irteenth Series, Vol. XIX, No. 28

Thursday, August 30, 2001
Bhadra 8, 1923 (Saka)

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Seventh Session
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA

Thursday, August 30, 2001/Bhadra 8, 1923 (Saka)

(The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock)

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

OBITUARY REFERENCE

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have to inform the House of the sad demise of Shri G.K. Moopanar, a sitting Member of Rajya Sabha who passed away in the early morning today at Chennai at the age of 70 after a brief illness.

Shri Moopanar was one of the senior-most Members of Rajya Sabha. He was elected to Rajya Sabha four times in 1977, 1983, 1995 and 1998.

He was also a Member of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly from 1989 to 1991.

An able parliamentarian, Shri G.K. Moopanar was a Member of Committee on Railways since 1998. He has aptly been described as an institution and his contribution to parliamentary proceedings was monumental.

Shri Moopanar worked relentlessly for the uplift of the poor and downtrodden. He worked hard for propagating national integration. It would be most difficult to fill the void left by this distinguished parliamentarian.

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

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

11.02 hrs.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

11.03 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Demand of CNG

*541. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have recently declared that it would not be possible for them to cater to the growing demand of CNG in the capital;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government taken/ propose to take up the matter with the Hon'ble Supreme Court to waive its restrictions on the compulsory use of CNG for commercial vehicles in the capital;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the alternative steps the Government propose to take to meet the crisis of CNG?

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

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The details of submissions made before the Supreme Court are annexed.

(d) A number of steps have been taken to augment the supply of CNG which, *inter-alia*, include the following:

- Orders have been placed for 14 higher capacity compressors of which 5 have been received and 9 are being air lifted.
- The total CNG stations would be increased to 87 by September 2001 as against 80 directed by the Supreme Court and to 94 by March 2002.
- The existing 39 daughter stations are proposed to be upgraded to daughter booster stations progressively by December 2001.
- Action has been initiated to lay 23 km. long gas pipeline connecting Dhaula Kuan with G.T. Karnal Road, at an estimated cost of Rs. 30 crores and is likely to be completed by March, 2002.
- In addition, 50 retail outlets have been identified for colocating CNG dispensing facility.

Annexure

Details of Submissions made before the Supreme Court on 14.08.2001 in Writ Petition (Civil) No 13029 of 1985

The Court was requested to:

(a) Direct that henceforth registration of CNG buses, taxis and three wheeler Auto Rickshaws for which firm orders have been placed with the manufacturers or conversion agencies in compliance of directions of 26th March, 2001 of the Supreme Court be done in accordance with the month-wise schedules to be prepared by Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) and Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL), matching the CNG requirement of registered vehicles with the CNG dispensing capacity of IGL, and for this purpose time beyond 30th September, 2001 be allowed for compliance of the directions dated 26th March, 2001 of the Supreme Court;

(b) Direct the registration of CNG buses, three wheeler auto rickshaws and taxis by persons who do not hold special permits in terms of the directions of 26th March, 2001 of the Supreme Court be taken up only after the registration of Buses, Three Wheeler Auto Rickshaws and Taxis referred to in (a) above has been completed and when CNG beyond the requirement of the buses, taxis and the three wheeler auto rickshaws already registered or to be registered by those holding the special permits, becomes available;

(c) Direct that henceforth no new private (non-commercial) vehicles be registered and no conversion of the existing private (non-commercial) vehicles to CNG mode be allowed by the GNCTD and further direct that CNG be supplied from the earmarked CNG stations only to such private vehicles that are certified as duly registered upto the cut off date by the registering authority of GNCTD;

(d) Direct/clarify that new four stroke petrol driven three wheeler auto rickshaws plying on unleaded low benzene petrol, which has been observed by the Supreme Court as "Clean Fuel" in its order dated 26th March 2001, be/can be registered in the NCT; and

(e) Direct the Bharat Stage - II emission complaint diesel buses be allowed to be registered subject to such conditions as the Supreme Court may direct, to meet the requirement of passenger transport in the NCT, over and above the CNG buses that are already plying or are in the pipeline in compliance of the directions of the Supreme Court dated 26th March, 2001.

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to ask the hon. Minister, could they not have found a solution to the shortage of CNG in Delhi before the crisis arose, putting the people and especially the workers, into large-scale distress and discomfort. However, having done that, in view of the widespread public fears, misgivings and difficulties over the auto fuel use, would the Government come out with a detailed policy statement on multi-fuel use in transportation that balances the availability of fuel, technological feasibility for multi-fuel vehicles and ecological balance?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, it is true that the people of Delhi had to suffer a lot of inconvenience. We are trying to establish CNG stations, as desired by the Supreme Court. But on 26th March, 2001 the Supreme Court gave another order. According to the earlier order, only buses were to be covered by CNG.

In March, 2001, the Supreme Court said that all autos, taxis, RTVs, that is, other commercial vehicles will also be covered by CNG, and that is why in the last four or five months, nearly 2000 to 2,500 new autos every month with CNG are coming on to the road. Instead of 11,000, the number of autos now in Delhi is 27,000. The CNG stations are to be established before 30th September. So, there has been some mismatch. We are trying to establish them. I go beyond party politics in doing that. I had meetings with the Chief Minister of Delhi also. Now, 11 applications of Indraprastha Gas Limited are pending with the Delhi Electricity Board. You will be surprised and also shocked to know that we have not been given electricity. If we do not get electricity, we are required to run generators there, and when generators run for 20 to 22 hours, they are creating problems. Ultimately, generators are supposed to work for six to eight hours only and maintenance and other problems are also there.

But, as I have indicated in the reply, 14 extra powerful compressors are coming and they will be installed before 30th September. They have to be imported from Argentina and Italy. Five of them have already reached and we are airlifting the remaining nine. Out of these nine, five will come tomorrow and the remaining

four will also come by next week or so, depending on the availability of aircraft. Now, instead of 80 CNG Stations, we will be establishing 87 CNG Stations. We propose to establish 94 CNG Stations as I have indicated in the reply, but it will take some time to stabilise. Any new experiment - this is an experiment which we are doing in a very big way - needs stabilisation and the Government is consciously making efforts to ensure that it is done.

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Sir, between the Judiciary and the Executive, between the State Government and the Government of India, there is a war of nerves going on regarding CNG. However, the common man is going on suffering unabated. The fact of the matter is that we had vehicles fitted with one mode of engine, resulting in fires across CNG Stations. Nowhere in the world are there vehicles fitted with only one mode of engine. Everywhere, they have two modes of engine to comply with the requirement.

Secondly, will the Government not take into consideration that the retail outlets that should have opened up in Delhi have not yet been opened up so far? They should have opened up by now so that people do not have to line up in queues to get CNG, in fact, for 33 hours at a stretch. The children, who have been going to schools, as I get to know from them directly, are suffering very much due to non-availability of CNG. It has been a sad reflection on the functioning of the Government of India.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, why should the Government of India alone be blamed? If anybody has to be blamed, then both the Governments should be blamed, but I do not believe in such comments. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Sir, between the two Governments, the common man suffers. The Minister cannot just shove off his responsibility to somebody else.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, I said in the beginning itself that I also feel that the people of Delhi are being inconvenienced. I agree with that. There is no disagreement on that. With regard to war of nerves, so far as the Government of India is concerned, I have been patiently trying to discuss the matter with the Government of Delhi, but sometimes the Ministers of the Government of Delhi flare up. I cannot help it.

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Sir, this will go down as one of the most mismanaged schemes that the Government of India has ever floated.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, the hon. Member can have her views, but I will explain the Government's view. The main question pertains to single mode of fuel. The Government of India agrees that there should be daul-fuel mode in Delhi.

I would like to share with the House the sea change that has taken place now after the Supreme Court order of 1998. When the Supreme Court have the order in 1998, at that time, the diesel which was supplied here had contained 0.50 per cent sulphur. Then, the Supreme Court has directed that it should be upgraded. Now, we are supplying diesel with 0.05 per cent sulphur content, which means that only one-tenth of sulphur is now remaining in diesel as compared to the diesel supplied in 1998. So, the situation has changed between 1998 and 2001. That is why, we have submitted to the Supreme Court that dual-fuel mode of transport should be accepted and I do hope that the Supreme Court would also take cognisance of the change in the situation that has taken place in the last three years and accept our submission.

[Translation]

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister in the reply has said that they cannot cater to the growing demand. I have requested that

[English]

No new vehicles be registered

[Translation]

My question is that

[English]

The Ministry of Petroleum is a very big one having a huge R&D Department.

[Translation]

As the Minister has just now replied, yesterday also he has said that there are two types of fuel being used in New York in USA.

[English]

One is CNG and the other is low sulpher diesel.

[Translation]

We are lacking two things here

[English]

First is R&D and the second is perspective planning.

[Translation]

The hon. Minister in his reply has said that the Government will lay pipelines worth rupees thirty crore. My question is that

[English]

What type of R&D are we working on to meet the demand of CNG for prospective five year, keeping in view the Supreme Court order?

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is true that there should be a long term planning as well as a short term planning. As regards the short term planning, we have apprised the honourable Supreme Court that as per their order, we would provide CNG to only those vehicles that are covered under their order but if more number of vehicles get registered, we do not have additional quantum of gas to supply to them. You also know that there is a saying in Marathi, let me translate in into Hindi although I do not know Hindi very well. They saying is that when there is no water in the well, then where from the water will come into the bucket. We do not have additional quantum of CNG to supply. It is not being extracted, then wherefrom we would supply, this is the basic aspect. As regards the perspective planning, it has got another equivalent. CNG has an equivalent by the name of liquefied natural gas. We have decided to import CNG and we will decide the terminal for that. Five million metric tonne gas will be available through Petromet India. We have signed a contract with Qatar for 25 years in this regard.

[English]

The terminal will be established by the end of 2003.

[Translation]

Thus additional quantum of gas would be available after the year 2003 but the price of the gas at that time as compared to the price of gas at present

[English]

Will be nearly 2-1/2 time more.

[Translation]

But the gas would be available at that time. This the situation today and as per the existing situation, we are trying to serve the people.

SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: My question was that

[English]

What will be the demand for CNG after five years and what steps the Government is taking to meet that demand. That was my specific question.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is the responsibility of the Delhi Government to project the number of vehicles in Delhi after five years from now. Now it is the Central Government and the Supreme Court who will decide whether the vehicles will run on CNG only or on alternative fuel as well. It is very difficult to project the demand for CNG after five year from now on this basis.

DR. (SHRIMATI) ANITA ARYA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the preparation for setting up of 87 CNG filling station in Delhi have been completed? What are the difficulties coming in the way of starting filling stations and the time by which the stations are likely to be made operational?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I said that 87 such filling stations will become operational from 30 September. About the problems I have said that the compressors are coming and these will be fitted. Alongwith this I have also said about other problems like electricity connection etc. I hope that all these problems will also be sorted out. All the 87 stations will be made operational from 30th September.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, the hon. Minister is one of my best friends and is also a competent Minister. The question that I am going to ask may be a little bit inconvenient for my friend to answer. In your reply you said that if there is no water in the well how will it come into the bucket. You also said that the type of fuel used for vehicle would be decided by the Supreme Court and High Court. You also said that it is the Delhi Government which have to project the number of vehicles and the resultant consumption of fuel after five years from now. I would like to know from the Minister whether it is not the responsibility of the Government too? Executive order will come to us from the Supreme Court and the High

Court and the policy will be decided by the Supreme Court and the High Court. Then what we are going to do here in the House as the people are suffering on account of this? We cannot distance ourself from the prevailing situation by saying that this matter will be decided by the Supreme Court or the High Court or the Delhi Government will tackle this. Whether the Government do not know as to how many vehicles are coming in Delhi or what type of fuel should be used? It is proving that you do not have any prospective planning in this regard. I am sorry to say this and I would not like to create any problem for you but it is nothing but non-governance. This is called inefficient governance and a governance without a vision.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister is there. He will reply. He is capable of defending the policy.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I would like that such a situation should not arise in future. It is not only the question of the hon. Minister rather we all form the part of the Government the Executive. I would like to know as to what is going to be done by the Government in this regard?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Hon. Member is very senior to me.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: You please do not call me old man.

SHRI RAM NAIK: I have more respect for him than he has for me. The hon'ble Member is well aware that the transportation system of the city is a State matter. So the State Government should do something in this regard. Our responsibility is to supply the gas and about this I have given the clarification.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: The formulation of the policy is your responsibility.

SHRI RAM NAIK: You are speaking while sitting.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: You are saying that it is the responsibility of the State, then what will you do?

SHRI RAM NAIK: I did not say that it is not our responsibility. I said that it is our responsibility. However, the main responsibility lies with the State Government. I am talking of the Constitution. I only said that the hon. Member is speaking while sitting and that is also not appropriate. We have prospective planning. We have prepared hydro-carbon vision 2025 as a prospective plan for up to 2025. We are implementing that. I have given its copy to all the hon. Members. If you wish I can once again provide you that copy. One main point in it is the category (quality) of auto fuel. We have decided to set up a committee of experts to formulate the auto fuel policy to ward off the legal complication in the Supreme Court or else where. You all know that Dr. Mashelkar is an efficient officer and it has been decided to include scientists in the Committee. The Committee will look into the matter as to what emission norms are to be fixed for the auto fuel. The scientific approach will come only when the emission norms are fixed. Presently we are emphasising that you may also follow the dual fuel policy and may use 0.05 per cent low sulpher diesel. I would certainly like to say that nowhere in the world any vehicle is running on CNG. And this is what we are telling the Supreme Court also because this case has been filed there. I have also said that I have held meetings with the Chief Ministers of the States twice. Our Minister is the amicus-cuirae of the Supreme Court and the Solicitor General is friend of the Supreme Court, they have been briefed about all the things and our hon. Prime Minister has called a meeting with the Minister in the evening today itself to broadly consider over this issue and to check out a future policy. The Prime Minister is also intervening in this matter. We should realise this and we will decide the future course of action on the basis of it but at the same time we also seek your cooperation in it.

[English]

SHRI A.P. ABDULLAKUTTY: Sir, the CNG system is gaining importance in the country in the light of its environmental feasibility. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is planning to open any CNG outlet system in Kerala.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, CNG means Compressed Natural Gas. We are supplying it in Delhi and Mumbai only in a limited quantity. Gas is not available with us. As soon as gas will be available with us in future and LNG terminal will be set up, however, a terminal is being set up in Dabhol and second of 2.5 is coming up in Kochi. Whenever, it is completed, we can make use of that.

SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is true that...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM NAIK: I have to tell one more important point and this is an important issue. What he has asked and I want to tell that CNG is not the only clean fuel. There are so many fuels available at present and therefore, we should not think that this fuel is the solution for all problems. We are trying to provide the 0.05 fuel all over India in 6-8 months which we are providing in four metropolitan cities at present.

SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, whosoever is at the fault, be it the Delhi Government or the Union Government but ultimately by public is on the receiving end. And it is also true that the responsibility of the Delhi Government was more right from the beginning to find out a solution to this problem. Shri Shivraj Patilji has rightly said that several decisions which ought to have taken by the Government are being taken by the Supreme Court. And we feel that the Supreme Court has taken more responsibility on it in the last some years. Shri Chandra Shekharji and other senior Members should together ponder over this issue but he cannot do it alone and this is not possible without his cooperation...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please ask your question.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I want to say to the hon. Members that I have kept telling the important leaders of all parties, including his party that this encroachment would one day prove fatal for parliamentary democracy but no leader is prepared to take action against it. I am alone but you know that I have been pointing it out regularly. I am sorry to say that nobody is prepared to listen. Shri Shivraj Patilji, you may seek any clarification from the hon. Minister, but the decisions that are being taken there are impossible to be implemented by any Minister or any party.

SHRI RAM NAIK: This is not the issue but still I would like to say that I am prepared to consider his suggestion...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIJAY GOEL: I mentioned Shri Chandra Shekhar's name because...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Goel, whenever, you are given the floor, you create problem.

[Translation]

Instead of asking supplementary question, you are questioning him.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIJAY GOEL: I do not agree with you because I am trying to solve a major problem along with that of the CNG and I have referred the matter to you because I have high hopes that you would make the people...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please ask you question.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Sir, Government says that there is no CNG in the well. It may well be so because there is a limit after which there is no possibility of the finding of any resource. Government says that there is no more CNG. Supreme Court have rejected 0.5 ultra diesel. I want to ask the Government whether it plans to promulgate an ordinance or any other step, through the Supreme Court or the Parliament, so that the problem could be solved?

Sir, there is another short question related to it - if three wheelers within Delhi run on CNG and ultra-diesel, then whether Union Government would allow two separate fare structures in consultation with Delhi Government? I want the hon. Minister to throw light on it also.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, I am replying to the second question first. Even today, we may have different fares for taxis running on diesel and petrol. It is not appropriate that all vehicles should run on a single fuel. Setting fare structure for vehicles running on CNG and diesel is the responsibility of State Government. They should consider it. Hon. Member is right.

As far his reference to ordinance, it is not possible, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, at present since the Parliament is in session.

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was preparing most of the questions, which have been asked by Shri Shivraj V. Patil and others. I am fully with Shri Chandra Shekharji that in all matters, the Supreme Court is not supreme and this House is also supreme. Considering this, both the State Government and the Central Government are guilty. Some leaders of both the parties are going to the streets and educating people. It is high time that the Central and the State Governments should tell clearly to the Supreme Court that this is the programme which they are going to adhere to and they are not against the policy. Further confusion must not be there. Both of you must state the firm steps in your affidavit. This harassment to the school children and the general public must be stopped. Are you prepared to do it?...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, half an hour has been denoted for the first issue. I should also be given the opportunity to speak....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is a very important Question. That is why, I am allowing it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we are doing all that has been mentioned by the hon. Member. We have informed the Supreme Court in April and on 14th August as to what can we further do in this direction. At present I can only say that we will take decision after seriously considering all the issues that you have raised with a view to alleviate the difficulties of the people of Delhi.

SHRI SAHIB SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, though it is true that the responsibility of transport, providing electricity, land and of stating the requirement of buses in Delhi lies with the Government of Delhi, but...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: If everything is done by the Government of Delhi, what does the Union Government do...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Sahib Singh, you cannot make a speech. You please put your supplementary question.

[Translation]

SHRI SAHIB SINGH: In spite of all this, Supreme Court issued order in 1998. Thereafter, whether Delhi Government, the present one, have told the Union Government till date about the total requirement and about the number of depots to be opened? If they have given the information, when was it given. Did they provide full information? Whether there have been any negligence on the part of the Union Government? Whether Union Government opened the depots in time? Who is responsible for that?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is not for me to say who is responsible. It can be decided only by the people or the Parliament. I only want to say that Union Government have done all that was required from it and we also convey the State Government about what is required to be done by them. Hon. Chief Minister has assured her cooperation...*(Interruptions)*. As I have already stated and we are also trying to improve the electricity scenario...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

Sale of Kerosene by Private Refineries

*542. SHRI MANJAY LAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether private refineries have been allowed to sell their kerosene in the parallel market;

(b) if so, whether the free availability of kerosene in the market is one of the reasons for adulteration in diesel/ petrol; and

(c) if so, the facts thereof and the corrective measures contemplated in the matter?

