are fabulous indeed, the Hornbill festival, the pride of its place. The bio-diversity of the area, the flora and fauna of the area are great treasures of India.

There is lot of scope to make the region an international hub of orchids, after Holland. The National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education & Research has been established.

Once the road connectivity is made possible, the inflow of tourists will increase and result in considerable economic development.

North-East has a high reputation for its pillars of strength- education. The missionaries have established high class and renowned educational institutions. By the way, our new Member of Parliament Mary Kom – you are most welcome in this temple of democracy. There is lot of scope for

establishing a world class sports university and other specialized centres in North-East in all fields of learning.

The Tri-lateral highway connecting North-east India, Myanmar and Thailand will be commissioned soon. This will bring in a quantum jump in economic progress. The Minister of Transport and Highways has already announced Rs 20,000 crore Road projects including inland waterways.

It is for the first time that the Government of India has come forward to make North-East region as a key destination for socio-economic development. From its age old pathetic condition, North-East states are going to be revived, revitalized and recharged to be a hub of economic activities. A big leap for North-East indeed.

When North-East develops, it throws up a lot of opportunities for giving expression to the 'Look East' policy of the Government of India.

So, a neglected area for sixty years is now being taken care of by the Hon'ble Prime Minister by putting his heart and soul to provide the best to the people for all possible opportunities to grow and excel. Now, let us integrate mainstream and fuse together. North-East hill states have ample scope for exporting organic farming products by a G.I. method which I always profess. Tea, spices, vegetables of North-east are all famous. Bio-technology centres would be an asset.

Infrastructure development is being given a lot of emphasis. This is a pragmatic step that would ensure growth. There are two prominent Ministers

from the North-east, now the DONER Minister is playing a key role for development of North-east.

I will wind up on a personal note. When I was a young college lecturer I visited Assam and was enamoured by the beauty of place. But once dusk came, heavy rains thudded on the roof of the hotel, where I stayed which caused fear in me. But the beauty of these States and the gracious hospitality of the people are ever remembered by me.

Let these eight sisters flourish under the chairmanship of our Hon'ble Prime Minister and the people of North-East, our brothers and sisters.

As a member of a minority community, I place on record my deep appreciation of the commitment of the people of North-East who are yearning for development and prosperity. It is my privilege and honour to support this important Demands for Grants of the Ministry of North-East region.

[Translation]

***SHRI SHARAD TRIPATHI (SANT KABIR NAGAR):** We feel proud of our states in the North-Eastern region. May it be Sikkim, Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura or Nagaland. After visiting these states, one feels that nature has meticulously crafted these states during moments of leisure. When one observes these states, it feels as if these north-eastern states alone encompass the natural attributes of many countries worldwide. However, even though the Congress party governed the country for the majority of the time since independence, these States have still been neglected. This is even though the history of the North-Eastern States has been remarkable even during the independence movement. The forces of the Indian National Army led by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose had entered India through Assam and were successful in attaining recognition to have the first President of India.

There is an outcry today regarding water issues, and even in this aspect, the north-eastern states are fortunate, where Cherrapunji, known as the wettest place on earth, is located. Taking into account all these special features, our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Bhai Modi, has given a special gift of railway lines for the North-Eastern States after independence and has also undertaken the task of creating special plans for the conservation of indigenous medicinal herbs produced there. I would like to congratulate the current Government's leader for paying special attention to the budget for the North-Eastern States today. The glory of the Brahmaputra, not just of the

* Speech was laid on the Table

North-East, has been praised in scriptures as well. Ganga, Sindhu, Kaveri, Yamuna, along with Saraswati, Reva, Mahanadi, and Godavari, are all revered, as is Brahmaputra.

[English]

***SHRI D. K. SURESH (BANGALORE RURAL):** India's North East, also known as the land of the seven sisters, comprises the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura, which collectively account for about 8 per cent of the country's geographical area and roughly 4 per cent of its population. The region is known for its ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and physiographical diversity. The British administration initially treated the hill areas as 'Non-Regulated Areas', then declared them a 'Backward Tract' and, eventually categorized them as 'Excluded Areas' and 'Partially Excluded Areas'.

India's growth can be expedited only when all the regions of the country are brought on the track of development. Whether it may be social development, infrastructure and economic development. Various projects and schemes for the development of North Eastern region is not reaching real beneficiaries. The beauty of India lies in its diversity in terms of language, culture, lifestyle of the people of various parts of the country. However, the country's north east has been experiencing a comparatively slower pace of industrialization and socio-economic growth. Though the region is blessed with abundant natural resources for industrial development and social

*Speech was laid on the Table

development, they have not been utilized to their full potential. The region has certain distinct advantages. It is strategically located with access to the traditional domestic market of eastern India, along with proximity to the major states in the east and adjacent countries such as Bangladesh and Myanmar. The region is also a vantage entry point for the South East Asian markets.

The resource-rich north east with its expanses of fertile farmland and a huge talent pool could turn into one of India's most prosperous regions. Though, it has all these advantages due to its unique challenges, like issues related to poor infrastructure and connectivity, unemployment and low economic development, it has not seen the overall development. Hence the government should take the lead in providing solutions to these problems. More reform need to be initiated in a range of areas, such as investment in agriculture, hydel power, infrastructure as well as in creating new avenues of growth through the development of vertically integrated food processing chains, market-linked skill development and cross-border trade. As multiple avenues for growth and development emerge, it is of paramount importance that the region, as a collective identity, embarks on a vibrant journey to realize the dreams of a better future. This vision can be realized only through the combined effort of all stakeholders.

Various schemes for the development of infrastructure and economy of the North East region have been formulated by the previous UPA governments. The schemes include the formation of the North East Council,

Hill Area Development Projects and Sub-plans, Tribal Area Sub-plan, and Tribal Development Agency Projects to name only a few. In addition, these seven states have been declared as Special Category States: this entitles them to get 90 percent of Central Assistance as a grant and just 10 per cent as Loan. Some public sector units have also been set up in the region. The policies of industrial licensing, concessional finance and investment subsidy, growth centers, as well as freight equalization of some major industrial inputs have also been used to promote economic development.

