

Bangalore Miraj Railway at the District place Haveri in Karnataka under-ground bridge is constructed.

Rain water collected on this bridge is not removed by pump installed due to defect in this equipment. This is a State highway and vehicles cannot pass through this bridge causing considerable hardship to the public. Regular letters of complaint are written to the Railway Department but no action has been taken.

I request the Minister of Railways to take urgent action before the commencement of this rainy-Season from April this year.

(xxii) Need to start construction work for FM Radio Station at Manjeri (Kerala)

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : FM Radio Station has been sanctioned for Manjeri (Kerala) and necessary equipment has also been acquired. In spite of repeated requests, the I & B Department has not started its construction work. Manjeri is a backward area and the Government have not fulfilled the assurances even when there is sufficient funds. I urge the Government to start the work of FM Radio Station at Manjeri.

(xxiii) Need to provide better telecom facilities in the Districts of Karbi, Anglong and North Cachar Hills of Assam

DR. JAYANTA RONGPI (Autonomous District Assam) : The telecommunication facilities in the Districts of Karbi, Anglong and North Cachar Hills of Assam is probably the worst in the entire country. The telephone exchanges at the district H.Q. of Diphu and Haflong which are capitals of Autonomous Hill Councils are of outdated model and mostly remain out of order. The sub-divisional headquarters namely Bokajan, Hamren, Maibang do not have proper exchanges. The block H.Qs. and rural townships like Howraghat, Dokmoka, Phulani, Bokulia, Silonijan, Rongmongve, Dolamara, Khironi and Harangajao are also yet to have proper telephone facility. The neglect of this hilly and tribal region by the department has generated serious resentment among the people.

I therefore, request the Hon'ble Minister for Communications to take following steps immediately :

- (i) To upgrade and expand the existing telephone exchanges of Diphu and Haflong and also to restore trunk booking facilities to those exchanges which were shifted to Nagaon and Silchar in recent time.
- (ii) To establish electronic exchanges in all the sub-divisional H.Qs., block H. Qrs. and rural townships mentioned above.
- (iii) To reconstitute the telecom district of Assam circle and carve out separate telecom districts for the Hill districts with H.Qrs. either at Diphu or Haflong.

(xxiv) Need to create a separate State of Bodoland

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY (Kokrajhar) : The initiation of the process for bringing about a peaceful, honorable and lasting political solution to the long-standing, burning and many decade old 'Bodoland Question' has been long overdue. Under the present most crucial and volatile ethno-political, socio-economic and cultural situation and overall turmoiling circumstances mounting in Assam, the question of the aboriginal Bodo people's and other oppressed Tribal groups' survival and existence, their safety and security, their alround growth and development and also preservation of their district ethnic self-identity within Assam has really been quite impossible, and an absurd idea. Therefore, immediate creation of the much long awaited separate state of a Bodoland has been a must, and it is the only and lasting political solution to the Bodoland tangle for the greater interest of the nation as a whole.

(xxv) Need to rescue the Tamilnadu Mercantile Bank from taking over by Essar Group

SHRI VAIKO (Sivakasi) : The Tamil Nadu Mercantile Bank Ltd. which was earlier called the 'Nadar Bank Ltd.' was promoted by the backward Nadar community of Tamil Nadu in 1921. In October 1994, the Essar Group acquired about 70% of the shares of the bank by offering all kinds of inducements and submitted the shares of the bank for registration for the transfer. The promoter community raised its protest. The Company Law Board gave a verdict in favour of the Essar Group. The Reserve Bank of India considering all the factors rejected the share transfer. As per the settlement reached, the Nadar community is to raise 100 crores in exchange for the disputed shares before 31st December, 1997. While the funds mobilisation drive was on, Sterling Computers reported that it had acquired the shares of the seven companies of Essar Group which had originally acquired the disputed shares of Tamil Nadu Mercantile Bank for a consideration of Rs. 135 crores and that it had paid Rs. 51 crore under VDIS for the unaccounted money of Rs. 135 crores with which it had acquired the above shares and that the Forum should pay Rs. 186 crores for the repurchase of the shares.

I request the Central Government to look into the matter.

17.32 hrs.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS — Contd.

[English]

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh) : There was an announcement that the Minister of State in the Ministry