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

Statement

(a) to (c) No domestic refinery including private refinery is allowed to sell their kerosene in the parallel market. Kerosene is miscible with petrol and diesel. The Kerosene (Restriction on Use and Fixation of Ceiling Price) Order 1993, issued under the Essential Commodities Act prohibits the use of kerosene as a fuel or as an additive to fuel in motor vehicles.

2. The Government have taken various steps to check the use of kerosene for adulteration of petrol and diesel, such as:

- blue dyeing of kerosene and furfural doping of kerosene.
- density checking of petrol and diesel at the retail outlets.
- regular/surprise inspections at the retail outlets.
- setting up of Anti Adulteration Cell and empowering of officers of the Cell with powers of Search and Seizures under various Control Orders issued under the Essential Commodities Act.

- increase in the number of mobile labs for checking of adulteration of petrol and diesel at the retail outlets from 23 to 46 during 1999 to 2001.

3. Punitive action against retail outlets found indulging in adulteration is taken as laid down in the Marketing Discipline Guidelines 2001 and/or in terms of Dealership Agreement.

4. The State Governments are also empowered to carry out inspection of retail outlets and take appropriate action under Essential Commodities Act against erring dealers in case any malpractices/irregularities are detected.

[Translation]

SHRI MANJAY LAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Nowadays the poor are finding it hard to cook their meals due to scarcity of ration and kerosene and they could not lit their lamps. The reply of the Government is not satisfactory and far from the facts. The Government have taken many measures about adulteration in Diesel/Petrol but these measures are of no avail. I wanted to know from the Government that oil producers in private sectors are earning huge profits by mixing kerosene which is cheaper than diesel, the price of which is three folds higher. In such a situation, whether the Government want to give direction to private oil refineries to change colours of oil compulsorily so that adulteration could be reduced and public could be benefited.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the question is about the kerosene which comes through the parallel market. But this is also correct that the kerosene which comes through the parallel market had also been used for adulteration. I want to tell you the quantum of kerosene coming in the country through parallel market. I want to give the figures of two-three years. In 1998-99, it was 1644 thousand metric tonne. We have taken up this task strictly against adulteration when it has been brought down from 1600 TMT to 308 in the year 2000-2001 in the parallel market.

[English]

Imported kerosene has been substantially reduced. For that, we have also increased the import duty on kerosene. So, import duty has been increased.

Regarding anti-adulteration activities, we have made a separate Cell. The State Governments are also co-operating. So, under that, we are taking stern action, because of which, adulteration has been reduced. I do not say it has gone away.

[Translation]

SHRI MANJAY LAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, whether it is correct that during the meeting of the Standing Committee on Petroleum and Chemicals in Mumbai, the Chairmen of Hindustan Petroleum, Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and IBP suggested to conduct mobile enquiry at commissionery level. If it was so, then what action has been taken thereon and whether review has been done by the Government? At the time of enquiry, whether the Government make arrangement to ensure the presence of local Member of Parliament to keep a check and balance on officers when an enquiry committee visits the area after receiving complaint?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Chairman, it is true that in the Meeting of Advisory Committee it was agreed to work strictly to check adulteration and after that we have taken several measures also. In that meeting this issue also came up that the number of laboratories for checking adulteration is less. When I took the charge of this Ministry at that time there were only 23 mobile labs for this kind of checking but at present there are 46 mobile labs which means the number of labs has doubled. Our target is to make it 50 by the end of this year and we will achieve this target.

My request to the Hon'ble Members is that they should tell us as to where we are making the mistakes so that we can work accordingly.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: No one cares for MPs.

SHRI RAM NAIK: People care for Member of Parliament and we are associated with people. Therefore, it is not possible to control that by constituting a committee. It is not proper also.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, just now the hon'ble Minister has said that in 1998, 1000 metric tonnes of kerosene was coming in an irregular manner.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Earlier the Government had formulated a scheme for parallel import and for this import licence was not required and it was coming through parallel import which was not at all irregular.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: It was coming under free trade but I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to whether he is aware that adulteration is being done by big industrial houses also and whether he has received any complaint in this regard? If so, the steps taken by the Government against big industrial houses?

SHRI RAM NAIK: If you have named them, then I could have furnished the details.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Dr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if the hon'ble Minister wanted to know the name then I would like to tell that it is the Reliance Company.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Whatever hon. Chandra Shekharji has said, in that connection I would like to say that in the earlier drafting there was a technical mistake of a word as a result of which it took advantage and distributed 300 tonnes in the country itself. When this thing came to our notice, we examined it and immediately made the necessary amendment but now such a thing is not happening. All this happened as a result of drafting which was done 4-5 years ago. But when this came to our notice we immediately made changes in the rules and now it has stopped.

[English]

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK: Sir, in view of the adulteration of kerosene in petrol as well as in diesel, I would like to ask whether the Government has got any policy to ensure that kerosene, petrol and diesel are sold at international prices. If they were sold here without any tax, would it solve the problem?

SHRI RAM NAIK: I am sorry; I have not understood the question.

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK: This problem arises because of the adulteration of kerosene in diesel and petrol. So, has the Government got any policy to eradicate this, to import all these things from the international market and sell them at the cost price in India?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, this is a question which needs a lot of deliberation.

In 1997, the Government decided that kerosene being used by the poor and economically weaker sections, there would be a subsidy for that and that subsidy would be to the extent of 33 per cent. Since the administered price mechanism would go off on 1st April, 2002, in the last two-three years, some marginal increases have been made. As of now, the difference between 33 per cent and the present subsidy is only Rs. 1.20. If the House is unanimous that this should be increased, I would take the opinion of the House and certainly do it. But I know that the poor people would suffer. That is why we are trying to go slow.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Sir the hon. Minister has mentioned here that the weaker sections are using kerosene. Especially in our State, Kerala, fishermen are using kerosene on a large scale for fishing. The hon. Minister has mentioned here that to check and prevent adulteration of kerosene with diesel and petrol, the Government is taking some measures. This creates an artificial scarcity of kerosene in the coastal areas, especially in Kerala. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, through you, whether the Government has noticed this and if so, what action has been taken by the Government to tackle the artificial scarcity of kerosene, especially in the coastal areas, for the benefit of fishermen.

SHRI RAM NAIK: This question hardly comes out of the main question but I would certainly reply to it because it is an important question.

As you are also aware, I am also a representative of a coastal area. So, I know the problems of fishermen. For fishermen, we have given special pumps for diesel. It is time that instead of kerosene they shifted to diesel. Then, there would be some uniformity in price. If there is any specific problem of a particular area or city and if the hon. Member informs me, I will look into it.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: You are very much aware of the problem...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM NAIK: I am aware; that is why I am replying.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do not respond to that. He is sitting and asking a question.

SHRI S. MURUGESAN: Sir, kerosene is one of the important fuels used by the poor people in the villages. It comes under the Essential Commodities Act. In fact, kerosene is being used for adulteration of diesel and petrol. Even though the hon. Minister, in his reply, has stated that the Government has taken initiatives and steps to control and check adulteration, in may observation, they have provided to be ineffective.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may please ask your supplementary.

SHRI S. MURUGESAN: Will the Government, apart from the steps taken, take any stringent penal action?

SHRI RAM NAIK: We have to carry on a crusade against adulteration. I am doing it; hon. Members should also co-operate in that. All actions against adulteration are basically required to be taken under the Essential

Commodities Act, which is in the domain of State Governments. In addition to that, we have oil companies and, at the Centre, we have recently started an Anti-adulteration Cell.

Let me share this information with the House. He said that it was not effective. It might not be effective for you but I am trying to improve it. Last year, we have terminated 50 pumps and action is at present going on against approximately 250 pumps to ensure that these things do not happen.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, when the hon'ble Minister was only an hon'ble M.P. at that time he used to ask pointed questions but ever since he has become a Minister, he tries to ignore the view-point of people.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rajo Singh, is this your supplementary question?

SHRI RAJO SINGH: Sir, you have said that number of mobile labs for checking adulteration has been increased from 23 to 46 in inferior areas. You are requested to tell the names of those places were the number of labs has been increased? You have accepted that there is adulteration in kerosene oil. It is used by poor people in the villages. The hon'ble Minister has not given the reply of the Question which my friend asked. He has not asked as to whether in the Investigation Committee, which has been constituted, the hon'ble Member has been included or not.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rajo Singhji, you ask your supplementary question.

SHRI RAJO SINGH: I am asking that only whenever the Investigation Committee, which you have constituted for the area from which the hon. Member hails, goes there for investigation, we find that there is collusion. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the Committee will inform the hon. Member about investigation so that the findings could be certified by the concerned Member?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if it is done so, then we will not be able to conduct surprise raid.

SHRI RAJO SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, surprise raids are not undertaken. It is like this that the groom is never taken into confidence during marriage.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rajo Singhji, first you listen to the reply.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, secondly the hon'ble member has said that I used to ask pointed questions but I would say that only the categorical reply is being given. I am only doing the work which have been assigned to me. I have accepted this also that adulteration is being done on a large scale and only Governmental machinery is not enough to check this. We should launch People's Expect Movement also for this. If it is being done at some place, and if the hon'ble Member informs us then we will certainly take action. If we get the cooperation of all then we will definitely achieve success.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as far as the question of Bihar is concerned, the State Government of Bihar has implemented the Essential Commodities Act. I will convey the sentiments of the hon'ble Members to the State Government of Bihar.

[Translation]

SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister the names of the persons who have misinterpreted the policy due to which heavy loss has been suffered by the nation? Whether the Government will take action against them?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, after examining it, we felt that there is a mistake in drafting due to which somebody is taking the advantage. Now, the amendment has been made in the law, and it has stopped.

SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, whether the Government are considering to hold inquiry about the people who are involved in the enactment of faulty legislation, because the nation has suffered a great loss?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I can only say that this happened earlier.

SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is a continuous process that steps are taken to prevent recurrence of such things. Therefore, I would like to know whether the Government propose to take remedial measures?

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Arun Kumar, please resume your seat. The hon. Minister has already replied to your question.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI K. MALAISAMY: Sir, so long as the price difference between diesel and petrol on the one side and kerosene on the other side - the difference is huge - exists, the adulteration is bound to take place and whatever may be your enforcement systems, they will fail. This is the way that I can substantiate it.

On the other hand, I want to know whether the hon. Minister or the Government is thinking of a way in which kerosene cannot be adulterated. You devise such a way by your research and other machinery where adulteration could not be possible. You find out such a device that kerosene could not be adulterated with diesel or petrol. You find out some scientific process and then you will succeed. I want to know whether the Government has done any such attempt by their research work.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have mentioned in the reply to the question that the steps being taken by the Government to stop such things. The real reason is price difference. All of us should unitedly work to stop the theft, and the Government is discharging its responsibility.

Fruits and Vegetables Processed in the Country

*544. DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of fruits and vegetables produced/ processed in the country during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government agreed that the said percentage is very low; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to improve the situation?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House

Statement

(a) to (c) As per the statistics made available by the National Horticulture Board (NHB), production of fruits and vegetable during the years 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-2000 are respectively 120.94, 131.58, 136.33 million tonnes. However, the breakup of total production of processable varieties of fruits & vegetables is not separately maintained. Exact co-relation, therefore, between production and processing is difficult to establish. Projections of estimates made by different studies indicate that approximately 2% of fruits & vegetables are processed.

The Department provides financial assistance for setting up of food processing industries, expansion, modernization of existing industries, training and human resource development and quality control etc. In the budget for 2001-2002, the processed products of fruits and vegetables have been exempted from 16% Central Excise.

The Department of Food Processing Industries has also prepared a draft policy, which envisages creation of an enabling environment for setting up of food processing industries, for meeting critical gaps in infrastructures and establishing a link between the different components of the food chain.

[Translation]

DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I had asked the percentage of fruits and vegetables processed in the country. The Government have stated in its reply that only 2% of fruits and vegetables are processed, though India is the largest producer of fruits and vegetables in the world. I would like to know from the Government, that last year on 11 August the then Minister of Agriculture had announced that the Government is going to introduce National Food Processing Development Bill. Almost one year has passed. When the Government are going to introduce National Food Processing Development Bill. What action the Government is taking to fulfil the targets fixed in this regard. The hon'ble Minister should say something in this regard.

[English]

SHRI AJIT SINGH: The hon. Member is right that only two per cent of the fruits and vegetables are processed here. That policy is being made; the draft is ready. Some other Ministries have given suggestions on this.

[Translation]

DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir my question is in Hindi, and the Hon'ble Minister knows Hindi. I would be grateful it he speaks in Hindi.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He can use English. Even though he knows Hindi, he can reply in English.

[Translation]

SHRI AJIT SINGH: I would definitely reply in Hindi, there is no problem. But if the Minister would have been from Tamilnadu and the question had been asked in Hindi, then problem may have arisen, therefore, do not insist on it.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have begin in English, therefore, conclude in English only.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: I will speak both in Hindi and English. Draft Policy is ready and it is to be debated upon. It has to be presented in the Cabinet. I agree that food processing is very low in the country. It is merely two percent. The target is to increase it to 10 percent and for it investment of one lakh and forty thousand crore rupees is needed. There are many problems related to food processing in our country. We are not having infrastructure facilities and sufficient raw material to process. And in our country not many people eat processed food. Therefore, it is only two percent. For the last three-four years, much progress has not been made. The one reason behind it is that the production of fruit and vegetable, which is processed has increased but it is still two percent only.

DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in India more vegetables and fruits are rotten than processed and consumed in England. I would like to know from hon'ble Minister the States where food processing plants are being set up. I would particularly like to request the Government regarding Bihar as in northern and central Bihar land is most fertile and there is no other industry over there. The system over there is based on agriculture only. Whether the hon'ble Minister will provide special facility to set up food processing plant over there? I would like to know whether the Government is going to provide package for building cold storages in Bihar?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: The Government provides economic assistance. The permission has been given to set up sixteen food parks. The Government provides grant of upto four crore rupees for it. In Bihar 'Lichi' could be processed. If any proposal in this regard comes from Bihar the Government will give priority.

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Sir, my constituency is a very sweet constituency. We grow a lot of pineapples. Muvattupuzha is my constituency's name. It is the place where the maximum production takes place. As far as productivity is concerned, we have reached a very high stage, and many young farmers are working in the field.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Thomas, you should ask your supplementary. How do we know what you want to ask?

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: They are facing a great problem.

They are facing a great problem. They produce the best quality pineapple in the maximum quantity. The prices of pineapple fall whenever there is a lorry strike in Mumbai, or some other kind of strike in some other part of India. Processing facilities are something which we lack.

My question is related to fruit-processing. Will the Minister take special interest and see that some processing units are put up for pineapple - for other fruits and vegetables also but especially for pineapple - if possible in my Constituency and, if not, anywhere in India, to encourage fruits production? The Minister is also a farmer.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Sir, the Government will encourage any entrepreneur who comes up with a proposal to set up a fruit-processing unit for pineapples or for any other fruit. We have given a tax holiday. We are giving financial assistance. Excise duty on processed food has been abolished. The hon. Member has said that there are many young people in his Constituency who are interested in this activity. I would suggest him to convince them to come forward with a proposal, and the Government will give all possible assistance.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: They can send some pineapples to this House free of cost.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Government have formulated big scheme and action plan to encourage farmer's production through food processing. As a result of it, the excise duty was abolished in this budget. According to the action plan the production

should be increased on large scale and farmers should be benefited. I would like to know whether this scheme is time-bound or will it run of long time.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The answer should also be brief.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Sir, I mentioned the salient features of the last Budget, connected with the questions raised by the hon. Member.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have already answered the question.

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Food preparations based on fruits and vegetables are completely expected from the Central excise duty. Special excise duty on soft drinks is reduced to 16 per cent from 24 per cent. Countervailing duty on imported liquor at suitable rates taking into account the levies of the State duties...

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Action Plan has already been told.

[English]

SHRI AJIT SINGH: These are the steps we have taken. Levy of additional duty on the imported items will be on the basis of retail sale price.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: I have said all this is there in the budget. What steps are being taken to encourage it.

[English]

SHRI AJIT SINGH: In the Food-Processing Development Act, as mentioned, the tax holiday for ten years is there. We are established new R&D institutions. We are identifying anchor industrial corporations for development of Food Parks.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the main impediment in the development of fruit-processing industries is the lack of infrastructure. The measures taken by the Ministry are not adequate for proper development of this industry. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will examine the present facilities given to the farmers and provide more facilities like creating a separate environment for this, giving technological know-how to farmers, etc., for further development of this industry? Will the Government take initiative for providing infrastructural facilities to the farmers?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: The hon. Member has mentioned that the main problem is lack of infrastructure. Lack of refrigerated trucks, lack of even roads to get the fruits and vegetables to areas where the consumption is more, lack of cold chain, and lack of grading facilities, all these things are there. Therefore, the spoilage is very much. The Ministry of Agriculture is giving special money to the States. Under macro management, they can set up grading facilities in each community, if they want to. We are giving grants. Earlier it was a loan, now we are giving grants for establishing cold chains and cold storage facilities.

Sir, as I mentioned, we are even giving grants for food Parks. Instead of loan, we are giving up to Rs. 4 crore for each Food Park as grant, and 16 cases have already been cleared.

So, the Government is trying to help them. But along with the infrastructure, there are problems of low demand, seasonal availability of raw material and very low margins. All these problems are also there.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Replacement of Distressed Bridges

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

(a) the number of rail bridges built by the Britishers, which have completed their life;

(b) the list of "distressed" rail bridges in the country; and

(c) the steps taken to replace these "distressed" railway bridges?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Rebuilding of bridges on consideration of end of life is not decided merely on basis of age but on age cum physical condition basis and technical considerations.

(b) As on 01.04.2001, there are 515 'distressed' bridges in the country. Railway-wise list is as under:-

Railways	Number of distressed bridges
Central	246
Eastern	27
Northern	66
North Eastern	25
Northeast Frontier	76
Southern	5
South Central	10
South Eastern	18
Western	42
Total	515

(c) Identified distressed bridges are prioritised on considerations of their condition assessed on the basis of physical condition through inspections and rebuilt/ rehabilitated.