The region remains isolated from the rest of the country. It has not been able to attract investors or to produce skilled labour and entrepreneurial resources, and has failed to transform the primitive agricultural practices of the region into modern commercial agriculture. More importantly, the existing policy framework has also become one of the important factors that has contributed to the emergence and continuance of insurgency in the region. In a nutshell, this complete policy framework has outlived its utility. The political economy approach has inordinately relied on the capacity of the state and its bureaucratic arrangements for economic development, and the approach has manifestly failed.

I shall request the Government to consider the serious issue of insurgency. A thorough background check of all insurgents groups should be carried out before the central Government enters into any Ceasefire or Suspension of Operations Agreements with the insurgents. Political solutions to the Assam problem should be discussed openly as widely as possible to

avoid backlash from the tribal and the minority population of the state. At present, the central Government is concentrating only in mega projects, which causes huge differences to the development of the region. A pragmatic land use policy should be formulated for attracting industries in the region. Niche tourism or high end tourism should be encouraged. Kindly consider all the seven states as a single economic unit without disturbing the political boundaries of the states and to formulate an exclusive Five Year Plan for the North East focusing on development of infrastructure. A proper monitoring system should be established to track the development work fund utilization in the North Eastern States.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESHWAR TELI (DIBRUGARH): Hon. Chairperson, I rise to speak in support of this grant. I come from the Dibrugarh Lok Sabha Constituency in Assam. The former Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji, established the DoNER Department in 2001. He observed that the Northeast was not developing and believed that it should, so he created the DoNER Department.

Currently, our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi Ji, is also paying a lot of attention to the North-East. Our colleague, Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, mentioned that every minister has been instructed to visit the North-East. Every minister is visiting the North-East, understanding its problems, and giving full attention to how those problems can be resolved. A few days ago, our Health Minister, Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda Ji, visited the North-East. He realized that the youth of Assam are very talented in their studies, but they face great difficulty in securing medical seats. Therefore, three medical colleges have been announced in Assam. Through this House, I want to convey this message to the entire nation.

In the same vein, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji also thought that people from Assam or the Northeast should not have to come to Delhi's AIIMS frequently. The decision has also been taken to set up an AIIMS in Guwahati. Very soon, its foundation stone will also be laid.

India has been independent for more than 60 years, but in all these years, the Congress Government built only five bridges over the Brahmaputra River. Our Prime Minister Ji has said that we will build five bridges in five years, and the announcement has been made. Hence, a lot of attention has been given to the North-East region.

Before this, when the Congress Government was in power for ten years, Dr. Manmohan Singh Ji came as a Member of Parliament from Assam and became the Prime Minister of India. We had great hopes when Dr. Manmohan Singh Ji was elected from Assam, so Assam was expected to receive a lot. But nothing was received. When Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji initiated the Four-Lane project, it began in Assam. We also hoped that when Dr. Manmohan Singh Ji became the Prime Minister of India, this Four-Lane project would extend to Dibrugarh. However, in the last ten years, the work on the four-lane project has not commenced. Our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi Ji, has made efforts for this, and just a few days ago, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji initiated the construction of the four-lane road up to Dibrugarh. A few days ago, Shri Nitin Gadkari Ji visited Assam and announced the conversion of three to four roads into national highways there. The condition of roads in the North-East is very poor. Taking this into account, Shri Gadkari Ji has established a North-East Corporation to develop the roads in the region. A sum of 33 crore rupees has also been allocated for this purpose. In this manner, attention has been paid to the North-East.

If I discuss all the areas where Shri Narendra Modi Ji has focused on the North-East, it will take up a lot of time. Therefore, I do not wish to take much time. Our Minister is also ready to respond now. Minister of the DoNER Department, Shri Jitendra Singh Ji, has also visited Assam several times. I would like to request that in my Dibrugarh Lok Sabha constituency, there is a place called Digboi, as mentioned by Shri Badruddin Sahab, there is a refinery there, and there is a major water problem in that assembly constituency. There is a project there that has been pending in the DoNER department for a long time. I request them to sanction the project.

I also want to say something about Arunachal Pradesh. During Makar Sankranti Hindus in large numbers from the country as well as abroad visit Parshuram Kund in Lohit district, Arunachal Pradesh. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to allocate funds from the DoNER department to develop that place. With this, I conclude my speech.

[English]

***SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL (BIKANER):** Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam took his last breath in the campus of IIM Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya. It is requested and demanded by some section of the society that IIM Shillong should be named after Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam IIM Shillong. Kindly accept the demand.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL (DAMOH): Chairperson Sir, thank you for allowing me to speak during the discussion on the Demands for Grants. It is a discussion on the Demands for Grants, and many people have spoken about the North East, I would urge that everything has gone well, at this time it is also our duty to remember and thank Atal Ji. Only a visionary leader can accomplish such a task.

Today, when we discuss funding, some say we need more. However, if we have funds but lack the right environment, that money serves no purpose. Similarly, if funds are available but the distribution process is flawed, I urge the Government through you, Sir, to reform this financial management system. There is a need to change this funding pattern in the North-East. If you genuinely seek to resolve the issues of the Northeast and want swift solutions, you must change the funding pattern. If the DoNER

* Speech was laid on the Table

Ministry will spend all that money by setting its priorities, I think we will achieve the goals that we want to achieve within a time frame. This might indeed be a significant challenge. I have been visiting Manipur regularly lately. Now, there are organized bodies there, such as district councils, especially in mountainous regions, that receive funds from the center, but the State Government directly provides the funds and does not allow them to create any programs. This is an example I have given you.

In the entire Northeast, there are positives - good agriculture, balanced temperatures, ample opportunities in nature, sufficient rainfall, consistent precipitation, plant varieties, biodiversity, good rivers, good sports, and good athletes. Despite all this, where are the problems? The problem is that while there is land available, there has never been any consideration given to advanced farming practices. The temperature there is moderate, but due to the insurgency, nobody wants to go there. We will have to consider separately two aspects - at what cost will development occur? If I mention Manipur today, I will tell you about five incidents where the policies implemented by previous Governments have led to adverse consequences. When our friends from Congress started this discussion, it would have been good if those points were presented in front of the House. You mentioned the history of Manipur, but you should also note that since terrorism emerged, the singing of the national anthem cannot take place in any Government program, school, or college. Who is responsible for creating such a situation in Manipur? The Government is yours. What's the

problem with that? I believe that there should be initial efforts to create an environment.

The second point is that His Excellency the President recently visited. You mentioned the year 1891, which was the final battle for Manipur's independence against the British. The President inaugurated a memorial there, and two hours later, the stone collapsed. You perceive it from which perspective? Do you believe this is not a disrespect to those soldiers? Is this not a disrespect to the President? But this will never be discussed because I believe it's negligence and corruption. If we don't discuss this, we won't be able to consider it with integrity.

You didn't mention that it's been more than 294 days, and in one district of Manipur, the bodies of nine youths have been lying. There may be disagreements on certain issues, but shouldn't their last rites be conducted with respect? Who is responsible for spoiling the environment? We do not discuss it openly in the house, so I do not want to delve into it further because the nature of the issues there is different. The way money flows there, you cannot deny drug trafficking, you cannot deny smuggling, you cannot deny ISI activities. The leftist extremism there, by arming themselves and providing weapons to other groups, engages in the work of getting their people killed. Shouldn't there be a discussion on this matter in the house?

I want to say about Arunachal Pradesh that in Syang-1 and Syang-2, where the members of the Northeast are sitting, who stopped it? There have been protests near Guwahati, and for nearly three years, projects in Syang-1

and Syang-2 have not been completed. If these projects are completed, 70 percent of Arunachal Pradesh will receive water. Shouldn't the House be concerned about such large projects? Today, we are discussing the DoNER Ministry, but if we don't approach the topic positively, I don't think we'll find a way forward.

My friend from the Biju Janata Dal, who was speaking, is not here now, I want to tell him very humbly that by reading books, books have been written there, and history has been changed there. If we look at Manipur, there are three laws regarding revenue - one for the Nagas, one for the Kukis, and one for the Valley. The Government has not yet been able to determine whether the king there belongs to the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, or General category. The British said and left, and we accepted it. Today, it has become the cause of terrorism. I believe these are the kinds of questions that cannot be resolved without discussion.

Sir, through you, I would like to mention that the railway line has reached Itanagar, which was initiated by Shri Atal Ji and has now been completed. In Manipur, the railway line can be initiated within a year. Mr. Gadkari Ji has stated that the road route from Silchar to Imphal and from Imphal to Moreh can be completed soon.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): You've just pressed the button by going there.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: I believe you know this too because you've been the Railway Minister. So, I believe you should accept some things honestly.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: We are also making efforts to connect Arunachal to Manipur, so you should also speak a bit honestly.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Sir, I would like to express my gratitude to Shri Kharge ji. There should be a discussion on these efforts and initiatives to understand what has happened with the North-East. I believe the outcome is a result of the same pace we are discussing, and today's discussion is on the progress of the North-East. If there's a need to establish a DoNER Ministry today, perhaps it's a consequence of the same momentum. I want to say this with great responsibility.

Sir, Manipur is a State where the first airstrip of the North-East existed. The Second World War was fought from there, and what is its current condition today? Are we responsible for that? Who is responsible for this, I don't need to say it today.

Sir, through you, I would like to conclude by saying that there should be at least night landing facilities in Guwahati. Through you, I extend congratulations to the Government, and I urge for a meaningful change in the funding pattern to make the DoNER Ministry more effective. This house should also discuss the policies there, and if the environment is not improved there, then there will be no benefit to the money going there. I express my

gratitude to Hon. Atal Ji and the Government for initiating the movement, and I fully support the demand that it will be fulfilled.

SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR (KARNAL): HON. Chairperson, I am grateful to you for allowing me to speak.

Sir, the north-eastern region of India comprises the Seven Sisters, which include Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, and Nagaland. Here we witness a unique confluence of Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, along with diverse cultures, languages, and attire, which is a living testament to the unity of our democratic and republican system. After independence, in the year 2001, the Department of North-East Region was established and the North-East Council was set up for economic and social development. The government of India has made a provision of Rs. 33097.2 crores for the North-Eastern States for 2016-17 which is more than the previous budget. The budget for schemes under the North-East Council has been increased from Rs. seven hundred crores to Rs. 795 crores. We need the progress and prosperity of the North-Eastern states for sure. I want to offer some suggestions to the Government regarding this matter. All the states in the Northeast should be connected through rail, road, and air transport, greenfield airports should be constructed, and small and mini hydel projects should be established there. Prime Minister recently inaugurated the Organic Farming Mission in Sikkim, similar initiatives should also be undertaken in all other states of the region. If high-speed trains can operate in other parts of the country, provisions should be made to run

them in the Northeast as well, connecting the region with the rest of the country through high-speed trains. The identity of the Northeast is associated with its tea gardens. Steps must be taken to protect the interests of tea garden workers. The establishment of separate hostels in Delhi for students from the North-East is a commendable step.

Sir, I would like to talk about tourism in the North-East. At present, the number of foreign tourists in the North-East is only one percent. There are immense possibilities for tourism there. As my esteemed predecessors have said, it is paradise and a very beautiful place. There are also UNESCO-declared World Heritage Sites there. The Indian Government should seriously consider promoting tourism in these States with the cooperation of the State Governments. School children should be taken on tours there to raise awareness about it. People here should meet the people there.

Sir, now I want to draw your attention to the other aspect of this issue. Sir, now I want to draw your attention to the other aspect of this issue. Sir, so far, all the speakers may not have touched upon this aspect, and if they have, it has been only briefly. However, I intend to delve deeper into it. Our neighbouring country, China, which boasts of socialism, has embarked on an expansionist policy and has cast its predatory eyes on our Arunachal Pradesh. Who is the MP of North-East? They are sitting here, they know it. China's expansionist policy has become so vile that the territory we claim as ours in the grip of Pakistan in Kashmir, has now dragged China into it. I am pointing out that China is encircling us from all sides, especially the states of

the Northeast, one day it could also engulf them. In the war of 1962, it reached Tezpur. ... *(Interruptions)* I would like to say two things, what Napoleon said about China... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: You are a good editor, the editor of Punjab Kesari, you write many columns in it, but you are talking about our Pakistan, when did Pakistan become ours?

SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR: There was a mistake, I meant to say our Kashmir.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Please refrain from saying our Pakistan, our China.

SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR: One day, we will reclaim it too. Remember, it will also be ours. One day we will make a united India here.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please refrain from beating around the bush, Shri Satyapal Singh Ji, I invite you to speak.

SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR: Sir, I will wrap it up in two minutes. NAPOLEON's quotation about China can be translated as –*[English]* “Let China sleep, for when she wakes, she will move the world.”

[Translation]

Today, China's expansionist policy is encircling us from all sides. I want to say to Mr. Kharge Ji that not only you, but I also urge my party, ultimately, I want to share this couplet with the House-

"Foolish is the one who does not worry about the nation; a calamity is approaching,

Your tales of devastation are being discussed in the heavens."

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH (BAGHPAT): Hon. Chairperson, thank you for allowing me to speak. I will conclude my remarks in two to three minutes, I will only cover the main points. I wish to highlight that the connection between the Northeast and what is known as the Indian mainland dates back to the Mahabharata era. Those who have read the Mahabharata would know, and as the esteemed Mr. Tathagata Ji was speaking, I would like to mention that Arjuna married Chitrangada from Manipur and stayed there for quite some time. Following that, names like Arunachal, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Brahmaputra indicate that culturally, this region has always been an integral part of India. It is indeed true that until 1937 Burma was also a part of the British Empire. Therefore, in the past 60-65 years, feelings of separatism have been growing there. There are many reasons for this, which I do not wish to delve into. But I want to say that we all should thank the esteemed Atal Ji for establishing in October 1996 that each ministry would allocate ten percent of its budget for the Northeast. We should commend him because it was due to his efforts that this initiative began.

Besides, today, if we exclude Assam, the entire region is considered one of the most educated regions in our country. I believe that the infant mortality rate is also the lowest in that region.

Since Hon. Prime Minister Modi Ji took office, each minister visits the North-East once in at least 15 days. This has never happened before till today. I particularly support the fact that over 33 thousand crores have been allocated as grants for Northeast India within 2016-17. I have some issues that I want to raise before the House. Firstly, there is a non-lapsable Central Pool of Resources. I will also request the Hon. Minister to ensure proper monitoring of it. The money goes into the pool, but whether it is being utilized properly or not needs to be scrutinized. ... (*Interruptions*) The Comptroller and Auditor General should be specifically instructed to conduct a thorough audit of the funds allocated to the North-East, ensuring transparency regarding where the money is being utilized and where it is not. Previously, I have worked in the CBI. Without naming the State, I would like to mention that upon my visit to the North-Eastern States of India, I discovered that there has been a vigilance department there since 1948. However, to date, it is not clear, even for the past two to four years, whether any vigilance inquiries have been conducted by the vigilance department there to track where the money goes. The money spent or if it just ends up in the hands of a few individuals.

In 2007, the Supreme Court stated that illegal immigration, particularly concerning Bangladeshis, is a virtual external aggression against India. We

need to pay more attention to this issue where activities of ISI, and the activities of Maoists are also increasing there. We need to seriously consider how this will harm our country. If drugs and narcotics can enter from outside or exit our country, then weapons and explosives can also come from there because such networking is operational there. This needs to be taken care of. For the integration of North-East, 50 percent of the seats in engineering, medical, and management colleges must go to students from the mainland. Similarly, more seats should be allocated to students from Northeast India in mainland colleges. Everyone has talked about infrastructure, whether it's about airports, railway lines, or roads. I would like to mention the Brahmaputra River it carries so much water that we should think about how we can utilize that water properly and how we can protect the region from the destruction caused by floods. If we accomplish this, then the development of Northeast India will undoubtedly occur properly.

***SHRIMATI DARSHANA VIKRAM JARDOSH (SURAT):** I would like to express my support for the demands regarding the allocations under the Ministry of Development of the North-East Region for the fiscal year 2016-17. We worship Mother India. When the BJP established this ministry, it was envisioned that this arm representing the northeast of Mother India should also be strengthened. Across India, these seven States are renowned for their exceptional natural resources. Priority should be given to the development of

* Speech was laid on the Table.

roads, drainage, railway connectivity, bridges, and hospitals for health, telephone, and IT sectors.

In the NDA government, the government of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Bhai decided on the priority of these seven states and gave this information and suggestions to all its ministries, due to which there is a lot of enthusiasm in the North-East areas. The previous Government did not fulfill its responsibilities properly. However, today, while fulfilling our responsibilities, we have allocated funds to the ministry. While ensuring their supervision, and using all funds appropriately with social harmony, let us initiate development, adhering to the principle of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', aiming for the North-East to function like the mainstream. I express gratitude to the Government for changing the funding pattern and improving the environment in States like Assam and Manipur, as recommended by Prime Minister Narendra Bhai, who has declared them as Organic States. The regions should be promoted by enhancing connectivity and encouraging foreign tourists through appropriate utilization of natural resources, thus avoiding their misuse. I express my support and gratitude to the Ministry for this initiative.

***SHRI BHAIRON PRASAD MISHRA (BANDA):** I support the demands for allocations under the Ministry of Development of the North-East Region, which I present in the House. Our Government has shown special concern for the neglected development of the North-East region for years, for which the people of this region are especially grateful to the HON. Prime Minister. HON. Prime Minister has declared Sikkim as India's first organic State. The government has decided to develop the North Eastern Region into a hub for organic farming. The Organic Value Chain Development Scheme will work towards transforming the landscape of this region. This year, a significant increase has been made in the budget for the development of the North-Eastern region. An allocation of 33097 crore rupees has been made across 56 ministries for the development of this region. A separate allocation of 150 crore rupees has been made for road development. Organic farming has been given Rs. 115 crores. The North-East Development Finance Corporation has been allocated an increased amount of 75 crore rupees, up from 30 crore rupees, which is commendable. The Government has paid special attention to enhancing railway facilities in this region. Railway lines are being constructed and gauge conversion is underway to connect all major sectors with the mainline. Much-awaited Luming-Silchar broad-gauge section has been thrown open. Barak Valley has been connected with various parts of the country. Our Government has devised a plan to develop and beautify this region as the "Seven Sisters" in every aspect. This will boost tourism in the

* Speech was laid on the Table

region and diminish the morale of separatists who are active in this area. The region's special affinity with the rest of India will increase, strengthening the national unity of India.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): Hon. Chairperson, I have very carefully listened to all the 23 hon. Members who participated in the debate. I shall try to respond to whichever exclusive points have been made.