Financial Assistance to Special Tourism Area

*545. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the financial assistance provided for each place identified as Special Tourism Area (S.T.A.) in the country, so far; and

(b) the progress of Tourism Development made in each area, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) The Department of Tourism, Government of India in consultation with the State Governments/UT Administrations has identified five Special tourism Areas namely Bekal in Kerala, Sindhudurg in Maharashtra, Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu, Puri in Orissa and Diu in Daman & Diu. Central financial assistance sanctioned to different projects so far for development of these areas is as follows:-

(Rs. in lakhs)

State/UT	Special Tourism Area	Amount Sancd.
Kerala	Bekal	190.00
Maharashtra	Sindhudurg	302.70
Tamil Nadu	Mamallapuram	78.73
Orissa	Puri	167.21
Daman & Diu	Diu	41.07
	Total	779.71

(b) Except Bekal in Kerala in Sindhudurg in Maharashtra no significant progress has been made in other three areas. Department of Tourism, Government of India has asked the concerned States to prepare Master Plans/Project Reports, take steps for acquisition of land and expedite implementation of the Special Tourism Area.

Cotton Technology Mission

*546. SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had launched a Rs. 600 crore Cotton Technology Mission last year to promote the cultivation of cotton;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have made any review of this programme;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof;

(e) the quantum of cotton produced in the country during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, State-wise;

(f) the quantum of cotton exported and imported, separately, during the said period, country-wise and the impact of such import on domestic cotton growers; and

(g) the steps being taken to protect the interest of Indian Cotton growers in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has launched a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of

Technology Mission on Cotton in February, 2000 with a total outlay of Rs. 566.5 crores for increasing production, productivity and quality of cotton. The Technology Mission on Cotton consists of four Mini Missions. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research is responsible for implementation of Mini Mission-I covering research aspects and the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation is responsible for the implementation of Mini Mission-II for extension and developmental activities. The Ministry of Textiles is the nodal Ministry for Mini Mission-III for improvement in marketing infrastructure and Mini Mission-IV for the modernization of ginning/pressing factories.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Scheme is being reviewed regularly by the Empowered Committee under the chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary to the Government of India as well as by the Standing Committees constituted for each Mini Mission under the chairmanship of the concerned Secretary to the Government of India. Apart from these Committees, the Agriculture Commissioner to the Government of India who is also the Mission Director, has been regularly monitoring the implementation of the Mission. Based upon these reviews, necessary modifications, in operational guidelines are being carried out in order to improve this Scheme.

(e) Data on the State-wise cotton production during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 is enclosed as statement-I. The data for the year 2000-2001 has not yet been finalised.

(f) The statement-II & III regarding import and export of cotton during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 from important countries is enclosed. In so far as the impact of import of cotton on cotton growers is concerned, so far there seems to have been no adverse impact as the cotton prices remained higher than the Minimum Support Price.

(g) To safeguard the interests of the cotton growers, besides the implementation of the Technology Mission of Cotton, the Government also announces Minimum Support Price for cotton each year and guarantees its procurement, if the price falls below the Minimum Support Price, through the Cotton Corporation of India in all States except Maharashtra. In Maharashtra, the State Government itself procures cotton under its Cotton Monopoly Procurement Scheme.

Statement-I

Cotton Production in Major States during 1998-99 and 1999-2000

(Production in Lakh Bales of 170 kg. each)

States	1998-99	1999-2000
Andhra Pradesh	15.22	15.95
Gujarat	39.03	20.86
Haryana	8.73	13.09
Karnataka	9.77	7.6
Madhya Pradesh	4.29	5.25
Maharashtra	26.19	31.00
Orissa	0.53	0.79
Punjab	5.95	9.5
Rajasthan	8.72	9.84
Tamil Nadu	4.06	2.88
Uttar Pradesh	0.08	0.08
All India	122.87	116.44

Statement-II

The quantum of cotton including cotton waste Imported from major countries during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

S. No.	Country	Quantity Imported (In Tonne)		
		1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Australia	13612	23208	29382
2.	Benin	2179	14501	24282
3.	Burkina Faso	1241	9919	7733

1	2	3	4	5
4.	Egypt	7376	7908	8827
5.	Germany	657	458	768
6.	Israel	774	144	97
7.	Ivory Coast	976	18532	28775
8.	Latvia	2146	—	—
9.	Russia	1153	13439	8752
10.	Senegal	1082	969	1014
11	South Africa	1868	19453	6686
12.	Sudan	5712	1341	3115
13.	Turkey	4212	17039	1375
14.	UK (Britain)	2142	701	118
15.	USA	3630	12866	14080

Statement-III

The quantum of Cotton Including cotton waste exported from India to major countries during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

S. No.	Country	Quantity Imported (In Tonne)		
		1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
1.	Bangladesh	1325	82	1601
2	Belgium	1344	1281	1210
3.	Chinese Taipei	8352	584	410
4.	China PRF	2151	—	1062
5.	France	845	913	1496
6.	Germany	1842	616	1198
7.	Hongkong	7576	141	1571
8.	Italy	4296	2862	5188
9.	Japan	5420	5471	4586
10.	Netherland	1493	220	90
11.	U.K. (Britain)	4234	2569	317

Multi-fibre Agreement on Textiles

*547. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have undertaken any evaluation of the likely competitiveness of Indian textiles after the Multi-fibre Agreement comes to an end in 2005; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to ensure that India's share of world trade in textiles increase significantly after the MFA comes to an end?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There have been a few studies to analyse the impact of post quota regime on our textile and clothing exports. These studies have emphasized the need for modernization and technological upgradation, human resource development, strategic alliances and Foreign Direct Investments so that the industry is enabled to successfully meet the competitive environment of post-quota regime.

The Government has taken stock of the new challenges and opportunities presented by changing global environment, and have announced the National Textile Policy - 2000 (NTxP-2000). The new policy provides an enabling environment to make the domestic textile industry strong enough to face growing global competition, and thereby, achieve an export target of US$ 50 billion by the year 2010. Dereservation of the woven segment of ready-made garment sector will allow the industry to achieve desired economies of scale. In order to implement the vision of the NTxP-2000, a "Textile Package" was announced in the Budget 2001-2002 to encourage investment in the textile sector. Some of the important provisions of the "Textile Package" are:-

(i) Customs duty has been reduced from 15% to 5% on 159 specified textile and garment machineries. In addition, 12 important items of machineries including shuttleless looms have also been exempted from additional excise duty. A programme has been announced to induct 50,000 shuttleless looms and to modernise 2.5 lakh powerlooms in the decentralised sector by 2004.

(ii) Assistance under Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) providing for a reimbursement of 5% out of interest, is available to the textile industry for modernisation and upgradation. In addition, rate of depreciation allowance for machinery under TUFS has been raised to 50%.

(iii) A provision of Rs. 10 crores has been earmarked in the Budget 2001-2002 for the establishment of Apparel Parks for production and export of garments. Besides a provision of Rs. 15 crores has been made for the Scheme for improvement of critical infrastructure facilities at major textile production centres.

In addition, a Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC) with an outlay of about Rs. 600 crores has been launched by the Government to improve the productivity and quality of cotton required by the textile industry.

[Translation]

Ill Effects of Pesticides

*548. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether ill effects of the indiscriminate use of pesticides are being noticed;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government to check the ill-effects of pesticides?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) While granting the registration of pesticides, the Registration Committee (RC) constituted under the Insecticides Act, 1968, prescribes dosage, the number & manner of application and the waiting period etc. to be observed before harvesting any crop. When used as per the recommendations of the RC and following the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), the use of pesticides does not cause any ill effect to human health, etc.

Indiscriminate use of chemical pesticides may result in several ill-effects such as development of resistance in pests to pesticides, resurgence of minor pests as major ones, higher levels of toxic pesticide residues in food, fodder, pesticide contamination of water, soil etc.

The following steps have been taken by the Government to check the ill-effects of pesticides:-

(i) Integrated Pest Management (IPM), an eco-friendly approach which encompasses cultural, biological and mechanical methods and need based use of chemical pesticides, has been adopted as the main plank and cardinal principle of plant protection to reduce the use of chemical pesticides.

(ii) The use of bio-control agents and bio-pesticides is encouraged in place of chemical pesticides under the ambit of IPM.

(iii) Extension workers and farmers are trained in IPM as well as in safe use of pesticides through Farmers' Field Schools (FFSs).

(iv) Judicious and need based use of chemical pesticides is recommended under IPM as a last resort on the basis of economic threshold level of pests.

(v) Literature on IPM as well as safe use of pesticides is freely distributed to extension workers and farmers.

(vi) The use of hazardous pesticides is reviewed from time to time by the Expert Committees/ R.C. On the basis of recommendations of Expert Committee/RC, manufacture, use, etc. of hazardous pesticides is banned/restricted from time to time.

[English]

Tapping of Hydel Generation Potential

*549 SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are likely to bring out a blue print on tapping of hydel generation potential in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Yes, Sir. A "Blue Print for Power Sector Development" has been prepared and hydro power development in the country has been accorded high priority.

(b) On the basis of studies carried out by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) during 1978-87, the economically exploitable hydro potential of major/medium schemes in the country was assessed to be around 84044 MW at 60% load factor, corresponding to an installed capacity of 150,000 MW approximately. As on 1.8.2001, on the basis of 60% load factor, a hydro-potential of 1403.43 MW has been developed and 5281.55 MW is under development.

Government of India has initiated action to develop about 30,000 MW of hydro power in the various parts of the country. A substantial portion of this is in the North East, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal. The North East has the highest untapped potential. Action has been initiated to develop hydro-electric projects in Siang and Subansiri Basins (20700 MW) in the North East, besides other projects.

With the object of executing the feasible hydro power projects in the country, the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has been asked to carry out a ranking study of all the undeveloped hydro sites in the country. CEA has initiated a basin-wise exercise in consultation with the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Central Water Commission, Geological Survey of India and National Remote Sensing Agency to identify those projects which could be taken up first so that hydro power development is taken up in an appropriate sequence. The Government has recently introduced a three stage process for development of the new hydro electric projects in the Central Sector. The budgetary allocation for the hydro sector has also been enhanced to accelerate capacity addition.

[Translation]

Concession to Senior Citizens

*550. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
SHRI VIJAY GOEL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the facilities being provided to the senior citizens by the Railways;

(b) whether the Government propose to provide more facilities to senior citizens;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Railways have made it mandatory for senior citizens for availing concession in rail fare to keep a certificate with them indicating their age during the course of journey;

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

(f) the details of penalty imposed in case of inability to produce the age certificate during the course of journey?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Indian Railways provide facilities to Senior Citizens as a social commitment. These are:

(i) Women of 60 years and above and men of 65 years and above are granted 30% senior citizen concession. This concession is valid in Mail/ Express fares of all classes and fares of Rajdhani/Shatabdi trains.

(ii) At major Computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) locations, Senior Citizens are dealt with at the exclusive counter earmarked for the specific categories of persons.

(iii) Senior citizens are allotted lower berth automatically, if available, at the time of seeking reservation.

(iv) For those senior citizens who have been allotted upper/middle berths due to non-availability of lower berths at the time of booking, Conductors/ TTEs in the train are authorised to allot them, on demand the vacant lower berths, if available.

(v) Separate accommodation has been earmarked for Senior Citizens in suburban trains of Central and Western Railways.

(b) and (c) Presently, there is no proposal to provide more facilities to senior citizens.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Senior citizens travelling on concession are required to carry some document showing proof of their age or date of birth and produce it if demanded by some Railway Official during journey. Documents like Identity Card, Ration Card, Driving License, Passport, Educational certificate, etc. issued by some Government Institution/ Agency are valid. Besides, the certificate from Local Bodies like Panchayat or Corporation or Municipality or any other authentic & recognised documents are also valid. This provision has been made to avoid misuse of the facility.

(f) If the senior citizen availing concession does not produce proof of age during journey, he is treated as without ticket and charged accordingly.

[Translation]

Marketing Facilities for Farmers

*551. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farmers do not have the marketing facilities to sell their produce in the market in many States;

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

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to make the marketing facilities available to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) The State Governments provide marketing facilities to the farmers to sell their produce in the market yards, established under their respective State Regulation Acts. As on 31.3.2001 there were 34,598 wholesale and rural primary markets in the country. In addition Food Corporation of India (FCI) and various State agencies in consultation with the State Governments establish a number of purchase centres at various mandis and key points to facilitate procurement of food grains. For the Rabi and Kharif marketing seasons, 2000-2001, 8110 and 6633 purchase centres were opened, respectively.

(c) Government of India implemented a Central Sector scheme for development of agricultural produce markets from 1972-73 to 1991-92, under which funds were sanctioned for development of 3658 markets.

Under the Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North-eastern States including Sikkim, grants are to be provided for development of wholesale markets, rural primary markets as well as for strengthening of laboratories for quality control in the region.

The Government had also constituted an Expert Committee on Strengthening and Developing of Agricultural Marketing. The Committee has since submitted its report and an inter-ministerial Task Force has been constituted to examine the recommendations and suggest measures for the implementation of the recommendations of the Expert Committee. The State Governments/Union Territory Administrations have also been requested to examine the recommendations of the Expert Committee and provide their feed-back to the Task Force.

[English]

Regulatory Authority for Oil and Gas Industry

*552. DR. D.V.G. SHANKAR RAO:
SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a regulatory authority to monitor the oil and gas industry in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the said regulatory authority is likely to be set up; and

(d) the steps proposed to ensure that both private and public enterprises do not concentrate only in urban areas but rural areas are equally covered in setting up of outlets for proper supply and distribution?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (d) The Government plan to set up a downstream regulatory mechanism before the oil sector is completely de-regulated.

The powers, functions etc., of the proposed regulatory mechanism are yet to be finalised.

[Translation]

Unrestricted Export of Onion

*553 KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI:
SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have assessed the export potentials for onion;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the quantity of onion to be exported;

(c) the quantity of onion exported during 1999-2000;

(d) whether the farmers are not getting remunerative price for want of unrestricted export of onion;

(e) if so, whether the Government propose to lift restrictions on the export of onion to enable the farmers get remunerative price; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Onion has considerable export potential in the markets of the Middle East and South Asian countries. During the current year, Government has fixed a ceiling of 5,00,000 MTs. of onion for export.

(c) A quantity of 2.60 lakh MTs. of onion was exported during the year 1999-2000.

(d) to (f) Allowing exports of 3.5 lakh MTs of onion during the year 2000-2001 and a quantity of 2.5 lakh MTs. on onion during the current year 2001-2002, till now, have helped the farmers by way of stabilisation in the domestic prices of onion, ensuring increased off-take of onion from the farm, and higher returns for their produce.

The long-term export policy evolved by the Government is intended to benefit the growers and safeguard consumer interests as well as instil confidence in the importers on continued availability of onions from the country.

[English]

Export of Rolling Stock

*554. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are exploring overseas markets for export of standard gauge rolling stock;

(b) if so, whether any preliminary market assessment has been made;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the success achieved by the Railways to bag export orders from foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Railway officials visited Switzerland for Standard Gauge Electric Locomotives and Iraq for Diesel Electric Locomotives. From the visits, it appears that there is potential for export of Standard Gauge Rolling stock. No export orders for Standard Gauge Rolling Stock have been received so far by the Railways.

Commercial Utilisation of Railway Land

*555. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have not considered proposals for the commercial utilisation of its land;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the railways have suffered a huge loss in the absence of taking decision on the proposals for commercial use of railway land, by the Railway Board; and

(d) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken in this regard by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir. Railways have been considering commercial utilisation of its land. Railways have earned a revenue of Rs. 138 crore during 2000-2001 from various uses of its land resources.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Task Force to Study the Impact of WTO on Agriculture

*556. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Task Force set up to study the impact of WTO regime on Indian agriculture has been disbanded by the Government, even before it could submit its second and final report;

(b) if so, at what stage the finalisation of the second report stands and the reasons for its disbandment;

(c) the main findings and recommendations made in the first report and the action taken, if any, thereon;

(d) whether the Task Force had sought extension of time; and

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

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (e) A High Level Task Force on Agriculture (TFA) was constituted on September 12, 2000. The TFA was required to submit its report by February 28, 2001. On the request of the Chairman, TFA, the term of the Task Force was extended by four months *i.e.* upto June 30, 2001 with the direction that the Final Report should be submitted by the Task Force before the end of the extended term *i.e.* June 30, 2001. On the request of the Chairman, TFA, the term of the TFA was once again extended by a month to enable it to submit its report by July 31, 2001. The twice extended term of the TFA expired on July, 31, 2001. The Chairman, TFA has submitted his version of the Report dated 31st July, 2001.

The First Report of the Task Force was submitted in the first week of May, 2001. The main conclusions of the First Report are summarized below:-

- Since our commitments of domestic support are well within allowable limits, there is ample scope for increasing domestic support for enhancing our comparative advantage. There is also urgent need to put in place an effective system of international trade monitoring and response.

- The National Agriculture Policy, which provides a policy framework for sustainable growth, must be operationalised to face the challenges of economic liberalization and globalization. Regional and sub-regional level programmes need to be charted out to attain this objective in a fixed time frame.

- Support through creation of infrastructure, watershed development, subsidized inputs and greater thrust on research, extension and risk management need to be continued. Alternatives to the minimum support price mechanism also need to be evolved.

- Competitiveness of Indian agriculture must be enhanced by tapping the potential of organic farming, developing value addition chain and post-harvest infrastructure in tune with global needs. Domestic market reforms and removal of restrictions on trade are also required.

- The issue of quality of produce and standardization as per international requirements should be given higher priority. Quality consciousness should be created in the agricultural sector.

- India's negotiating proposals are based on concerns of food and livelihood security. These proposals, combined with matching efforts of production support in the domestic policy regime, will take Indian farming to higher levels of growth and prosperity.

The Department has already set in motion several measures for implementation of these recommendations. It is also recognized that some of the issues raised by the TFA would require extensive dialogue with State Governments and with other Departments/Ministries of the Government of India and would require long time frames for their full implementation.

Business Meeting on NCES at Bangalore

*557. SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any business meeting was hosted on the Development of Non-Conventional energy business market in India at Bangalore last year;

(b) if so, the steps suggested at the meeting to boost renewable energy; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) Yes, Sir. A Business Meet on the Development of Non-Conventional Energy Business/Market in India was organized by the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources, through the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), for the Southern Region of the country in Bangalore during September 7-8, 2000.

(b) and (c) The major suggestions made in the Meet include, continuation of subsidies and fiscal incentives for the non-conventional energy sector, standardization of products, skill development at the grass roots level, focus on human resource development, involvement of more banks in the financing of non-conventional energy projects/ system/devices and strengthening of institutional framework for the promotion of non-conventional energy business. The suggestions made in the Meet have been well received by the Ministry and an incentive Scheme for business development and export promotion has been launched.

Conversion of Track into Standard Gauge

*558. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have any plans to convert all the existing track into Standard Gauge (1435 mm.);

(b) if so, whether all the modern technological advances in Railways have been made using Standard Gauge as the benchmark;

(c) whether Indian Railways have deliberately ignored the potential of conversion to the universally accepted Standard gauge;

(d) if so, the reasons for not resorting to Standard gauge in track conversion schemes; and

(e) the steps proposed to review the existing policies on track conversion?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Indian Railways is a vast system running on Broad Gauge, Metre Gauge and Narrow Gauge. Conversion of the system to Standard Gauge is neither feasible nor at all necessary.

(e) Conversion of Metre Gauge and Narrow Gauge lines into Broad Gauge is taken up on considerations of viability, operational requirements and on national and strategic considerations and subject to availability of resources. Individual Gauge Conversion projects are regularly reviewed, on a case-to-case basis.

Inter Regional Export of Power

*559. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Electricity Authority has drawn up a plan to double the inter-regional export of power;

(b) if so, whether the plans of CEA to double power exports would benefit some States;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the other steps the Government propose to take to meet power crisis throughout the country?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (c) Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has drawn up a perspective National Plan for additional generation capacity of 1,00,000 MW and the corresponding transmission plan to form a National Power Grid by 2011-12. The present inter-regional transmission capacity is about 4800 MW. For further strengthening of the National Grid, high capacity long HVDC links as well as AC links have been planned to be commissioned along with large projects.

The following inter-regional links are under implementation for transfer of power from Eastern Region to Northern, Western and Southern Regions:

From Eastern Region to Northern Region:

(i) HVDC Back to Back station at Sasaram along with Biharshariff-Sasaram-Allahabad 400 KVD/C line. The line has been charged upto Samath. The entire project is expected to be completed by December, 2002.

From Eastern Region to Western Region:

(i) 400 KVD/C Rourkela-Raipur transmission line. The project is expected to be completed by October, 2002.

From Eastern Region to Southern Region:

(i) Talcher-Kolar HVDC bi-pole Link having converter station at Talcher and Kolar. The project is expected to be completed by June, 2003.

The following inter-regional links have been/are being planned by POWERGRID for transfer of power from Eastern Region to Northern Region and Southern Region:

From Eastern Region to Northern Region:

(i) 400 KVD/C Muzaffarpur-Gorakhpur Transmission line together with Tala HEP Transmission System.

(ii) 400 KVD/C line from Sasaram to Sarnath along with back up transmission between Biharshariff and Sasaram.

(iii) 765 KV Transmission System as part of evacuation system from proposed Kahalgaon Extn. (2x660 MW) and Barh (3x660 MW) Projects.

From Eastern Region to Southern Region:

(i) Second 500 MW HVDC module at Gazuwaka together with system strengthening works in Eastern Region and Southern Region.

The total inter-regional power exchange capability would be increased to about 23,400 MW by 2006-07. In the ultimate phase, a strong synchronous National Grid has been envisaged to evacuate the power from major generation resources. This would involve development of a high capacity transmission corridor in chicken-neck area and establishment of a ring of 765 KV lines inter-connecting Eastern, Western and Northern Regions. Inter-regional transmission capacity of the proposed National Grid would increase to about 30,000 MW by the year 2012.

(d) The Government has taken a pro active role to bring about reforms in the power sector and some of the major initiatives include the following:

1. The Government enacted the Electricity Regulatory Commissions Act in 1998 to pave the way for creation of Regulatory Commissions both at the Centre and the States in order to rationalize electricity tariff, and introduce competition and efficiency in the electricity sector.

2. The Ministry of Power has signed Memoranda of Understanding with the States of Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Chattisgarh, Kerala and Orissa for initiating power sector reforms facilitating special assistance to them.

3. In the Chief Ministers/Power Ministers Conference held on 3rd March, 2001, some of the major resolutions which were adopted include the following:

- Energy audit at all 11 KV feeders must be made effective within the next 6 months and accountability fixed at the local level.

- Full metering of all consumers has been targeted for completion by December 2001. Special efforts would be made to complete the programme.

- Commercial viability has to be achieved in distribution in 2-3 years through creating profit centres with full accountability, handing over of local distribution to local bodies, privatisation of distribution etc.

- Efforts by States at inviting private investment in the power sector need to be focused towards the distribution sector.

- Current operations on distribution would need to reach break even in two years and achieve positive returns thereafter.

- State Electricity Regulatory Commissions may be made functional in the next six months and tariff filings made. Tariff orders issued by Central Electricity Regulatory Commission and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions need to be implemented fully unless stayed or set aside by Court order.

- Subsidies may be given only to the extent of State Government's capacity to pay the subsidies explicitly through budget provisions.

- The Centre and the States need to take suitable decisions regarding increase in outlays for the 10th Plan. Priority should be given for investments at those locations which produce the cheapest power specially for hydro projects

and pit head thermal generation. CEA has estimated the requirement for an additional 100,000 MW of generating capacity by 2012.

- The evolution of a National Grid for inter-regional transfer of power needs to be taken up on priority.

The energy shortage in the country during 2000-2001 was 7.8% while the peak shortage was 13%. To improve availability of power and generation capacity and to make optimal use of the available power resources in the country the following measures have been taken:

1. Expeditious implementation of capacity addition programme.
2. Promotion of measures for demand side management.
3. Renovation and modernisation of old generation units.
4. Promotion of inter state and inter regional power transfers.
5. Coordinated operation of hydro, thermal, nuclear and gas turbine power stations in the regional power system.
6. Augmentation of transmission/transformation capacity in the power system and installation of shunt capacitors to improve the voltage.

Policy to Fix a Ceiling on the Generating Cost of Power Projects

*560. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a policy to fix a ceiling on the generating cost of power has been evolved by the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the National Thermal Power Corporation is likely to set up a project based on the latest super critical technology and its cost per megawatt will be a benchmark to bid for any new projects; and

(d) the time by which the policy is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Power set up an Inter Disciplinary Group (IDG) in the context of the need to reduce the cost of delivered power to the end user(s) and bring transparency in the bidding process of power projects. The Group in its report submitted in April, 2001 has recommended various short term and long term measures in the areas of:

- The Project execution stage.
- Bench marking of capital costs.
- Operation and Modernisation of Power Plants.
- Renovation and Modernisation of Power Plants.
- Reduction of Transmission and Distribution losses.
- Human Resource Development & Training.

There is a proposal of NTPC to install the first power project based on super critical technology at Sipat with three units of 660 MW each in Madhya Pradesh. The Techno-economic clearance (TEC) for this project has been accorded by CEA. The NTPC shall be adopting International Competitive Bidding (ICB) for award of various packages resulting in optimum cost for various facilities. Accordingly, the cost of main plant equipment could be taken as a kind of bench mark cost of future projects. However, being site specific the cost of auxiliary facilities such as coal, water and civil works, etc. may vary. Cost/MW of NPTC's other new power projects being planned to be based on super critical technology shall depend on site conditions, unit sizes, off site facilities and technology etc.

NTPC plans to commission two units of 660 MW each in the Tenth Plan, with the third unit (660 MW) to be commissioned in the Eleventh Plan.

Splitting of DVC Board

5622. SHRI SAIDUZZAMA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to shift the Head Quarter of Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) to Ranchi;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Government of Jharkhand has sent a proposal to shift the Headquarters to DVC to Ranchi as the most of the area of operation of DVC falls in the State of Jharkhand. The views of Government of West Bengal, being a constituent State, has been sought in this matter.

[Translation]

False and Misleading Advertisements

5623. SHRI MANSINH PATEL:
DR. M.P. JAISWAL:
SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY:
PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT:
SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY:

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

(a) whether the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTP) is investigating into the cases of false and misleading advertisements in various States, State-wise;

(b) if so, the outcome of the investigation; and

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

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Commission has not ordered any investigation in terms of the provision of the MRPT Act, 1969 to be conducted by Director General of Investigation and Registration or Director (Research) relating to false and misleading advertisements. However, a number of unfair trade practices enquiries (UTPEs), which include complaints arising out of false and misleading advertisements, have been considered by the Commission. Number of such UTPEs pending during the last three years are as under:-

	1998	1999	2000
Unfair Trade Practices Enquiries (UTPEs)	1328	1273	1332

These cases are being enquired into by the Commission and are pending before the Commission at various stages of consideration.

MRTP is a Quasi-Judicial Body.

Supply of Petroleum Products to Bihar

5624. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of diesel, petrol, kerosene and LPG being supplied to Bihar each month;

(b) whether supply of those items are less as compared to demand in the State; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to meet the demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Sales of diesel, petrol, kerosene and LPG by PSU Oil Marketing Companies in the State of Bihar during 2000-2001, month-wise are given in the Statement.

(b) and (c) Petrol and diesel is sold to meet the demand in full. Kerosene for Public Distribution System is an allocated product and is released in line with the allocation. Sale of kerosene under the Parallel Marketing Scheme (PMS) is also allowed by the Government to supplement kerosene supplied under PDS. Domestic LPG is supplied to customers and their requirement is met. At present there is no waiting list of customers and LPG connections are freely available across the counter as per demand in the existing markets. Parallel marketing of LPG by private parties is also permitted by the Government.

Statement

Consumption of Petroleum Products in the State of Bihar during 2000-2001 (PSU sale only) (in TMT)

Month	LPG	MS	HSD	SKO
1	2	3	4	5
April	14	17	168	73
May	16	17	172	74
June	16	15	143	75
July	15	15	149	75
August	17	16	130	75

1	2	3	4	5
September	18	15	116	74
October	17	13	109	74
November	14	15	145	73
December	19	15	157	75
January	19	15	142	75
February	17	16	141	75
March	19	18	160	75
Total	200	186	1731	893

Note: Since new State of Jharkhand was formed in November, 2000 carved out of Bihar, above figures include consumption for Jharkhand also from November, 2000 onwards.

[English]

Irregularities in Kendriya Bhandar

5625. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether lots of irregularities and cases of corruption have been brought to the notice of the Government in the Kendriya Bhandar for looking into by the Central Register Cooperative Societies registered under the Multi State Cooperative Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these matters will be enquired into?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. This Ministry has received some complaints in respect of Kendriya Bhandar. These complaints, *inter-alia*, relate to the functioning of the Kendriya Bhandar and purchases of various items. The Central Registrar has ordered on 8.8.2001 inspection of the Kendriya Bhandar under the provisions of the Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 1984. According to this order, the inspecting officer shall submit the inspection report within a period of one month.

Allotment of Retail Outlets and LPG Dealership

5626. SHRI JASWANT SINGH YADAV:
SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state the number of LPG Distributorship and retail outlets allotted in the name of present/former Members of Parliament and MLA/MLCs and their spouses during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): The information regarding relationships or other connections of the persons, who have been allotted dealerships/ distributorships after the selection by the Dealer Selection Boards (DSBs), with public representatives is neither collected nor available.

[Translation]

Investment in Gas Exploration in Rajasthan

5627. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil India Limited has invested a huge capital in gas exploration in Rajasthan without informing the Board of Directors of Government or going into the feasibility aspect of the investment;

(b) if so, the investment made and total expenditure incurred in the project;

(c) whether heavy losses have been suffered in this investment; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken against the persons responsible for such losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) A total amount of Rs. 391.17 crores including Rs. 60.55 crores towards capital expenditure was incurred by Oil India Ltd. on exploration & development of gas in Rajasthan with due approval of the competent authority.

(c) and (d) Revenues of OIL were less than the projections mainly due to the following factors:

(i) The calorific value of the combined gas from Dandewala & Tanot fields is around 4000-4100 per Kilo Calories (K. Cal) per Standard Cubic Meter (SCUM) as against the projection of 5600 Kilo Calories from the Tanot field.

(ii) The discovery of Dandewala field & the subsequent gas analysis revealed presence of carbondioxide in the gas. Presence of carbondioxide along with water being highly corrosive, the Company had to upgrade the equipment design in the field to premium grade stainless steel materials resulting in a multifold increase in costs.

The consumer price of gas is linked to a calorific value of 10,000 K. Cal per SCUM. For a period from 1.1.96 to 30.9.1997, the producer price of gas payable to OIL was fixed at Rs. 1650 per thousand cubic meter with an increase by 1% for every 10% change in the consumer price index. The reimbursement claims of producer company for difference in producer price and consumer price are processed in accordance with the extant Gas Pricing orders.

[English]

Production of Meat

5628. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production of meat is increasing every year;

(b) if so, the details of production of beef/veal, kine, mutton and chevon during the last three years;

(c) the age group of each species of animals slaughtered;

(d) the percentage of their slaughter as compared to the world average; and

(e) the ratio of animals required in relation to human beings for ecological balance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (d) As per statement enclosed.

(c) The data for age group of each species of animals slaughtered is not available.

(e) No ratio regarding the number of animals in relation to human beings has been evolved.

Statement

(000 Tonnes)

Meat Production - 1998 to 2000 - All India

Year	Beef/Veal/Kine	Buffalo meat	Mutton & lamb	Chevon	Pork	Poultry meat	Total Meat
1998	1401	1380	226	462	542	540	4551
1999	1421	1410	228	466	560	559	4644
2000	1442	1421	229	467	560	575	4694

Estimate of Livestock & Livestock Slaughtered - 1998 to 2000

(000 nos.)

	India			World		
	1998	1999	2000	1998	1999	2000
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Cattle						
Stock	212121	214877	218800	1338775	1340498	1350130
Slaughtered	13600	13800	14000	274642	274557	283661
% Slaughtered	6.4	6.4	6.4	20.5	20.5	21.0

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Buffaloes						
Stocks	90909	92090	93772	160709	162599	164968
Slaughtered	10000	10220	10300	21033	21719	21977
% Slaughtered	11.0	11.1	11.0	13.1	13.4	13.3
Sheep						
Stocks	57100	57600	57900	1055175	1055906	1057908
Slaughtered	18800	19000	19100	477020	478256	486083
% Slaughtered	32.9	33.0	33.0	45.2	45.3	45.9
Goats						
Stocks	121362	122530	123000	697966	711287	720008
Slaughtered	46200	46600	46700	294352	305962	308893
% Slaughtered	38.1	38.0	38.0	42.2	43.0	42.9

Interviews for Promotion to Principal Scientist in ICAR

5629. SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP SINGH:
DR. BALIRAM:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board, New Delhi, during April-May 2001 conducted interviews of scientists working under Indian Council of Agricultural Research for promotion from Senior Scientist to Principal Scientist (Professor) post;

(b) if so, the total number of scientists interviewed, the number out of them who possessed Ph.D. degrees and the number of scientists promoted with Ph.D. and without Ph.D. categories; and

(c) the percentage of scientists promoted under Ph.D. and non-Ph.D. categories on the basis of appointment orders issued so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per the Career Advancement Scheme a Senior Scientist will be promoted to the post of Principal Scientist if he/she:

i. has completed 8 year of service, and

ii. he/she presents himself/herself before the Selection Committee constituted by ASRB with some of the following:

a. Self appraisal report (required).

b. Research contribution/books/articles/research papers published.

c. Any other academic contributions. The best three written contributions of the Sr. Scientist (as defined by him/her) may be sent in advance to the experts to review before coming for the selection.

d. Seminars/conferences attended.

e. Contribution to teaching/academic environment/ institutional corporate life.

f. Extension and field outreach activities given above.

The Scheme further provides that Scientists grade S-2 who were designated as Sr. Scientists vide ICAR letter number 301/92-Per. IV dated 30th July, 1996 shall be eligible for promotion to the grade of Principal Scientists, if they fulfil the above eligibility criteria for Principal Scientist (promotion) given above.

As per the provisions of the scheme mentioned above, the required information is as follows:

(i) Total number of scientists interviewed = 1625

(ii) Number of Scientists with Ph.D. degree = 1353

(iii) Number of Scientists promoted under Ph.D. category-1272

(iv) Number of Scientists promoted under without Ph.D. category = 244

Out of 1625 candidates interviewed, 1353 were with Ph.D. and 272 without Ph.D. Total number of 1516 candidates were promoted. Out of 1353 candidates who were having Ph.D. degree, 1272 were promoted. Out of 272 candidates who were not having Ph.D. degree 244 were promoted.

On the basis of total number of candidates promoted *i.e.* 1516 the percentage of promoted candidates with Ph.D. degree and without Ph.D. degree comes to 83.9% and 16.09% respectively.

However, on the basis of number of Ph.D. degree holding candidates interviewed and promoted, the percentage of those promoted comes to 94%. Likewise, the percentage of non-Ph.D. candidates considered and promoted comes to 89.7%.

Fishing Harbour at Ponnani, Kerala

5630. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in the processing of projects for new fishing harbour at Ponnani, district Malappuram, Kerala;

(b) whether the Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery (CICEF), Bangalore has completed scrutinizing the project and has submitted its report;

(c) if not, the steps being taken to expedite the scrutiny by the CICEF;

(d) whether the Government are considering the interest of the fishing industry and the poor fishermen community; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) The Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fishery (CICEF), Bangalore had completed scrutiny of the proposal and submitted its report. The proposal of the Government of Kerala for construction of a fishing harbour at Ponnani was considered and has been processed.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) The Government of India has been implemented various Centrally Sponsored and Central Sector Schemes with the objectives of development of fishing Industry and poor fishermen community. These include development of infrastructure, motorisation of traditional crafts, reimbursement of central excise duty on HSD consumed by vessel below 20m length, Fishermen welfare schemes consisting of insurance, saving-cum-relief, housing etc.

Fishing Activities

5631. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in coastal areas the fishing activity is very active and continuous throughout the year;

(b) if so, whether fishing community in coastal areas carry on drying activities without any scientific and low cost technology;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have identified any low cost technology for drying fish;

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether the Government propose to develop a low cost technology for drying fish in consultation with veterinary centres, Agricultural University and fishery cooperatives;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Fishing activity is very active and continuous throughout the year in coastal areas except during the monsoon ban specified from region to region.

(b) and (c) The uneconomic varieties of fish are conventionally dried on the beach treating them with common salt.

(d) to (g) Methodologies for improved hygienic drying of fish have been evolved by organisations like Integrated Fisheries Project (IFP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research as well as the Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP) of Food and Agricultural Organisation and demonstrated to fishermen. These include both wet and dry salt curing methods and sun drying techniques using raised platforms, drying racks, webbings and various hanging methods. Use of preservation techniques to enhance shelf life of the dried products has been standardised. Packaging techniques like heat sealing in ploy pouches has also been introduced in commercial scale by IFP.

(h) Question does not arise.

Supply of Mineral Water in Ratlam Division

5632. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH BARWALA:
SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM:
SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:
SHRI ASHOK ARGAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the supply of "Trupti Mineral Water" is going on in Ratlam Division;

(b) if so, the time from when the company is supplying mineral water in Ratlam Division; and

(c) the criteria laid down by Ratlam Division for the supply of mineral water?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. "Trupthi Mineral water" is being sold alongwith other brands in Ratlam division since 1998.