At the outset, I would like to submit that whatever be the observations, nobody can deny that in the last two years under the hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, there has been a special focus on the North-East; and it is not because I am a Member of the Government saying so, it is being said all across -- across the cross-sections of society as well as in the media in the North-East.

The hon. Prime Minister has made more than half a dozen visits in the North-East. In the first six months, he was there inaugurating the first ever

rail line which hon. Khargeji had constructed but left the button to us. But nevertheless we did not lose any time to press the button... (Interruptions) But we are very quick to seize the opportunity.

The other issues of connectivity and organic farming have come, which have been high on the priority of the Government. There has been repeated reference to North-East sought to be brought closer to the rest of the country and an expression often used is mainland India and mainstream India.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: It is mainstream, not mainland.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Yes, somebody has used mainland. I have taken down notes. You said mainstream and somebody said mainland. Eversince I have been in this Ministry for the last one and a half years or so, I have tried to study as much I could learn about it. I think this expression itself is a misnomer. Every part of India is a part of mainstream India and as long as we call it North-East and mainstream India, we are by implication accepting knowingly or unknowingly that this is something different from India. So, we have to come out of this mindset. I agree with the hon. Members that there is a problem of mindset also. In the first few weeks that I took over this Ministry, the first thing that occurred to my mind is that if India is known as a country of unity in diversity, here you had the best example of diversity within diversity. As was being pointed out by the hon. Member, you have 200 tribes, 200 languages and 200 dances and yet they live in an atmosphere of mutual coexistence which is something remarkable and which rest of India should learn and in fact, the rest of India has much to learn. The literacy

rate as was being pointed out is much higher in some of the States compared to other States. For example, very few of us may be aware that a small State like Mizoram with a population of just seven lakh has a literacy rate of 92 or 93 per cent. So also is the Manipur which, I think, is next only to Kerala which has a tradition of a high literacy rate right from the British Raj and Mizoram was born only in 1980s. Similarly, we have growth rate which is higher than many other States. For example, Sikkim has two digit growth rate. We are yet to achieve at the national level. First of all, we must send out this message and clear our mindset that North-East is contributing hugely to the literacy and the growth of the country. It is just as was being rightly pointed out by Members across both sides how best to use its potentials.

One more thing which I would not be modest in taking credit is that when I got into this Ministry, I realized that very few people were actually aware that there was something called Ministry of DoNER even in North-East. So, I started an experiment which has proved to be quite successful. We started holding camp secretariat offices in each of the State by rotation. For example, we began with Manipur, then Tripura, then Mizoram. So, every month the officers of the DoNER Ministry are setting up a camp secretariat in one or the other State and I thought the most befitting name to give it would be DoNER at doorstep so that a message goes out that for the redressal of each grievance, a citizen from North-East need not necessarily travel to Delhi, DoNER can also travel to doorstep. This was the pattern which was being followed even in the larger provinces as Prof. Saugata Roy knows

better when we had the undivided Bengal, we had the Central Provinces, we had the undivided Punjab with Capital in Lahore and they would go to Simla or undivided Bombay. So, this is one new initiative that has been taken because I am pointedly referring to these so that the impression should go out that we have been very passionately following the subject. Eight Union Ministers are visiting North-East now every 15 days. So, under the directions of the hon. Prime Minister, this roster was made beginning from January last year. So, you have one Minister in each of the States. It offers them an opportunity to have assessment of their ministerial work. It also gives them a ground reality experience and also offers them an opportunity to meet the representatives there. All the Ministers sitting over here have been repeatedly visiting even recently.

There has been a reference to Rani Gaidinlu. We actually celebrated the centenary last year. Somebody referred to Mary Kom. She is already there in the Upper House.

Kharge Ji is an experienced Member. He can also educate us. Owaisi Ji has gone out. One thing I would just like to humbly clear is that whether this Ministry is an implementing Ministry or a coordinating Ministry. I would come to these points. Basically, the Development of North-East Region Ministry was constituted primarily with the object of development, be it in the form of NLCPR Projects, be it in the form of roads, bridges but nevertheless, we are also trying to coordinate with the other Ministries, which

was not happening in an institutionalized manner. In the last one year, we have constituted inter-ministerial committees.

18.00hours

For example, it is with the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Civil Aviation so that we can have regular meeting at Joint Secretary level and Secretary level because a lot many things can be done. So, we are also acting as a liaison Ministry because what happens is, we are Ministry for Development of North-Eastern Region. Somehow, the impression goes that it is the Ministry for North-East. But we are proud of that.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, it is six o' clock. The time of the House may be extended till this Demand for Grants is disposed of. I think the House agrees.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: But we are proud to be known like that and that we take upon ourselves the responsibility of coordinating and doing the liaison. In fact, the hon. Member was referring to Manipur. I was there in Manipur four times in one month—once during floods; other time when there was a violent incident; third time when there was an earthquake; and fourth time when there was Naga accord and some kind of apprehension. So, we have tried to go beyond the mandate. Sometimes, it is not understood easily. When a Minister from the State Government comes, he says, donate and give us more money. So, I tell them humorously, it is DoNER, and not donor. It is

not that we are sitting there just to donate. But what I am trying to say is that we are certainly going beyond.