(c) The present criteria is in accordance with Board's policy of open tender. Prior to this mineral water was being procured on rate contract basis by inviting quotations from local market.

[Translation]

Construction of Waiting Room

5633. SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to develop waiting rooms at railway stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are contemplating to develop waiting rooms in Maharashtra especially at Jalana, Aurangabad and Parthur railway stations;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) Developing of waiting rooms at railway stations is a continuous process and is undertaken on the basis of need and subject to availability of funds. Passenger Amenities including waiting rooms at stations are provided as per norms based on the volume of passenger traffic and upgradation is undertaken whenever so warranted by growth in passenger traffic at the station.

(c) to (e) The waiting rooms at Jalna, Aurangabad and Partur are not planned to be developed at present. The position of availability of waiting rooms/halls is as under:

(i) **Jalna:** A Gents' waiting room of area 30 square metre (sqm) and a ladies waiting room of area 20 sqm has been provided. In addition, waiting hall of 162.75 sqm and cover over platform of area 1248 sqm is available.

(ii) **Aurangabad:** A Gents' waiting room of area 59 sqm and a ladies waiting room of area 30 sqm has been provided. In addition, 2nd class waiting hall of 449.86 sqm exists. Cover over platform of area 1691 sqm is available and similar work is sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 5 lakh.

(iii) **Partur:** This is a "E" category station and as per the laid down norms, no waiting room is required. However, a waiting hall of area 44.13 sqm and cover over platform of area 275 sqm is available for the use of passengers at this station. Also, provision of cover over platform of area 148 sqm is in progress.

[English]

Constitution of Soya Board

5634. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:
SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI:
SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:
SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had constituted a "Soya Board" in Indore;

(b) if so, whether the Government have their own representatives for monitoring the activities of the board;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the major works and activities undertaken by the board since its inception?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) The Government have not constituted a "Soya Board" in Indore.

(b) to (d) Question does not arise.

Grievances of Shareholders of ITDC

5635. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the shareholders of ITDC employees are allowed to write to the department regarding their grievances, complaints, functioning and corruptions etc., if come to their notice to seek remedies;

(b) if so, whether some employees have also written to the department in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon;

(d) the rules and regulations/guidelines laid down in this regard;

(e) whether shareholders have also demanded that their representative should also be nominated to represent in the managing body of shareholders; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) The shareholder employees of ITDC may write about their grievances/complaints to the ITDC management or any other concerned authorities. ITDC management has, however, not received any grievance/complaint about functioning of ITDC from any shareholder employee.

(d) A share holder can approach different authorities *i.e.* Company Law Board, Central Government, Court, Company Management etc. for redressal of his grievance/ complaint under various provisions of the Companies Act.

(e) and (f) So far no such demand has been received by ITDC management.

Shifting of Petr^' Pumps in Uttar Pradesh

5636. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE:
SHRI BRAHMA NAND MANDAL:
SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI:
SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:
SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:

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

(a) the total number of petrol pumps shifted in Uttar Pradesh between 1998 to 2001;

(b) the district of Uttar Pradesh where maximum number of petrol pumps shifted; and

(c) the number of petrol pumps likely to be shifted in Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) 78 retail outlets were resited in the State of Uttar Pradesh during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001. 41 retail outlets in Uttar Pradesh are planned to be resited.

[English]

Development of Tourism Industry

5637. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether for the foreign tourists, India is considered a high cost of destination;

(b) whether the Home Minister has called for the removal of all bottlenecks in the way of travel and tourism so as to give boost to the tourism industry; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir. There is a perception that India is a comparatively costly destination

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) As a part of its on-going activities of promoting tourism to the country, and removing the bottlenecks, Ministry of Tourism is coordinating with other Departments who provide tourism services. In this context, Minister of Tourism & Culture has held many meetings with other Ministers, including Minister of Home Affairs, to discuss ways and means for bottlenecks and tourism development and growth. New initiatives on facilitation, like visa on arrival, on information dissemination and interministerial coordinated have been mooted.

Use of Voters Identity Card

5638. SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether voters identity cards issued by the Election Commission of India wherein it is clearly written "This card may be used as an identity card under different Government Schemes" can be used in an application for a ration card;

(b) if so, whether any instructions have been given to various Departments in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) According to the Election Commission of India, it has issued instructions to inscribe on the Voter Identity Card - "This card may be used as an identity card under different Government Schemes"—to enable use of the identity card under different Government schemes. The Election Commission has been pursuing the State Governments to issue necessary orders/ instructions to various Departments under them to accept the voters' identity cards as means of identification in connection with various schemes and programmes executed by them. So far, the Government of Haryana has issued necessary instructions to all its Departments in this regard.

Genetically Modified Crops

5639. PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the environmentalists have urged the Centre to reject the genetically modified crops in the country as had been done in Thailand; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Greenpeace India, an environmental group had requested the Government not to approve commercial release of transgenic Bt. cotton in India.

(b) The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) set up under Rule 4 of the Rules for the Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells 1989, considered the proposal for release of transgenic Bt. cotton submitted by Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company (MAHYCO) in its meeting held on 19.6.2001. The GEAC observed that the data generated on large scale field trials on Bt. cotton undertaken by MAHYCO could not reflect the true values because of late sowing. It was decided that the trials be repeated on a larger scale under the direct supervision of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under their Advanced Varietal Trials of the All India Coordinated Cotton Improvement Project. In addition, GEAC has accorded approval to MAHYCO for conducting field trials on farmers' fields in an area of about 100 hectares.

Action against Erring Dealers

5640. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the detailed reasons and justifications for providing 18 offences of RPO dealers in Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) as compared to only 7 offences in MS/HSD control order;

(b) whether the Government have ordered the Oil Corporations to pass speaking orders in case of any punitive action against any erring dealers under MDG;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the detailed procedure to be followed up by the concerned authority passing such orders for establishing offence/irregularity against dealers found responsible; and

(e) the names of the appellant authority and detailed procedure of appeal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Motor Spirit and High Speed Diesel (Regulation of Supply and Distribution and Prevention of Malpractices) Order, 1998 deals with only MS and HSD, whereas, Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) 2001 approved by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on 12-04-2001 covers malpractices not only concerning MS/HSD but also various other petroleum products by dealers.

The definition of malpractices given in the MS/HSD Control Order covers 9 irregularities relating to MS and HSD. However, in the MDG there are 8 major irregularities and 13 minor irregularities, including those pertaining to Lubricants, Kerosene, Free Air, Drinking Water, Discourteous Behaviour, Issue of Fake Pollution Under Control (PUC) Certificates, etc.

(b) and (c) Oil Companies do not require Orders from the Government for taking punitive action against erring dealers under MDG.

(d) In case of any irregularity detected, the concerned dealer is issued a show cause notice. If the explanation is not found satisfactory, further action is taken as per Marketing Discipline Guidelines, 2001 and/or in terms of Dealership Agreement.

(e) Though no specific provisions is contained in the Marketing Discipline Guidelines with regard to Appellate Authority, if the concerned dealer is not satisfied with the action taken, he can always approach the next higher authority in Oil Marketing Company.

Natural Calamities

5641. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that our country is surrounded by vast hilly regions, deserts, rivers-nallahs and sea where one part of the country or the other faces natural calamities every year;

(b) if so, whether the Government have considered constituting and training an organized task force at district levels which is capable of handling natural calamities;

(c) if so, the names of States where such task forces have been constituted so far; and

(d) if not, the reasons of delay in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (d) It is a fact that given its vast size and geographical diversity, our country is prone to a wide range of natural calamities. It is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments to deal with such calamities: the role of the Central Government is of a supportive nature. As such the State level relief apparatus varies. The Central Government has, however, taken a number of initiatives for imparting training and providing other support to the State Governments.

It is for the State Governments to decide whether in their local circumstances they should adopt the district level task forces.

Depriving of Voting Rights

5642. DR. JAYANTA RONGPI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have been receiving complaints from time to time about deprivation of voting rights of displaced persons from erstwhile East Pakistan especially those in Jarai region of Uttar Pradesh; and

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

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Production of Low Cost Jute Bags

5643. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Centre for Jute Diversification propose to develop a low cost jute bags for consumers in order to replace plastic bags;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with its likely cost; and

(c) the details of strategy to be adopted for a large scale production and marketing of low cost jute bags all over the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. NCJD has developed the following quality of low cost jute bags in order to replace the plastic bags:

(i) Jute bags costing Rs. 5-6 approx using jute netted fabric woven in the needle looms for approximately household use;

(ii) Hessian bags of small size and varying dimensions targeted for general purpose packaging and carrying needs;

(iii) Environment friendly carry bags made of light hessian cloth pasted with paper/pulp costing Rs 8/- approx. to cater to upmarket demand.

(c) These bags are produced in the decentralised sector. NCJD has arranged for training in production and marketing of low cost jute bags through the regular schemes of the Centre. NCJD has been working jointly with various organisations to popularise low cost jute bags.

[Translation]

Funds to Maharashtra for on-going Power Projects

5644. SHRI UTTAMRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any representations from the Government of Maharashtra to provide funds for development of the on-going projects and setting up of new power projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the proposals cleared by the Union Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The power projects to be set up by various State Governments are funded out of their State Power Plan outlay which is decided by the respective State Governments within the approved overall State Plan size. No specific proposal has been exclusively received from the Government of Maharashtra for setting up of a project. For the Annual Plan 2001-2002, the Government of Maharashtra had proposed an outlay of Rs. 1558.16 crore, which has been recommended by the Working Group. The State Government has also been provided Rs. 134.44 crore under Accelerated Power Development Programme during 2000-2001.

Supreme Court's Judgement on Underworld Gangs

5645. SHRI SUBODH ROY: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has delivered a judgment to the effect that the underworld gangs were required to be dealt with by all concerned including the judiciary, the executive and the politicians;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the Government's action thereon?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Supreme Court in its judgment dated 11th July 2001 in Criminal Appeal No. 628 of 1998 entitled State of Maharashtra vs. Bharat Chaganlal Raghani & others reported in SCALE 2001 (4) p. 285 has made the following observations.

".....The eruption of organised crime in India is of recent origin and is at the initial stage. It is the need of the hour to control such criminal activities which tempt the persons involved to amass huge profit. Such crimes have not only a legal fact but has a social and economic aspect which is required to be felt and dealt with by all concerned including the judiciary, the executive, the politicians, the social reformers, intelligentia and the law enforcing agency."

(c) The observations of the Hon'ble Supreme Court have been noted by the Government.

Proposals from Kerala

5646. SHRIMATI MINATI SEN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the expansion of Railway lines in various States during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the criteria/norms adopted by the Government for introducing various lines and trains in the States;

(c) whether the Government have received requests from the Government of Kerala for expansion of rail lines and introduction of various trains;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) New lines completed during the last three years State-wise is as under:-

State	New line completed during last 3 years (In km)
Andhra Pradesh	67
Assam	124
Gujarat	59
Madhya Pradesh	82
Orissa	153
West Bengal	58
Total	543

(b) Criteria/norms adopted for construction of new lines is as under:-

(i) Project oriented lines to serve new industries for tapping mineral and other resources;

(ii) Missing links for completing alternative routes to relieve congestion on existing saturated routes;

(iii) Lines required for strategic reasons; and

(iv) Lines for establishment of new growth centers or giving access to remote areas.

Criteria/norms adopted for introducing trains are given as under:-

Introduction of new passenger carrying trains depends upon many factors like availability of coaches, facilities for repairing and maintaining the stock for services to be safe and satisfactory, quantum of traffic, line capacity and terminal constrains, repercussions on essential freight traffic, development of infrastructure and availability of resources.

(c) to (e) Details are given in statement attached.

Statement

Requests received from Government of Kerala for expansion of rail lines and action thereon are as under:-

S. No.	Request	Action Taken
1.	Cochin-Madurai rail line	Due to acute resource constraints being faced by the Railways, it has not been considered feasible to take up this project.
2.	Takazhy - Pathanamthitta via Thiruvalla	Survey has been completed. However, due to unremunerative nature of the project and acute resource constraints being faced by the Railways, it has not been found possible to consider this project at present.
3.	Guruvayur-Kunnamkulam-Kuttipuram rail line	This work has already been included in the budget. However, work would be taken up after obtaining the requisite clearances for which necessary action has already been initiated.
4.	Nanjagud-Nilambur via Meppadi	Due to acute resource constraints being faced by the Railways, it has not been considered feasible to take up this project.

The information regarding requests from the Government of Kerala for introduction of trains is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Funds to Cultural Department

5647. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of total funds provided to the Department of Culture during each of the last three years and the current year;

(b) the details of funds allocated to organizations during the said period, organization-wise;

(c) whether paucity of funds has prevented the Government in sanctioning of funds to eligible applicants;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the remedial measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) A Statement of funds allocated to organizations of the Department of Culture during the said period is annexed. Details of grants-in-aid given by the Department of Culture to various NGOs/Voluntary Organizations are given in the Annual Reports of the Department for corresponding period (Rs. 1,00,000/- and above).

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Question does not arise.

Statement

Funds allocated to Organisations and Schemes of Department of Culture for 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002

(Rs. in lakh)

		1998-1999		1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002	
S No	Organisations/Schemes	Plan	Non-Plan	Plan	Non-Plan	Plan	Non-Plan	Plan	Non-Plan
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I	DIRECTION & ADMINISTRATION	50.00	549.00	75.00	575.00	65.00	640.00	65.00	750.00
II	PROMOTION & DISSEMINATION								
1.	Zonal Cultural Centres	350.00	-	400.00	-	440.00	-	525.00	-
2.	Setting up of Cultural Complexes, Guwahati	200.00	-	1.00	-	0.00	-	-	-
3.	Assistance to Dance, Drama and Theater	400.00	100.00	600.00	100.00	700.00	100.00	810.00	100.00
4.	Gandhi Peace Prize	-	127.00	-	127.00	-	130.00	-	130.00
5.	Fellowship to Outstanding Artists	204.00	66.72	214.00	66.72	464.00	107.00	465.00	110.00
6.	Shanker International Children Competition	-	2.22	-	2.22	0.00	2.22	-	3.00
7.	Assistance to distinguished Arts persons	100.00	83.40	100.00	77.80	110.00	78.00	90.00	90.00
8.	Assistance for promotion of Tribal Folk Art	75.00	-	75.00	-	80.00	-	95.00	-
9.	National Culture Fund	200.00	-	200.00	-	200.00	-	1.00	-
10.	Financial Asstt. to Promotion of Himalayan Art	30.00	-	50.00	-	50.00	-	70.00	-
11.	Setting up of Multi-purpose Cultural Complexes	250.00	-	100.00	-	100.00	-	100.00	-
12.	Building Grants to Voluntary Organisations	175.00	-	175.00	-	195.00	-	225.00	-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13.	Institutes and individuals engaged in literary activities	-	11.12	-	11.12	-	12.00	-	17.00
14.	Sangeet Natak Akademi	330.00	255.00	400.00	270.00	440.00	400.00	520.00	410.00
15.	Lalit Kala Akademi	235.00	200.00	235.00	200.00	250.00	200.00	250.00	222.00
16.	Sahitya Akademi	420.00	221.00	450.00	230.00	390.00	230.00	415.00	274.00
17	National School of Drama	315.00	194.00	400.00	200.00	470.00	225.00	535.00	250.00
18.	Centre for Cultural Research and Training	600.00	147.00	650.00	150.00	550.00	160.00	560.00	156.00
19.	Scholarship to Young workers	-	50.04	-	50.04	-	70.00	-	70.00
20.	Assistance to Cultural Organisations in India (R.K. Mission)	67.00	55.60	180.00	67.00	80.00	67.00	80.00	87.00
21	Development of Cultural Organisations in India	50.00	-	50.00	-	50.00	-	50.00	-
22.	Presentation of book objects	-	22.24	-	22.24	-	22.00	-	1.00
23	Kalakshetra, Madras	100.00	94.52	100.00	100.00	110.00	120.00	110.00	145.00
24	Emeritus Fellowships	-	13.34	-	13.34	-	26.00	-	26.00
	Total (Promotion of Art and Culture)	4101.00	1643.20	4380.00	1687.48	4679.00	1949.22	4901.00	2091.00
III	ARCHAEOLOGY								
25.	Archaeological Survey of India	2000.00	6088.00	2800.00	7000.00	3100.00	8438.00	4600.00	9829.00
26.	Operation of Antiquities & Treasure (Acts) (3602, 3601)	-	67.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total (Archaeology)	2000.00	6155.00	2800.00	7000.00	3100.00	8438.00	4600.00	9829.00
IV	ARCHIVES & ARCHIVAL LIBRARIES								
27.	National Archives of India	350.00	517.00	330.00	525.00	330.00	700.00	150.00	762.00
28.	Asiatic Society, Calcutta	108.00	173.00	150.00	175.00	150.00	290.00	160.00	300.00
29.	Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library	62.00	83.40	75.00	85.00	80.00	91.00	58.00	91.00
30.	TMSSM Library, Thanjavur	40.00	-	70.00	-	70.00	-	70.00	-
31.	Rampur Raza Library	80.00	47.82	86.00	48.50	90.00	50.00	90.00	66.00
32.	National Mission for Preservation of Manuscripts	-	-	13.00	-	30.00	-	30.00	
33.	Promotion of Literary books and magazines	-	-	10.00	-	-	-	-	-
	Total (Archives & Archival Libraries)	640.00	821.22	734.00	833.50	750.00	1131.00	558.00	1219.00

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
V	MUSEUMS								
34.	National Museum, New Delhi	390.00	572.00	420.00	550.00	465.00	600.00	400.00	650.00
35.	National Council of Science Museum	500.00	735.00	550.00	778.00	650.00	900.00	700.00	1000.00
36.	Science Cities	500.00	0.00	1100.00	0.00	1100.00	0.00	1300.00	0.00
37.	Indian Museum, Calcutta	250.00	199.00	360.00	200.00	400.00	295.00	450.00	330.00
38.	Salarjung Museum, Hyderabad	360.00	146.00	450.00	160.00	485.00	245.00	400.00	340.00
39.	Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta	200.00	90.08	220.00	106.00	220.00	130.00	125.00	140.00
40.	Allahabad Museum	70.00	62.06	90.00	65.00	90.00	80.00	90.00	88.00
41.	NGMA	300.00	72.00	375.00	75.00	400.00	100.00	255.00	105.00
42.	N.R.L.C. Lucknow	100.00	100.08	100.00	110.00	100.00	158.00	100.00	120.00
43.	Dr. ZHM Museum	–	2.22	–	3.00	0.00	3.00	–	4.00
44.	Promotion & Strengthening of Local Museums	100.00	0.00	150.00	0.00	175.00	0.00	200.00	–
45.	National Museum Inst.	60.00	3.33	70.00	4.00	75.00	7.00	75.00	8.00
46.	Setting up of Museum for JEM	–	1.11	–	0.00	–	–	–	–
47.	Vrindavan Research Institute	–	11.12	–	12.00	–	12.00	–	13.00
48.	Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay	–	0.00	–	0.00	–	–	–	0.00
49.	Nehru Centre, Bombay	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00
50.	INTACH	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	0.00
	Total (Museums)	2850.00	1994.00	3905.00	2063.00	4180.00	2530.00	4106.00	2798.00
VI	ANTHROPOLOGY & ETHNOLOGY								
51.	Anthropological Survey of India	170.00	573.00	195.00	610.00	220.00	745.00	220.00	790.00
52.	IGRMS, Bhopal	420.00	102.00	450.00	105.00	490.00	110.00	490.00	120.00
	Total (A & E)	590.00	675.00	645.00	715.00	710.00	855.00	710.00	910.00
VII	PUBLIC LIBRARIES								
53.	National Library, Calcutta	200.00	676.00	245.00	690.00	250.00	850.00	310.00	1000.00
54.	Central Reference Library, Calcutta	20.00	44.48	45.00	48.00	40.00	75.00	40.00	80.00
55.	Central Sectt. Library	113.00	45.00	125.00	50.00	145.00	70.00	200.00	100.00