There was a reference to certain insurgency problems and certain law and order issues. I shall not go into that in detail because actually that pertains to the Ministry of Home Affairs. But I certainly believe that peace and development have a reciprocal relationship. If peace does not exist, development does not move out in the expected ways. If the development does not take place, it leads to unrest and disturbance of peace. Therefore, all of us have to work in tandem.

As far as the Act East policy is concerned, it is not strictly within the mandate of the DoNER but yes, I personally believe that if you have to actually act beyond the borders and if the Ministry of External Affairs also has to effectively act beyond the borders, we will first have to act proximal to the borders. For example, there is a small instance. If you have to do trade with Myanmar, you have to sell goods produced in the North-Eastern States. You cannot carry groundnuts or *rajmas* from another State and sell it with Myanmar. So, it has to grow. In order to facilitate even the Act East Policy, we have gone beyond the mandate. The youth culture wing has been told that I will go some time.

Before I go to the pointed references, as I was saying, we have gone beyond the mandate. Only in the last six months, realizing that the incidence of cancer and the prevalence of cancer in the North-Eastern States was higher than most of the other States of the country--now this was not the

responsibility of the DoNER Ministry or the DoNER Minister--but you know, out of my passion to try to prove my worth, I studied that and we engaged in a kind of an understanding with Adayar Cancer Institute in Chennai, which is the oldest cancer institute of India.

Beginning from January this year, they have agreed to train our doctors in cancer surgery and cancer medicine for a six-month short-term training. All the liabilities would be borne partly by the DoNER Ministry and partly by the Adayar Cancer Institute. The State Governments will only have to give us leave and that training has already started. Meanwhile, since I had the advantage, as Prof. Saugata Roy said about right hand and left hand, of also looking after atomic energy, there I learnt, which was not known widely, that under atomic energy we have a deemed institute, called Bhabha National Institute. At the same time, in North-East, we have Barooah Cancer Institute. So, I thought why not we try and start some degree courses in cancer itself in the Barooah Cancer Institute, and that is being processed. Barooah Cancer Institute is there in Guwahati. The team is right now there. Bhabha National Institute is a deemed university. It is known only in the Atomic Energy Department but we operate through Tata Memorial Cancer Centre. So, we are trying to do that also.

The requirement of a Sports University was being referred to. A Sports University was one of the first announcements made by the present Government, by the hon. Prime Minister himself at none other than Manipur. There has been the issue of land transfer. Repeatedly, our teams are going.

We are also trying to approach the Sports Ministry because they have to do that. Now we are not directly going to do it. Somebody has to do it for us. So, the Sports Ministry is facing some problem of land issue. And, AIIMS, as was said, is coming up. Then, again for the first time in 10 years, we have a huge beautiful complex of North-East Council in Shillong, the capital of undivided Assam. For the first time in 10 years a meeting of the North East Council was conducted there and a Minister visited there. I do not know whether I deserve credit for that. But it was done. It was possible because I personally approached and all the hon. Chief Ministers, all the hon. Governors. The time from North East point of view was a little odd, it was 2nd – 3rd January, soon in the hangover of the New Year, but they obliged. So, we are actually proceeding very seriously.

Now, coming specifically, Mr. Meinya referred to topographic strategy points. Yes, these are issues and we are aware of it. It is not often understood, for example, that the same budget which is required for construction of 10 kilometres of road in Delhi would construct only 4-5 kilometres there. Then, you have insurgency problems also. But that itself is a challenge which all of us have to meet together.

Budget allocation is not enough – has been pointed out by one hon. Member. I agree with him. We approached the Finance Ministry this year. There has been a hike to an extent. Actually the 55 non-exempted Ministries contribute 10 per cent. The catch here is – Prof. Saugata Roy and another hon. Member was also pointing out – that this does not go directly into the

DoNER kitty. If a given Ministry has not allocated upto 10 per cent, the remaining amount is earmarked for North East and that remains with the Finance Ministry. Then, the papers have to be processed from the respective State and the money is released. We have right now about Rs.33,000 crore which is with the Finance Ministry.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: But they do not release it. We have to pursue for it. You see that because of 10 per cent you cannot hold 90 per cent.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: That is well taken.

So, we have Rs.33,000 crore right now which includes Rs.2400 crore, which is of the DoNER Ministry *per se*. Last year it was Rs.20,000 crore. We requested the hon. Finance Minister and they made an increase in this. Last year the NEC Budget was Rs.7000 crore, we approached the Finance Ministry and they increase it. In addition, we have the Railway Budget of Rs.5380 crore. As you were rightly pointing out, for eight States we do not have even Rs.100 crore, they have made it almost Rs.800 crore. Certainly they have responded positively to our request.

Then, the issue of DPR was very rightly pointed out by Shri Meinya. I would say that that is the cause of delay also. I think in the spirit of cooperative federalism we are asking the States to send it. If the DoNER has to decide, then it will not be in that spirit and the States will object. So, what is happening is that the States send the DPR which gets delayed. By the time

the process starts, the money gets stuck up and by the time the work starts, the actual cost goes up.

Then, the problem comes of the Utilisation Certificate. After the release of the first installment, the UC is expected for release of subsequent installments. Many of the State Governments do not find it necessary to send the UCs. They are contented with the first installment and in the meanwhile they ask for the second one. At my own level, whatever was my jurisdiction, I have tried to make two amendments. But, with the consensus of the House we can further improve upon it.

One is that we would ask the State Governments to prepare the DPR and directly discuss it with the Ministry concerned. For Example, if it is Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways, let them sort it out with them and be answerable for the delay. We do not come in between. We will be there for funding and monitoring. We are working on that because that was in the purview of the DoNER Ministry.

Second, as far as UC is concerned, since I was also looking after Space, it occurred to my mind that we could use the satellite imaging because sometimes the complaints came that UC was also fabricated.

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: If work doesn't happen, how will UC come?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Alright, you're right. A complaint was received that the photo of the road was of some other place. *[English]* So, we thought to use the satellite imaging provision as the Space Department has the facility. It can directly take the photo with exact latitude and longitude.

We also have North Eastern Space Applications Centre in Shillong called NESAC which was also not being fully utilised. We have sought their services. It is being coordinated by the NEC.