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
56	Delhi Public Library	80.00	389.00	80.00	400.00	86.00	440.00	86.00	500.00
57	R.R.M. Roy Library Foundation, Calcutta	540.00	100.00	568.00	100.00	650.00	118.00	700.00	125.00
58	Central Library, Bombay	58.00	16.00	43.00	17.00	40.00	25.00	20.00	26.00
59.	Connemera Public Library, Madras	48.00	22.00	38.00	23.00	35.00	23.00	20.00	24.00
60.	Central Tibetan Lib. Dharamsala	-	18.30	-	18.50	0.00	20.00	0.00	35.00
61.	India Library	50.00	-	1.00	-	1.00	-	1.00	-
62	DELNET	50.00	-	25.00	-	10.00	-	10.00	-
63.	NAPLIS	20.00	-	10.00	-	10.00	-	10.00	-
64	Maintenance & Strengthening of Small Libs.	-	-	10.00	-	10.00	-	1.00	-
65	Promotion of Literary books and magazines	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.00	-
	Total (Public Libraries)	1179.00	1310.78	1190.00	1346.50	1277.00	1621.00	1399.00	1890.00
VIII	TIBETAN, BUDDHIST & OTHER STUDIES								
66	Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies	100.00	183.49	100.00	200.00	115.00	390.00	125.00	387.00
67	Central Inst. of Buddhist Studies	150.00	77.84	150.00	100.00	150.00	140.00	125.00	190.00
68.	Sikkim Research Inst. of Tibetology	-	13.34	-	13.34	-	13.50	-	19.00
69.	Fin. Assistance for development of Buddhist/Tibet Inst.	90.00	0.00	90.00	0.00	90.00	0.00	110.00	0.00
	Total (Buddhist, Tibetan & other Studies)	340.00	274.67	340.00	313.34	355.00	543.50	360.00	596.00
IX	MEMORIALS								
70	Gandhi Samiti Darshan Samiti	190.00	122.33	190.00	140.00	150.00	155.00	100.00	180.00
71	Nava Nalanda Mahavihara	155.00	33.36	155.00	45.00	160.00	60.00	163.00	91.00
72.	M.A.K. Inst. of Asian Studies	40.00	6.67	60.00	10.00	62.00	14.00	75.00	15.00
73	Rajiv Gandhi Memorial	50.00	-	10.00	-	1.00	-	1.00	-
74.	Nehru Memorial Museum & Library	200.00	279.00	200.00	300.00	200.00	330.00	150.00	410.00
75.	Centenaries and Anniversaries Celebrations	15.00	506.01	15.00	5516.00	15.00	516.00	1.00	200.00
76.	India House, Paris	-	6.67	-	7.00	-	207.00	-	1.00
77.	INA Memorial, Morang	-	155.40	-	155.00	-	0.00	-	0.00
78.	Maintenance of National Memorials	20.00	311.39	20.00	304.22	20.00	304.00	1.00	200.00

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
79.	Celebration of Tri Centenary of Khalsa	0.00	0.00	-	0.00	-	100.00	-	95.00
	Total (Memorials)	670.00	1426.83	650.00	6477.22	608.00	1686.00	491.00	1192.00
X.	International Cultural Relations								
80	Festival of India	-	244.00	-	10.00	-	800.00	-	300.00
81.	Contribution to Centre for Conservation	-	5.56	-	8.00	-	8.00	-	10.00
82.	Contribution to World Heritage Fund	-	4.44	-	4.44	-	6.00	-	7.00
83.	International Cultural Activities and Grants to Indo Friendship Society	-	27.80	-	35.00	-	40.00	-	45.00
84.	Travel Subsidy	-	11.12	-	11.12	-	11.00	-	1.00
85.	Delegation under CEP	-	27.80	-	30.00	-	30.00	-	30.00
86.	Other Expenditure	-	9.58	-	10.40	-	10.28	-	11.00
	Total (ICR)	-	330.30	0.00	108.96	0.00	905.28	0.00	404.00
XI.	CELEBRATION OF 50TH ANNIVERSARY								
87.	Programme of Freedom Celebration	200.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
88.	Secretariat for Commemoration of 50th Anniversary of India's independence	-	2224.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
89.	Celebration of 50 years of Indian Republic	-	0.00	-	0.00	-	5700.00	-	2350.00
	Total (Celebration of 50th Anniversary)	200.00	2224.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5700.00	0.00	2350.00
XII	IGNCA								
90.	IGNCA	100.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1,000.00	1.00
XIII	Activities for the ne region	-	-	-	-	500.00		855.00	-
	GRAND TOTAL (Deptt. of Culture)	12720.00	17400.00	14720.00	21121.00	16225.00	26000.00	19045.00	24030.00

[Translation]

Insecticides Manufacturers in the Country

5648. SHRI VISHNUDEO SAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government to ensure good quality of insecticides manufactured in the country and its use in agro products without affecting the health of the human beings;

(b) the insecticides found to be harmful and useless for health; and

(c) the action taken against the manufacturers of those insecticides?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) Following are the steps taken by the Government to ensure good quality pesticides manufactured and used in the country:-

(i) Effective enforcement of the provisions of the Insecticides Act, 1968 to ensure the manufacture and sale of quality pesticides.

(ii) The Registration Committee, constituted under the Insecticides Act, 1968, satisfies itself about the safety and bio-efficacy of the pesticides before grant of registrations.

(iii) Monitoring the quality of pesticides by drawal of samples from the manufacturing units/distribution sale points and testing them by the notified functionaries.

(b) and (c) 27 pesticides and 4 formulations of three other pesticides found harmful for human health have been banned for use in the country. The list is given in the statement. The manufacture of banned pesticides is not allowed under the Insecticides Act, 1968.

Statement

List of Pesticides banned in India

A. Pesticides banned for manufacture, import and use (24 Nos.)

1. Aldrin
2. Benzene Hexachloride
3. Calcium Cyanide
4. Chlordane
5. Copper Acetoarsenite
6. Dibromochloropropane
7. Endrin
8. Ethyl Mercury Chloride
9. Ethyl Parathion
10. Heptachlor
11. Menazene
12. Nitrofen
13. Paraquat dimethyl sulfate
14. Pentachloro nitrobenzene
15. Pentachlorophenol
16. Sodium Methane Arsonate
17. Tetradifon
18. Texafen
19. Aldicarb
20. Chlorhenzilate
21. Dieldrin
22. Maleic hydrozide
23. Ethelene Dibromide
24. TCA

B. Pesticide banned for use but their manufacture is allowed for export (3 Nos.).

25. Nicotin Sulfate
26. Phenyl Mercury Acetate
27. Captafol

C. Pesticide formulations banned for import, manufacture and use (4 Nos.).

1. Methomyl 24% L
2. Methomyl 12.5% L
3. Phosphamidon 85% SL
4. Carbofuron 50% G

[English]

Super Cyclone in 1999 in Orissa

5649. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a super cyclone in 1999 swept across 14 more prosperous districts of Orissa where turbulent storm killed over 10,000 people and 3 lakh cattle besides damaging crop of 21 lakh hectare and falling about 9 crore trees;

(b) whether the Union Government and the Government of Orissa did not add a single cyclone shelter to 23 that existed before the sea storm and post disaster coordination work; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) As reported by the Government of Orissa, two cyclones of October, 1999, including the Super cyclone, affected 14 districts, resulting in loss of about 10,000 human lives, affecting cropped area in about 22 lakh ha. and damage to about 22 lakh houses.

(b) and (c) In addition to 23 shelters completed a little before the cyclones of October, 1999, 24 such additional shelters are nearing completion.

Protection of Textiles Manufacturers

5650. SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have decided to collaborate to protect their interests in the textile sector against European Union;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the mechanism evolved to protect the interests of textile manufacturers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (c) There is no direct collaboration with Pakistan to protect interests in the textile sector against European Union. However, efforts are made to involve all developing countries, including Pakistan, for raising the common concerns related to textile sector at appropriate fora.

Harassment of SC/ST Employees

5651. PROF. R.R. PRAMANIK:
SHRI SURESH KURUP:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government got the information from All India Depressed Classes Federation, Nagpur, regarding the alleged harassment of employees belonging to SC/ ST communities working in Central Railway;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government against this discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes Sir, a representation dated 8.5.2001 addressed to Divisional Railway Manager/Nagpur Division/Central Railway was received from All India Depressed Classes Federation, regarding alleged harassment of employees belonging to SC/ST communities working on Nagpur Division of Central Railway.

(b) In their aforesaid representation, the Federation had cited four specific cases of alleged harassment to SC/ST employees. All the four cases have been duly examined.

One case is regarding removal from service of Shri T.P. Gaikwad, Deputy Station Superintendent, Wardha. It is seen that there was a joint complaint by staff against him. As the complaint was of serious misconduct of Shri Gaikwad, disciplinary action was processed against him and competent authority imposed penalty of removal from service on him.

The second case is of transfer of Shri B.T. Atram, Station Master, Ballarshah. It is to state that transfer of Shri Atram from Ballarshah has subsequently been cancelled on humanitarian consideration.

The third case is of transfer of Shri B.N. Tayade, Station Manager, Pulgaon to Nagpur. This transfer was ordered on Shri Tayade's own request. Thus, the question of harassment does not arise in this case.

The fourth case is of Shri H.S. Khichi, Station Master, Teegaon. As per the report received from the Railway, Shri Khichi does not belong to SC/ST community.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Import of Cattle

5652. SHRI SURESH PASI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether cattle are being imported every year in our country during the last two years;

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

(c) whether due to foot and mouth disease and mad cow disease abroad lakhs of cattle were untimely slaughtered;

(d) the steps taken by the Government so far to prevent break out of such diseases amongst animals in India through imported animals;

(e) whether the Government have evolved any policy to tackle this problem; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and

(b) Details of import of cattle during last two years are given in the statement.

(c) As per reports published by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), animals including cattle have been destroyed in many countries due to the outbreak of mad cow and foot and mouth disease.

'd) to (f) Government has prohibited import of live ruminants, including cattle, as well as germplasm and other products of ruminant origin from countries affected by mad cow disease and other diseases from the same group. Besides, live animals are on the Restricted List of imports and are permitted against import licenses issued on the recommendations which are made on the basis of the disease status of the exporting country. Imports are also subject to fulfillment of health and quarantine conditions laid down in this regard.

Statement

Year 1999-2000

S No.	Description	Country	No. of cattle
1	Heifers & Bulls (for breeding)	Australia	21
2	Heifers & Bulls (for breeding)	Denmark	28
3.	Bulls, Adult other than pure bred breeding	Nepal	22
4.	Others (exchanging Bulls and Buffaloes) other than pure bred breeding	Nepal	153
		Total	224

Year 2000-2001

1.	Bulls, Adult other than pure bred breeding	Nepal	427
2.	Others (exchanging Bulls and Buffaloes) other than pure bred breeding	Nepal	153
		Total	1653

[English]

Reserves of Gas and Oil in Andhra Pradesh

5653. SHRI A. NARENDRA:
SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:

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

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has urged the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited to prepare a five year master plan to explore gas and oil reserves in the State;

(b) if so, whether the ONGC has considered the proposal of the State Government; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has informed that no formal communication has been received by them from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh regarding preparation of a five year master plan for that State. However, ONGC has prepared a draft 10th five year Plan covering exploration activities in the country, including the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Use of Biotechnologies to Promote Agriculture

5654. SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a plan to use biotechnologies to promote evolving plants which consume less water, drought resistant, pest resistant, contain nutrition, higher yields giving and environmentally safe;

(b) whether applications of such technologies have not yet been realized through genetic engineering;

(c) whether claims to pest resistance as in Bt. Cotton currently undergoing field trials pose inconsistent; and

(d) if so, Bt. Crops are a guarantee for creating super-pests and threatening friendly species due to production of toxins by the plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The data on trials of Bt. Cotton were insufficient to assess the consistency of performance. Therefore, the trials are being repeated under the supervision of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under multi-location Advanced Varietal Trials of the All India Coordinated Cotton Improvement Project.

(d) So far there is no conclusive and final evidence to suggest that Bt. crops will create super-pests and threaten friendly species due to production of toxins by plants.

[Translation]

Job Opportunities in Agricultural Sector

5655. SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH:
SHRI SURESH CHANDEL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of diploma holders/degree holders and post graduate degree holders of different agricultural universities/institutes of the country are facing the problem of unemployment due to lack of adequate job opportunities in this sector;

(b) if so, whether the Government have prepared any action-plan to provide ample job opportunities in agriculture sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) As per the information collected from most of the State Agricultural Universities/Institutes, very many of the diploma holders/graduates and post-graduates have to wait six months to three years to get a suitable employment in Government sector/private sector in their respective fields of specialization.

(b) and (c) The Government of India is considering a scheme to have a new extension system through private ventures to be set up by unemployed agriculture graduates who will provide services to the farmers on payment basis. The ventures are proposed to be set up through bank financing.

[English]

Marketing of Neera

5656. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has expressed its inability to market 1,260 crore litres of Neera which is likely to be produced from the eight crore coconut trees in the State;

(b) if so, the main reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government of Karnataka has sought the help of Central Food Technology and Research Institute which studying the possibility of preservation of Neera;

(d) if so, whether the Government of Karnataka has agreed to take a decision only after receiving the report;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Government of Karnataka has reported that sale of toddy is banned except in 4 districts of the State. They have further reported that the coconut trees fall under the definition of excise trees and cannot be allowed for tapping. Considering the demand, in view of the pattern of liquor consumption in the State over the years 1,260 crore litres of Neera has no scope for utilization in the State.

(c) Government of Karnataka has sought help of Defence Food Research Laboratory, Mysore for analysis of Neera with respect to its composition, microbiological quality and nutritive value. They have also sought help for evaluation of suitable preservatives, their influence on the product quality, stability; and evaluation of suitable processing treatments, including development of suitable packaging system and shelf stability.

(d) to (f) No decision has been communicated by the State Government.

Link Express from Visakhapatnam

5657. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new Link Express has been started from Visakhapatnam to Korba in the South Eastern Railway Section;

(b) if so, the details of its timings and haltage; and

(c) the other trains proposed to be introduced from the Visakhapatnam in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O.

RAJAGOPAL): (a) 8517/8518 Visakhapatnam-Bilaspur Express (4 days a week) has been extended upto Korba with increase in frequency to daily from 1.7.2001.

(b) The details of timings and stoppages have been published in public Time Table of South Eastern Railway and "Trains at a Glance", July 2001 issue. The timings and stoppages are placed in the statement attached.

(c) The following services announced in the speech of Minister of Railways introducing the Railway Budget 2001-2002 serve the passengers of Visakhapatnam:-

1. 6357/6358 Howrah-Nagercoil (weekly) Express introduced from 8.7.2001.
2. Howrah-Yesvantpur (Bangalore) bi-weekly Express (proposed to be introduced during 2001-2002).

Statement

Timings and stoppages of 8517/8518 Korba-Visakhapatnam Express are as under:-

8518 Visakhapatnam-Korba Express	Stations	8517 Korba-Visakhapatnam Express
1	2	3
19.00	d. Visakhapatnam a	08.30
19.11	d. Simhachalam d	08.03
20.05/20.10	a/d. Vizianagaram a/d	07.00/07.05
20.50./20.55	a/d. Bobbili a/d	05.55/05.57
21.15	d. Parvatipuram d	05.33
21.23	d. Parvatipuram Town d	05.25
22.20/22.40	a/d. Rayagada a/d	04.30/04.50
22.50	d. Singapur Road d	04.15
23.00	d. Therubali d	03.10
23.43	d. Muniguda d	02.35
00.05	d. Ambodala d	02.10
00.35	d. Norla Road d	01.30
00.45	d. Rupra Road d	01.18
01.10	d. Kesinga d	01.05
01.55/02.05	a/d. Titlagarh a/d	00.40/00.50
02.19	d. Muribahal d	23.35
02.35/02.45	a/d. Kantabanji d	23.10/23.20
03.06	d. Harishankar Road d	22.40
03.43	d. Khariar Road d	21.55
04.05	d. Bagbahara d	21.35
04.35	d. Mahasamund d	21.10
06.40/07.00	a/d. Raipur a/d	20.00/20.25

1	2	3
07.50	d. Bhatapara d	18.37
09.05/09.40	a/d. Bilaspur a/d	17.30/18.00
10.03	d. Akaltara d	16.47
10.19	d. Naila d	16.32
10.40/10.42	a/d. Champa a/d	16.20/16.22
11.45	a. Korba d	15.20

Heritage Hotels

5658. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Heritage hotels established in the country, State-wise/location-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal to set up more such hotels in the country, particularly in Maharashtra; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise/location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) The Department of Tourism has classified 61 hotels in the country under Heritage category upto August, 2001. A list of Heritage Hotels State/Location-wise is given in the Statement.

(b) The Department of Tourism also approves Heritage Hotels at project stage as per the guidelines laid down in this respect. So far there are 10 approved Heritage hotel projects. No hotel project in Maharashtra has come up for approval to this Department so far.

(c) The 10 Heritage hotel projects approved by the Department of Tourism are, at Mehrauli - New Delhi; Diu - Daman & Diu; Mt. Abu- Rajasthan; Dausa - Rajasthan; Anandpur Sahib - Punjab; Srinagar - Jammu & Kashmir; Haridwar - Uttaranchal; Solan - Himachal Pradesh; Jodhpur and Jaisalmer - Rajasthan.

Statement

State-wise/Location-wise List of Heritage Hotels in the Country

RAJASTHAN

1. The Ramgarh Lodge, Ramgarh, Jaipur
2. Raj Mahal Palace Hotel, Jaipur
3. Hotel Lalgarh Palace, Bikaner
4. Samode Haveli, Jaipur
5. Sardar Samand Palace, Sardar Samand
6. Neemrana Fort, Neemrana
7. Ajit Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur
8. Fateh Prakash Palace, Udaipur
9. Karni Bhawan, Jodhpur
10. Raj Palace, Jaipur
11. Karni Bhawan Palace, Bikaner
12. Bhanwar Niwas Palace, Bikaner
13. Shikarbadi, Udaipur
14. Gajner Palace, Bikaner
15. Laxmi Vilas Palace, Udaipur
16. Hotel Connaught House, Mt. Abu
17. Sawai Madhopur Lodge, Sawai Madhopur
18. Cama Rajputana Club Resort, Mt. Abu
19. Narain Niwas Palace, Jaipur
20. Castle Mandawa, Mandawa
21. Hotel Bissau Palace, Jaipur
22. Pushkar Palace, Pushkar
23. Laxmi Vilas Palace, Bharatpur
24. Deogarh Mahal Fort, Deogarh
25. Devigarh, Delwara
26. Hotel Raj Mahal, Bhindar
27. Khimsar Fort, Khimsar

28. Balsamand Palace, Jodhpur

29. Ranbanka Palace, Jodhpur

30. Shiv Niwas Palace, Udaipur

31. Laxmi Niwas Palace, Bikaner

32. Palace Hotel, Mt. Abu

33. Samode Palace, Samode

GUJARAT

34. Neelam Bagh Palace, Bhavnagar

35. Balram Palace Resort, Village Chitrasoni

36. Utelia House, Ahmedabad

37. River Side Palace, Gondal

KARNATAKA

38. Lalitha Mahal Palace, Mysore

MADHYA PRADESH

39. Jehan Numa Palace Hotel, Bhopal

40. Usha Kiran Palace, Gwalior

41. Jhira Bagh Palace, Dhar

42. Noor-Us-Sabha Palace, Bhopal

HIMACHAL PRADESH

43. The Clarks, Shimla

44. Taragarh Palace, Taragarh

45. Nalagarh Palace, Nalagarh

46. The Judges Court, Paragpur

KERALA

47. Lake Palace, Thekkedy

48. Fort Heritage Hotel, Cochin

49. Naduluveetil Resort, Naduluveetil

50. Somatheeram Ayurvedic Beach Resort, Somatheeram

51. Kayaloram Lake Resort, Thekkedy

52. Coconut Lagoon, Alleppy

53. Malabar House Residency, Cochin

WEST BENGAL

54. Ivanhoe Hotel, Darjeeling

55. Himalayan Hotel, Darjeeling

56. Windamere Hotel, Darjeeling

UTTAR PRADESH

57. Fair Havens Holiday Home, Nainital

58. Chevron Resemount, Ranikhet

TAMIL NADU

59. Taj Garden Retreat, Madurai

60. Savoy Hotel, Octamand

GOA

61. Panjim Inn, Goa

[Translation]

Acute Shortage of Urea

5659. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an acute shortage of urea in the country particularly in the tribal and scheduled caste dominated areas;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the State Governments including Maharashtra have been demanding additional quota of urea from the Union Government during the last three years;

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and

(e) the quantum of urea supplied to the States including Maharashtra particularly in tribal and dalit dominated rural areas during the said period till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) There are no reports of shortage of urea from any States/U.Ts.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) The requirement of urea for each State/UT is assessed in consultation with the respective State Governments/UT Administrations and allocations are made to fully meet the requirement. Sometimes State Governments ask for additional allocation and wherever required, additional allocations are made to ensure adequate availability. As a result, no State has reported

any shortage of urea in the last three years. It is the responsibility of the State Government/UT Administration to distribute Urea to different areas within the State/UT.

A statement giving State-wise, season-wise details of availability and sale of Urea during the last three years and during Kharif 2001 up to 31.7.2001 is enclosed.

Statement

Availability and Sales of Urea

(000' tonnes)

Sl. No.	States	Kharif-1998		Rabi-1998-99		Kharif-1999		Rabi-1999-2000		Kharif-2000		Rabi-2000-2001		Kharif-2001	
		Availability	Sales	Availability	Sales	Availability	Sales	Availability	Sales	Availability	Sales	Availability	Sales	Availability	Sales (Upto 31.7.2001)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
SOUTH ZONE															
1	Andhra Pradesh	1080.73	955.57	1212.03	1058.59	1148.64	1032.54	1174.02	984.23	1186.99	1044.61	1287.53	1061.86	671.65	185.08
2	Karnataka	595.91	544.82	438.15	360.54	651.39	592.19	438.56	362.79	704.45	651.04	452.87	385.01	383.54	177.02
3	Kerala	77.73	58.34	56.71	54.85	68.44	60.69	66.19	55.88	59.66	48	63.74	42.09	37.61	27.95
4	Tamilnadu	400.72	333.06	581.11	480.6	408.91	355.74	566.66	521.42	404.83	362.19	587.99	504.18	205.42	132.86
5	Andaman & Nicobar	0.4	0.4	0.46	0.46	0.39	0.39	0.34	0.34	0.23	0.23	0.3	0.3	0	0
6	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.02	0.02	0	0	0.02	0.02	0	0
7	Pondicherry	10.79	9	13.55	10.48	11.93	9.63	12.75	9.8	10.47	8.97	12.08	9.09	5.77	4.41
	Total	2166.28	1901.19	2312.01	1965.52	2289.7	2051.18	2258.54	1934.48	2366.63	2115.04	2404.53	2002.55	1303.99	527.32
WEST ZONE															
8	Gujarat	611.61	554.95	721.14	575.09	653.44	569.16	565	484.82	511.2	473.9	462.44	395.98	338.62	296.08
9	Madhya Pradesh	780.95	633.52	828.74	628.7	730.26	529.3	725.89	588.04	824.54	583.28	472.58	317.19	334.53	220.84
10.	Chhattisgarh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	101.67	46.44	244.02	168.58
11	Maharashtra	1207.03	1038.23	748.55	669.24	1285.92	1135.79	855.99	740.76	1189.81	1051.6	690.22	583.02	869.79	607.18
12.	Rajasthan	552.43	411.2	785.52	600	537.7	453.81	664.44	578.29	530.1	463.52	541.15	479.51	359.7	254.21
13.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	0.71	0.71	0.15	0.15	0.84	0.84	0.17	0.17	0.69	0.62	0.36	0.32	0.67	0.67
14.	Goa	2.29	2.33	2	1.99	2.17	2.14	2.35	2.35	3.25	1.23	2.02	2.02	1.54	0.93
15.	Dama & Diu	0.16	0.16	0.06	0.06	0.14	0.14	0.02	0.02	0.07	0.07	0.04	0.04	0.09	0.02
	Total	3155.18	2641.1	3086.16	2575.23	3210.47	2691.18	2813.86	2394.45	3059.66	2574.22	2270.48	1824.52	2148.96	1548.51
NORTH ZONE															
16.	Haryana	671.44	525.65	916.24	766.5	662.06	504.5	920.66	743.26	603.06	488.06	976.83	836.35	579.77	463.48

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	Himachal Pradesh	33.89	29.77	20.93	19.01	33.96	33.34	14.27	9.63	31.54	28.07	16.4	15.5	26.94	25.58
18.	Jammu & Kashmir	61.82	51.09	53.36	44.97	52.89	41.08	67.3	53.14	66.7	57.18	58.8	44.93	38.76	30.84
19.	Punjab	1164.09	983.57	1185.4	1081.8	1083.54	935.03	1143.69	1039.42	1103.92	971.91	1245.3	1092.62	784.5	693.3
20.	Uttar Pradesh	2769.2	2308.88	3037.04	2577.22	2756.08	2369.32	2810.46	2321.6	2578.75	2126.01	2644.12	2238.38	1912.08	1398.99
21.	Uttaranchal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77.9	63.93	86.87	66.43
22	Chandigarh	0.33	0.33	0.55	0.55	0.5	0.5	0.23	0.23	0	0	0.25	0.25	0	0
23.	Delhi	13.22	10.8	27.99	24.67	15.27	10.72	22.93	16.52	9.52	3.2	13.11	6.76	5.73	1.32
	Total	4713.99	3910.09	5241.51	4514.72	4604.3	3894.49	4979.54	4183.8	4393.48	3674.43	5032.71	4297.72	3434.65	2679.94
EAST ZONE															
24.	Bihar	924.27	688.82	787.41	616.99	861.65	692.11	796.21	663.56	823.43	731.02	737.6	650.04	431.64	250.57
25	Jharkhand	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	74.13	31.52	75.88	62.23
26	Orissa	372	250.65	192.76	73	375.85	304.68	176.91	113.87	389.59	297.99	139.27	65.6	223.13	132.32
27	West Bengal	534.25	383.94	669.7	566.4	533.61	474.55	704.88	615.06	512.24	399.52	723.1	639.87	265.66	124.17
	Total	1830.52	1323.41	1649.87	1256.39	1771.11	1471.34	1678.01	1392.5	1725.26	1428.53	1674.1	1387.03	966.31	569.29
NORTH-EAST ZONE															
28.	Assam	61.85	44.27	69.54	44.26	90.82	70.05	90.42	73.41	106.17	62.94	89.77	72.46	68.66	41.79
29	Manipur	24.72	22.46	10.63	8.51	26.52	25.85	7.35	7.17	31.33	30.91	10.79	8.77	23.63	22.25
30.	Meghalaya	2.73	2.44	3.42	2.86	3.66	3.04	2.15	1.94	2.43	2.12	2.03	1.83	1.71	1.41
31.	Nagaland	0.62	0.08	1.1	0	1.4	0	0.53	0	1.07	0.02	0.35	0.07	0.28	0.06
32.	Sikkim	0.55	0.2	0.93	0.35	1.18	0.3	0.61	0.35	0.6	0.1	0.8	0.25	0.7	0.7
33.	Tripura	9.3	9.29	8.13	5.6	8.06	6.86	8.43	7.83	12.49	5.61	13.07	6.33	10.58	5.13
34.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.46	0.01	0.96	0.09	1.42	0.03	0.37	0.08	0.3	0.02	0.42	0.26	0.46	0.02
35.	Mizoram	0.73	0	1.28	0.33	1.45	0.08	0.55	0	0.7	0.15	0.5	0.08	0.63	0
36.	Tea Board (NE)	20.99	20.99	16.51	16.51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	121.95	99.74	512.5	78.51	134.41	106.21	110.41	90.78	155.09	101.87	117.73	90.05	106.65	71.36
	All India	11987.92	9875.53	12402.05	10390.37	12009.99	10214.4	11840.36	9996.01	11700.12	9894.09	11499.55	9601.87	7990.56	5396.42

[English]

Implication of Sugar Import on Farmers

5660. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the threat of import of sugar has adversely affected the agriculture sector;

(b) if so, its implications noticed so far on farmers; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) The import of sugar is under OGL. The Government is keeping a close watch on the import of sugar and in order to regulate the import Government has increased the customs duty on import of sugar to 60% along with continuance of countervailing duty of Rs. 850/- per tonne with effect from the 9th February, 2000. With the increase of customs duty to 60% import of sugar has substantially declined. As per published data of Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI&S). Kolkata, imports of sugar are merely placed at 30.612 tonnes (provisional) during the financial year 2000-2001 as against 11,81,183 tonnes during 1999-2000.

Introduction of Train between Mumbai and Vapi

5661. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received representations to start new trains between Mumbai and Vapi;

(b) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government thereon;

(c) whether any representation to extend trains from Balsad to Dahanu Road is received by the Government; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Introduction of train between Mumbai Central and Vapi and extension of Valsad bound train like 249/250 Valsad-Ahmedabad Passenger etc. upto Dahanu Road have been examined but not found feasible at present due to line capacity constraints on Mumbai Central-Dahanu Road-Vapi-Valsad section, inadequate terminal/maintenance facilities in Mumbai area and Dahanu Road & non-availability of terminal/maintenance facilities at Vapi.

[Translation]

Gauge Conversion in Maharashtra

5662. SHRI RAMDAS RUPALA GAVIT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details in regard to the conversion of metre gauge lines into broad gauge lines in Maharashtra during the current year;

(b) whether the Government have any proposal for conversion of the Dhule rail line into broad gauge line under Bhusawal division;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) A statement is attached.

(b) No, Sir. The line connecting Dhule is already on BG.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Statement

The Details of ongoing gauge conversion projects falling partly/wholly in Maharashtra are as under:

Sl.No.	Name of the Project	Cost	Status
1	2	3	4
1.	Mudkhed-Adilabad (167 Km.)	170.5 cr.	The work has been taken up under BOLT Scheme. The agency has been facing problem in arranging finances for the work. The completion of work would depend upon arrangement of finances.

1	2	3	4
2.	Secunderabad-Mudkhed & Jankhampet-Bodan (269 kms.)	287.8 cr.	The work is in progress in phases. In the first phase work in progress on Mudkhed-Nizamabad section and in the phase-II on Nizamabad-Secunderabad section.
3.	Purna-Akola (209 kms.)	228 cr.	Final Location Survey is in progress. Arrangements are being made to take up earthwork and bridges on Purna to Hingoli section (81.51 kms.)
4.	Miraj-Latur (359 kms.)	329 cr.	The work is being progressed in phases. In the phase-I gauge conversion work from Kuruduwadi to Pandharpur (52 kms.) has been completed. Residual works in the section are in progress. In Ph. II from Latur Rd. to Latur (42 kms.) earth work, major and minor bridges have been completed. Ph. III from Kuruduwadi to Latur (143 kms.) has also been taken up.
5.	Gondia-Jabalpur and Balaghat-Katangi (285 kms.)	386.3 cr.	Work has been taken up in phases. In the first phase work on Gondia-Balaghat is in progress.

[English]

Road at Adjoining Area of Mejia Thermal Power Project

5663. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the road from Maliara to Metali intake pump house of Mejia Thermal Power Project in West Bengal is likely to be pucca road;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. An estimate amounting to Rs. 49.54 lakhs has prepared for construction of metal road from Maliara to Metali intake pump house of Mejia Thermal Power Project. DVC has requested D.M., Bankura, Government of West Bengal to take up the work under connectivity scheme or under MPLAD through the Zila Parishad.

Supply of Gas by GAIL to Power Plants/Industries in Gujarat

5664. SHRI SAVSHIBHAI MAKWANA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gas Authority of India Limited has been supplying gas for production of power in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of commercial organisations which supply gas to Gujarat Electricity Board or Gujarat Industries Power Company Limited; and

(d) the details of their performance in supply of gas?

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

(b) to (d) Presently Gas Authority of India Limited is supplying natural gas to an extent of 4.17 million standard cubic meters per day (MMSCMD) to various industries for production of power in Gujarat, including 0.53 MMSCMD and 0.21 MMSCMD to Gujarat Electricity Board at Utran and Dhuvaran respectively and 0.68 MMSCMD to Gujarat Industries Power Company Limited against allocation of 0.70, 0.20 and 0.70 MMSCMD for these power projects respectively.

[Translation]

Encroachment of ONGC Land in Jodhpur

5665. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the encroachment of ONGC land in Jodhpur city of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have made any efforts to get the land vacated;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps the Government propose to take against the officials of ONGC involved in such land encroachment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has informed that there is no encroachment on ONGC's land at Jodhpur, Rajasthan. However, attempts had been made on three different occasions to forcibly enter the premises of ONGC and occupy approximately 2.2 Bighas out of the total 128.29 Bighas of land. The land was got vacated on all the three occasions and has been attached as per orders of Additional District Magistrate, Jodhpur. The Appeal filed by ONGC before High Court at Jodhpur against the attachment order is subjudice.

[English]

Foreign Deputation of SC/ST/OBC

5666. SHRI ANANDA MOHAN BISWAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Board had given commitment to appoint SCs/STs/OBCs abroad on deputation in IRCON;

(b) if so, whether such commitment has not been honoured by the IRCON;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure the deputation of SCs/STs/OBCs abroad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Railway Board had assured the Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of SC/ST that steps would be taken for giving adequate publicity amongst the SC/ST officers so that more SC/ST officers come on deputation to IRCON and other PSUs.

(b) and (c) SC/ST officers are being sent on deputation abroad by IRCON to the extent possible depending upon requirement of personnel by client, their educational qualification, work experience, etc.

(d) Railway Ministry had issued letter to all General Managers to take various steps to encourage the deputation of SC/ST officers and to freely forward their names to the Ministry for such deputation.

Increase in Price of Kerosene After Dismantling of APM

5667. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:
SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY:

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

(a) whether the Government have decided to hike the prices of kerosene and LPG after dismantling of the administered pricing mechanism in April, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to evolve some mechanism to avoid such hike; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) As per the Government decisions of November 1997, subsidies on domestic LPG and Kerosene for public distribution system at 15% and 33.33% of the import parity respectively would be borne by the fiscal budget after dismantling of administered pricing mechanism (APM).

(c) No, Sir.

(d) As per the Government decisions of November 1997, prices of all petroleum products are to be moved towards import parity subject to the subsidies as per (a) & (b) above.

Poultry Business

5668. SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the sub-urban of Vellore, Namakkal and Salem are full of poultry farmers engaged in poultry business for their livelihood;

(b) whether there has been a widespread demand for construction of a Government cold storage in Vellore area;

(c) whether the Government are also aware lakhs of poultry eggs are destroyed recently by the poultry farmers due to non-availability of cold storage system; and

(d) if so, the action the Government propose to take to protect these farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. As such there is no proposal for construction of Government cold storage in Vellore.

(c) and (d) The Government are not aware that lakhs of poultry eggs have been destroyed recently in Tamil Nadu. However, NABARD is implementing a capital investment subsidy scheme for construction, expansion and modernization of cold storages in various States including Tamil Nadu. These cold storages, apart from storing horticulture produce, are also permitted to store eggs.

Science Cities in Punjab

5669. SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to establish Science cities in Punjab; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Punjab Government, with financial assistance from the Central Government, to the tune of Rs. 70.00 crores, is establishing a Science City at Jalandhar, named as Pushpa Gujral Science City.

Setting up of Retail Outlets in Villages in Punjab

5670. SHRI J.S. BRAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether retail outlets are being set up by different oil companies at the village focal points in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of retail outlets targeted to be set up date-wise; and

(d) the retail outlets set up so far, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) As per the policy, regular surveys are conducted in the country, including the State of Punjab, for identifying economically feasible locations for setting up of retail outlets and the locations meeting the Volume-distance norms are included in the Retail Outlet Marketing Plan of the Oil Industry.

In addition to the locations pending from the previous Marketing Plans, 154 locations, including 149 focal points, have been included in the Retail Outlet Marketing Plan 1999-2000 for setting up retail outlet dealerships in the State of Punjab by the Oil Marketing Companies, *viz.*, Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited and IBP Co. Limited.