As far as AFSPA and ILP are concerned, I will not take the risk of getting into that. It is a controversial issue related to the Ministry of Home Affairs. I would rather say that I am not qualified to answer about AFSPA. This is best left to the security agencies in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Shrimati Bijoyaji said that officers take it as a punishment going to the North-East. We have tried to bring in some facilitatory provisions. For example, an officer, who is there in the North-East, will have a residential accommodation in Delhi. He might feel tempted. Particularly an officer with his children at class tenth or twelfth level will feel tempted to have his family here so that his children could join coaching centres etc. So, we are working on that.

Another initiative which we have taken exclusively is with respect to unemployment which has been wittily pointed out by Bijoyaji. The point is that we have Start Up India - Stand Up India, an ambitious programme launched by the Prime Minister. Now notwithstanding all the other

provisions which exist in that programme – the Finance Minister is also here – you have the exit period of three months, you have tax-free facility, from DoNER Ministry's side, we thought that we could also contribute something. So, we have contemplated floating a venture fund for those of the youths who decide to start an entrepreneurship or a start-up in the North-East. I agree that the potentials are so vast that you do not need to go anywhere out and if the potentials are fully exploited and if we succeed in this venture, we would have all the youths from all over the country making a beeline for the North-East and the North-East will become the favourite destination for future entrepreneurs.

The North-East Industry Policy has been referred to. It falls under the Ministry of Commerce. There was some thought of giving away with it, then of transferring it to the DoNER Ministry. As of now, they have agreed to carry on for the next one year and then, they will take over.

There has been reference to connectivity which is a huge issue, but in the last one-and-a-half years, we have given an impetus to a number of airports. Not only the connectivity of the North-East with the rest of the country, but the connectivity within the North-East is also the worst. So, more than inter-connectivity, the issue is intra-connectivity. From Guwahati, it is easier to travel to Kolkata, Bengaluru, Jaipur and New Delhi because you have direct flights, but you cannot travel to Shillong. That is an issue which has also been picked up which was not pointed out earlier.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: You can go to Shillong only by helicopter.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Yes. So, I took up this issue and placed a suggestion before the Civil Aviation Ministry and also some of the helicopter running firms that if Guwahati could be cultivated as a hub, from there, we could have a civil commercial chopper service as long as we are not able to bring up the airport.

Meanwhile, airport at Sikkim had been held up for a long time and we have been given to understand that by 2017, it will become operational. Shillong is another place. Itanagar Airport got stuck up because of the land issues. The Chief Minister was not convinced with the land which had been selected.

What I am trying to say is that there are a number of issues, which I do not wish to get into, which are beyond our control because we have to carry all the eight States and eight dispensations with us, but as I said, we liaison also.

Shri Tathagata Satpathy has gone out of the House. I think, somebody will tell him that in his enthusiasm to guard us against saying ‘Bharat Mata ki Jai’, he said it almost six times. Each time he will say now somebody would jump with ‘Bharat Mata ki Jai’. So, it was nobody from this side. Nevertheless, his suggestions are well taken. As he mentioned about the cultural integration of the North-East, we have already started interacting with the youth. From time to time, we are already celebrating their festivals in Delhi and at different places.

The DoNER headquarters is in New Delhi, but the NEC is there in Shillong. As far as the education is concerned, in Guwahati University, the DoNER Ministry has taken a decision to fund the Brahmaputra Study Centre. The Vice Chancellor is quite enthusiastic about the issue. The hon. Chief Minister and the Government was having certain reservations. I hope, the hon. Members from Assam will pursue it. We will have an exclusive centre which will be funded by us.

I am not going to talk about the Arunachal border with China because that goes beyond my purview.

About the towers, the Telecom Ministry has informed us that Rs.5336 crore has been earmarked this year. I think we have a reason to wait and see the result.

Shri Ramen Deka ji certainly said that there was more to do. He also mentioned certain micro projects. Yes, the Secretary, North East Council has the jurisdiction to fund projects up to Rs.50,000 crore and beyond that it is the jurisdiction of the DoNER Ministry. But overall, the money kitty is less, which I humbly admit. The problem comes there. Otherwise, it is a good idea and we could do that.

Prof. Saugata Roy also referred to the insufficiency of funds. You will be glad to know that very soon we are going to have a train to Bangladesh *via* Tripura and a road also.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Is it final?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Yes. Already it has been finalized. Once you have the road, you can reach Bangladesh from Agartala in just about one and a half hours or so. So, that has also been facilitated by this Indo-Bangla Exchange of Conclave which had been waiting for 40 years.

Prof. Saugata Roy, I would like to share with you about the waterways. We have actively pursued with the MORTH about the waterways. There are about 17 waterways which have been planned for the North-East. We can start from the top Brahmaputra and going on to the Bay of Bengal. The advantage will be two-fold. Firstly, it will provide an alternative method of transport when the roads are blocked due to rain or where there is no air connectivity. Secondly, the cost is almost one-fourth compared to the fuel cost by train or by road.

Shri Tasa Ji has rightly mentioned that 210 Ministers visited there. But I would like to clarify that it happened only up to October. Since then, another 200 might have visited. He has also suggested that there should be a probe to find out where the money went. I wish it was. But, it is beyond my control to do that probe. But certainly, all of us should hold ourselves accountable.

Shri Jitendra Chaudhury referred to rubber growth. This Government has set out a different scheme for rubber.

As far as bamboo is concerned, we recently had a three-day International Conclave to explore the possibilities of bamboo utility.

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY: I was talking about Bamboo Board.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: I agree. In various spheres you can use bamboo. This Conclave was held ironically not in North-East but in Indore -- the reason being that that Government came forward to host it and it was explained that Madhya Pradesh has a huge bamboo forest. Rather, I would like each of the North-Eastern State to be known by its own unique identity. Instead of calling it 'North-East State', why can we not call it a 'Bamboo State'? We call Mizoram as a Bamboo State. We can call Manipur a Bamboo State. So, we do not call Punjab as a North Indian State; we do not call Tamil Nadu as a South Indian State. That will also help us improve our way of looking at it. We will have an identity for each of the State. But certainly, we are looking into it.

Dr. Rajeshji has rightly pointed out that there is a huge exodus of patients who are mostly going to Vellore. Somewhere, the CMC, Vellore has gained popularity. There are a number of institutes on the way also. But somehow it has become known among patients. Three medical colleges have already been announced as has been mentioned by the hon. Member Shri Tasa. At the same time, there were demands from other States. For example, in Nagaland, there is no medical college and also there was a demand from the Meghalaya Chief Minister. I said that if we wait for the Government to give us a medical college, it might take long. Nowadays, we have a trend of PPP. At my own level, I engage myself in discussion with some of the corporate sectors. I am now arranging their meetings. So, the arrangement would be that they would give the land and some kind of set up would be

established by these corporate hospitals. Dr. R.P. Sarmaji from Tezpur, he is not here now, spoke about connectivity. I have to compliment him as today he set an example by coming on a horseback to the Parliament. ...
(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL: He came riding on the horse due to the odd-even scheme. ... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Vincent Pala sahab spoke about special status. For the time being they have continued it, they have yet to take last decision. Meanwhile the problem is that demands have started coming more from the developed States that they should also be included. So, I do not know what will be the final call that the Government will take. Ajmal sahab made a very good point about the educational institutions and universities. He would have been happy to know that IIT Guwahati has been rated among the first ten engineering institutes of the country.

One more issue which we would like to bring to the notice of HRD and others concerned is that it is not *per se* the quantitative part of the educational institutes. We have a number of institutions. For example in Assam we have nearly 15 or more universities. The point is that we have to now shift our focus to quality education because the entire milieu has shifted. Now the young boys and girls go for these corporate jobs, placement jobs. And they

are not given placement if their profile is not impressive enough to convince the employer. Earlier on, the only employer was government and so things were going on.

[Translation]

SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL: Mr. Minister, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Sahib delivered the last speech at IIM Shillong, so can we please name it after the name of APJ Abdul Kalam Sahib? It is a very good suggestion. It should be implemented.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: If everyone agrees, why can't we name it?

SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL: It would be better if the Minister announces something like this.

[English]

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: I have put this view forward. What we have to ask ourselves is that even if you have so many engineering colleges, actually we are looking at our education system from the mindset of 1947 when the problem was quantity. I came from a village where there was not even a middle school. So, people traveled to Lahore. Now the problem is different. Earlier the employer was government and anybody with a BA degree would get a job. It is not so now. So, in spite of universities being there, boys and girls are coming from there to Delhi, Bengaluru, Pune for studies because they get easy placements. And there is no campus placement in many of the universities. So, we will have to look into that, improving the standards part.

On our part what we could do is that we have started the exercise of setting up hostels for these boys and girls who are studying outside North-East. We have already acquired land in the JNU and we are also trying for land in Delhi University. In Bengaluru we have already acquired land and the next place will be Pune. Otherwise, staying as paying guests is quite difficult for them. Ajmal sahab also referred to crude oil industry and tourism. Reference to Nagaland Medical College was made and I have answered it. *[Translation]* Shri Pappu Yadav Ji has left, his remarks were quite steeped in poetry. *[English]* But I appreciate his statement that there is self sufficient potential in the Northeast. There's no need to go elsewhere. *[English]* Rather I am of the view that if all of us regardless of our affiliations earnestly work to develop this potential, North-East will on its own become a destination for whole of India. *[Translation]* Shri Owaisi has raised eight questions. He has left. He had asked whether this ministry is coordinating or implementing. *[English]* We are implementing, plus we are coordinating, we are also liaisoning, and we go beyond our mandate. Even when there is an adversity like an earthquake where Disaster Management has to go, we go because they feel that the nodal Ministry will be knowing North-East better. His second question was about North-East Industrial Policy which I have answered. NLCPR, about the remaining amount, Prahlad Singhji also mentioned.

[Translation] What action to take regarding that is everyone's concern? Discussion took place about the delayed projects. In comparison to last year,

when Shri Owaisi Sahab asked about the Education Project, we have increased both the allocated and revised amounts

[English] For example, if the Revised Estimate last time was Rs 3,920 crore for school education, this year it is Rs 4,351.15 crore. Though I don't claim that this is sufficient, in our own way we have tried to persuade the Finance Ministry to whatever we could do, but we are conscious of this aspect. He has talked about the China project threats and hydro projects which I am sure the Ministry of Home Affairs will look into.

Mr. ROY has talked about bamboo. *[Translation]* Shri Teli mentioned three colleges. One thing perhaps missed by him was that Shri Gadkari Ji allocated 33 crore rupees for the roads there. *[English]* In addition, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh have been brought on the rail map for the first time and a broad gauge railway line has started operating to Agartala, which did not happen earlier. *[Translation]* The track was laid, but the button was not pressed.

An Hon. Member has made some excellent points *[English]* from his security experience also, and the monitoring of funds. He said that there could be a CAG monitoring. I think we will place this suggestion before the concerned agency. This tendency of being liberal with peripheral States sometimes leads to unwarranted pilferage as well.

In total, all that I can say is that with all the constraints that we face, we are trying to pursue it very seriously and where we are short of funds or resources, we are trying to make up by our passion to serve.

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Release three thousand crore rupees...

(Interruptions)

[English]

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Your point is well taken.

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY: Hon. Minister of State for Finance is here. What is the policy of the Government on the NLCPR? How much money has lapsed and what is the policy of the Government on that? We would like to know that.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I shall now put cut motions no. 1 to 5 moved by Shri Jitendra Chaudhury to the vote of the House.

The cut motions were put and negatived.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I shall now put the Demand for Grant relating to the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region to the vote of the House.

The question is:

“That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the column

of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India, out of the Consolidated Fund of India, to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 2017, in respect of the head of Demand entered in the Second column thereof against Demand No. 24 relating to the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.”

The motion was adopted.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: The House stands adjourned to meet again tomorrow, Thursday, 28th April, 2016 at 11 o'clock.

18.29 hours

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock On
Thursday, April 28, 2016/Vaisakha 8, 1938 (Saka).*

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