The locations included in the Marketing Plans are advertised by the Oil Companies for selection of dealers through the Dealer Selection Boards as per prescribed procedure. It generally takes 6-12 months from the date of interview for the commissioning of dealerships.

Solvent Dewaxing Unit at Digboi Refinery

5671. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a solvent dewaxing unit at a cost of Rs. 400 crores is proposed to be set up at Digboi Refinery to improve the quality of bitumen produced there;

(b) if so, the steps taken in that direction so far; and

(c) the bitumen production capacity at Digboi refinery and the extent to which it is proposed to be augmented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) A solvent dewaxing unit is being set up at Digboi refinery at an approved cost of Rs. 419 crore for increasing the production capacity of waxes, and not for improving the quality of bitumen. The project for installation of this unit is under implementation.

(c) Bitumen production capacity of Digboi refinery is 20 thousand tonnes per annum and at present there is no proposal to augment the capacity.

Missing Persons in ONGC

5672. SHRIMATI SUSHILA SAROJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state.

(a) the names of persons missing while on duty from January 1990 to 1994 in ONGC headquarters, Dehradun, Uttaranchal;

(b) the details of appointment provided to the dependents of such missing persons;

(c) whether final accounts of such employees have also been settled; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. has informed that no employee is reported to be missing while on duty during the period from January 1990 to 1994 in ONGC headquarters, Dehradun, Uttaranchal.

(b) to (d) Not applicable in view of reply at (a) above.

Stopping of Flow of Terminator Seeds

5673. SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken a decision to stop the flow of Terminator Seeds into the Indian Market; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The Government have taken steps to ensure that seeds containing 'Terminator gene' do not enter the Indian market. These steps include:-

1. Issue of instructions to all Permit Issuing Authorities, that before issuing import permits for seeds, they should satisfy themselves that such seeds are not having Terminator gene.

2. The Protection of Plant Varieties & Farmers' Rights Bill, 2001, which has been passed by Lok Sabha, has a provision that no registration shall be made of a variety which involves any technology, including Terminator Technology and Genetic Use Restriction Technology, which is injurious to the life or health of human beings, animals or plants.

3. In the revised Seeds Act, it has been proposed that seeds containing Terminator Technology will not be allowed for marketing in the country.

Review Committee on Working of ASI

5674. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any plans to constitute a review committee to look after and monitor the works of ASI, circle-wise;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith its composition;

(c) the terms and reference of the Committee;

(d) whether there is a huge administrative gap between the DG's office and various circles and sub-circles of ASI;

(e) if so, whether there is any plan to appoint any intermediate officers to check and monitor the works carried out in various circles;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (g) A Review Committee constituted by the Government for suggesting measures for restructuring and streamlining the functioning of ASI has already submitted its report. The recommendations of the Review Committee also include reorganization of the circles of the ASI and the appointment of intermediate officers.

The acceptance of these recommendations are contingent on the approvals of the various Ministries concerned.

Introduction of Shuttle Trains

5675. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce new shuttle trains between Delhi and the adjoining towns viz., Sonepat, Rohtak, Faridabad, Bhiwani of Haryana in the near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Due to operational and resource constraints.

Track Renewal

5676. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the funds allocated for the track renewal by the Railways during the last three years and current year so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): The funds allocated (Gross) for the track renewal by the Railways were Rs. 1802.57 crores, Rs. 2042.00 crores and Rs. 2244.65 crores during the year 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 respectively. During the current year, the budget provision for track renewal is Rs. 2680 crores.

Death due to Heat Waves

5677. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:
SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons died due to heatwave during the last three years, State-wise; and

(b) the preventive measures proposed to be taken to save the people from heatwave?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) As heat wave is not a natural calamity, figures of deaths occurring due to sun stroke or heat stroke are not maintained in the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation. Department of Health in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Census Commissioner and Registrar General of India have, however, been requested to indicate the availability of information on the subject.

(b) According to medical experts, deaths due to heat wave can be prevented by taking suitable preventive measures like minimizing movements in very hot weather, adjustment of working hours, taking fluids in large quantities and seeking medical attention in the event of developing symptoms of heat-stroke or sun-stroke.

Implementation of Emission Norms

5678. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "O Experts offer alternatives for clean" appearing in the 'Asian Age' of April 9, 2001;

(b) if so, whether experts have opined implementation of various emission norms rather than dependence on any particular fuel/technology; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to reduce dependence on any particular fuel/technology?

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

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government have made submission before the Hon'ble Supreme Court that, unleaded and low benzene petrol and diesel with 0.05% sulphur may also be treated as clean fuel.

Rehabilitation Package for Earthquake Victims of Kutch

5679 SHRI PRABODH PANDA:
SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is also a fact that the people of Kutch observed a bandh to show their protest against the Government's failure to provide a satisfactory rehabilitation package for the earthquake victims in Gujarat;

(b) whether the Government have ensured that all the next kith and kin of dead and other affected persons of the devastating earthquake in Gujarat have received the compensation; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the progress made so far in the rehabilitation of the victims?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) The Government of Gujarat has informed that no such bandh was observed.

(b) and (c) The State Government has informed that 'ex-gratia' in case of deaths assistance for those injured, cash doles and assistance for house-hold kits of the families and assistance for damaged houses have been paid.

[Translation]

Purchase of Electricity from DPC

5680. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Electricity Boards of Maharashtra and other States have shown inclination to purchase power from Dabhol Power Project;

(b) if so, the names of the States which have conveyed their willingness to the Central Electricity Authority to purchase power from the Dabhol Power Project;

(c) whether these electricity boards have quoted any rates for purchase of power from Dabhol Power Project; and

(d) if so, the rates at which these electricity boards have agreed to purchase power and the extent to which these rates are less than the rates of the Dabhol Power Project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (d) Central Electricity Authority held discussions with States to explore the possibility of their buying power generated by the Dabhol Power Project. The details of quantum of power and acceptable tariff, etc. has also been discussed with the States by the Negotiating Committee set up by the Government of Maharashtra, who are required to take the final decision in the matter. The States which have indicated interest in purchasing power from Dabhol project include Maharashtra, Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. The rates, nature of supply, as well as the quantity vary from State to State depending on their requirements.

[English]

Investment in Russian Oilfields

5681. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item regarding. "The ONGC subsidiary's whopping Rs. 8136 crores investment in a Russian Oilfield was signed in indecent haste and procedures were bypassed despite doubts about its commercial soundness" appearing in the *India Today* dated June 11, 2001;

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

(c) the manner in which the Committee of Secretaries cleared this proposal without inclusion of Ministry of Finance representatives;

(d) whether rules were bend to allow ONGC to fund the project ignoring its Rs. 7500 crore modernization plan for Mumbai High;

(e) whether the Government are aware that US oil giant Texaco had refused to by stake in Sakhalin project during 1999; and

(f) if so, the circumstances, the Government compelled to inexplicably hike the premium on equity from Rs. 211 crores to Rs. 1057 crores without the approval/ consent of Ministry of Finance?

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

(b) to (d) For their investment in the Sakhalin-I Project, 'OVL had obtained the advice of internationally reputed consultants, namely, J.P., Morgan, Investment Consultants, and Gaffney, Cline & Associates (GCA), Technical Consultants, who had advised that Sakhalin-I project was a high quality investment opportunity with attractive returns. This proposal was approved by the Government following all requisite inter-Ministerial deliberations.

Before making investment decision for the Sakhalin-I Project, ONGC had carried out an analysis of its fund position and expected cash inflows as also expenditure, including investments for Mumbai High redevelopment, and found that it could comfortably fund these projects, through internal and external means.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) The original indicative bid of OVL to Rosneft was based on a combination of two factors, viz. (i) more conservative view of the project due to limited technical and economic information available to OVL at that time and (ii) the old development profile based on geological data of 1999. Subsequently, the Operator made available the latest development plans for Sakhalin-I as also various technical, legal and economic information. The results of the new exploration well in 2000 also substantially improved economics of the project. Apart from this, there was also an unsolicited offer by an oil major, which necessitated protracted negotiations on the premium to be paid. Overall, the improved profitability of the project was brought into the negotiations and the premium was revised upwards.

[Translation]

Cooperation between United States and India

5682. DR. ASHOK PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the United States have expressed its desire to extend cooperation with India in the field of oil production;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) The National Energy Policy Development Group of the United States of America in its Report of May 2001 has, inter-alia, recommended that the concerned Department work with the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India to help India maximize its domestic oil and gas production. Any bilateral cooperation for mutual benefit in the hydrocarbon sector is welcome.

[English]

Proposal to Create Hydel Development Fund

5683. SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have proposed to create Hydel Development Fund by imposing surcharge on consumers for the fund;

(b) if so, the amount generated from the said fund;

(c) whether the Government or Central Electricity Regulatory Commission plan to spend the collected amount for the improvement of the hydel projects;

(d) if so, whether the State Government Hydel projects will get a share from it; and

(e) if so, the ratio of share therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (e) On the advice of the Ministry of Power, the National Hydro-electric Power Corporation (NHPC) had filed a petition before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), praying for levy of a surcharge of 10 (ten) paise per unit on energy available at bus bar, on the electricity generated from its generating stations. The amount collected as a result of levying such surcharge was intended to supplement the budgetary support, for accelerated hydro power development programmes. It was anticipated that it would be possible for NHPC to mobilize Rs. 100 crores per annum at the rate of 10 paise per unit. CERC, in its Tariff order dated 21.12.2000 has fixed a surcharge on every bill for fixed charges (for NHPC on both capacity and energy charges) at the following rates:

National Thermal Power Corporation	5%
National Hydro-electric Power Corporation	5%
Neyveli Lignite Corporation	5%
Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd.	10%

The surcharge is intended to specifically meet a portion of the capital expenditure to be incurred by the utility for the purpose of addition of capacity. This is not available for capital expenditure relating to R&M or for replacement of existing capacity. This shall be available only for investment in the business of the electricity supply undertaking for addition of capacity. Operations exclusively within a State shall not be liable for this surcharge. The CERC had invited reactions from beneficiary States before pronouncing its order.

Implementation of Moratorium on Debts in A.P.

5684. SHRI K.E. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken on the demands of Government of Andhra Pradesh with regard to implementation of Moratorium on debts; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Chief Minister Andhra Pradesh vide his letter of 4th July 2001 addressed to the Minister of Power suggested that Government of India may consider 100% waiver of surcharge/interest on outstanding dues of SEBs to CPSUs instead of 50% recommended by the Expert Group on one time settlement of outstanding dues of SEBs. The High Level Empowered Group of Chief Ministers met on 6th July, 2001 to consider the report of the Expert Group. While accepting the report the Empowered Group made minor modifications in the recommendations of the Expert Group including 60% waiver of surcharge instead of 50% recommended by the Expert Group.

[Translation]

Grievances of Agricultural Research Scholars

5685. SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of senior and junior research scholars associated with agricultural research work in the country institution-wise;

(b) whether the life of the aforesaid research scholars become dark once they cross their age limit for entry into Government service;

(c) the efforts being made by the Government for the future prospects of these research scholars;

(d) whether the Government propose to accord priority to the said research scholars for appointment as scientists/ technical officers or on some other similar posts;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) The research scholars are engaged for various projects under operation at Agricultural Universities and ICAR Institutes on co-terminus basis. Essentially, they render assistance to scientists working on the project. Since they are not appointed against regular vacancies of the Agricultural Universities or ICAR Institutes, no detailed establishment record is maintained as in the case of regular employees.

(b) No, Sir. The research scholars work in ad hoc and objective specific projects of short duration. The experience acquired helps them in getting jobs in future. Besides, they are free to keep on applying for regular positions during their working on these ad hoc project.

(c) to (f) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research makes recruitment to various posts in scientific and technical categories through the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board. The research scholars can compete for these posts alongwith others if they fulfil eligibility conditions. Besides, the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board conducts a National Eligibility Test (NET) for various disciplines in agriculture for filling posts of Lecturers/ Assistant Professors in SAUs. The research scholars can also take chance alongwith others if they are eligible to qualify the National Eligibility Test, qualifying which makes them eligible for consideration for appointment as Lecturer/ Assistant Professor in SAUs.

[English]

Direct Sale Facility in Power Sector

5686. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the combined losses of SEBs average Rs. 22,000 crores annually due to Low Plant Load Factor, Pilferage, farmer subsidy and politically constituted SE Boards;

(b) if so, whether the Centre has over attempted to enforce fiscal discipline among the SEBs;

(c) whether the recent recommendations of Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Authority to permit power producers to sell directly to consumers;

(d) whether the Centre follows the GERA directives; and

(e) if so, whether Dabhol Power Company is likely to be permitted to sell power directly to consumers and to other interested parties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The combined commercial losses of the State Electricity Boards during 2000-2001 is estimated to be Rs. 26013.05 crores.

(b) The States are being persuaded to constitute State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SERC) and to give them the responsibility of determining tariffs and to provide subsidies where they would like to be less than the determined by the SERC for any category of consumers. SERCs of Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi have already issued tariff orders.

(c) Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission has not recommended sale of power directly for Generating companies to the consumers.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) According to Section 43 (A) (c) of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948, a generating company can sell power to any person with the consent of competent Government or Governments. The decision to allow Dabhol Power Company to sell power directly to consumers rests with the Government of Maharashtra, therefore.

Utilisation of Funds by Ministry

5687. SHRI M. CHINNASAMY: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for under utilisation of funds by the Ministry; and

(b) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to fully utilize the funds allocated to the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) The Ministry, on an average, has been utilizing 98% of the Gross Budgetary Support which has been provided to it at the Revised Estimate Stage during the last four years of the Ninth Plan.

(b) The Ministry makes necessary efforts to sort out various issues like provision of matching grants and formulation of conducive policies by the State Governments to ensure full utilization of allocated funds.

[Translation]

Allotment of Petrol Pumps/LPG Agencies in Uttar Pradesh

5688. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of dealers of those petrol/diesel pumps which were allotted pumps under Scheduled castes/ Scheduled tribes quota and later on these petrol/diesel pumps were sold/transferred to the persons belonging to the general category in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Haryana;

(b) whether the Government propose to look into the said sale/transfer of petrol pumps; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) No cases of transfer/sale of retail outlet dealerships allotted under the quota reserved for Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes to persons belonging to other categories in the States of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana and the NCT of Delhi have been reported by oil marketing companies.

Fuel from Mustard and Coconut Oil

5689. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL:
SHRI JAI PRAKASH:

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

(a) whether the Government are aware that mustard/ coconut oil was used as a fuel successfully to run vehicles in Kolkata;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to explore the possibilities of making commercial use of this green fuel; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No Sir

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Proposal of Patratu Expansion

5690 PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal of Patratu extension Phase-I Power Project in Bihar has been returned;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the date on which the Union Government received the said proposal and the date on which it was returned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, the proposal of Bihar State Electricity Board (BSEB) for setting up Patratu Stage-V Extension (2x 210 MW) was returned by Central Electricity Authority (CEA), as certain essential inputs/clearances such as fuel linkage, water availability, environmental clearances etc. required for Techno-Economic Clearance (TEC) had not been tied up

(c) The Detailed Project Report of BSEB was received in CEA in December 1988 and was returned to BSEB on 4.12.1992.

[English]

Dairy Development

5691. SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state the grant-in-aid/ assistance provided to the Government of Bihar on account of Bihar State Dairy Development Board and Indian Veterinary Council in Bihar during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): No grant-in-aid/assistance to the Govt. of Bihar on account of Bihar State Dairy Development Board has been provided.

During the year 2000-2001 Rs. 1.56 lakh was provided as grant-in-aid to the Government of Bihar under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Professional Efficiency Development' which envisages setting up of State Veterinary Council. However, no grant-in-aid was provided during the year 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

[Translation]

Setting up of Railway Zones

5692. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister inaugurated the North-Western zonal office at Jaipur;

(b) whether an area of 1744 hectares of land has been acquired for the residential scheme of the said zone;

(c) whether the State Government has cleared the proposal for allotment of land at cheaper rates near Jawahar circle for the zonal headquarters in Jaipur and the said proposal has been sent to the Railway Board; and

(d) if so, the reasons for delay in granting clearance to the said proposal by the Railway Board and the time by which the said clearance is likely to be granted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) The proposal has been received by Railway Board. The same could not be cleared due to financial stringency at present. The entire issue of reorganisation of zones/divisions is under review at present in view of the severe resource crunch.

Land Acquired by Bharat Petroleum Corporation

5693. SHRI DHARM RAJ SINGH PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a provision to give employment to the children of those farmers whose land has been acquired for the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited's Unit situated in Naini-Allahabad;

(b) whether interview of the children of some farmers have also been taken but they have not been given employment as yet;

(c) if so, the names of the children of those farmers who have not been given employment even after taking interview; and

(d) the reasons for not giving them employment and the time by which they are likely to be given employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes Sir, but it is subject to the candidates fulfilling the minimum eligibility criteria and their suitability for the post.

(b) and (c) As per statement attached.

(d) The man-power requirements at Naini LPG Plant have since been met by transfer/recruitment's and no vacancies are available, hence, there is no further scope of providing employment at this Plant.

Statement

Yes Sir, the following 8 candidates were interviewed but were not found suitable, the reasons are mentioned against their names:-

Sl. No.	Nominee	Land Loser	Reason
1.	Sh. Mohd. Shahab Hanfi	Sh. Mehndi Hasan	Not Found Suitable
2.	Sh. Ram Asrey Yadav	Sh. Banshi Lal	Not Found Suitable
3.	Sh. Kamlesh Chandra	Sh. Ram Sajivan	Overage
4.	Sh. Krishna Dev Yadav	Shiv Kumar	Not Found Suitable
5.	Smt. Vimla Devi	Sh. Shobha Ram	Not Found Suitable
6.	Sh. Devanand	Sh. Hosala Prasad	Overage
7.	Sh. Ram Shankar Yadav	Sh. Babu Lal	Not Found Suitable
8.	Sh. Ram Kamlesh Chandra Pandey	Sh. Hanumandeen	Overage

Increase in Prices of Petroleum Products

5694. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase prices of petroleum products to develop the national highways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether increase in prices of petroleum products would have any affect on consumer goods; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) There is no such proposal at present.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.

Compensation Claim of Reliance Petroleum

5695. SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reliance Petroleum has claimed any compensation from the Government/Public Sector Oil Company; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) For the controlled petroleum products namely petrol, diesel, domestic LPG and kerosene for public distribution, import refinery gate prices are paid for upliftment from the Reliance Petroleum Limited (RPL). For the decontrolled

products, the payments are made as per bilateral agreements between the oil companies and RPL. The payments in respect of Central Sales Tax (CST) and terminalling charges are made to the RPL on the same basis as applicable to public sector refineries as per the compensation mechanism under APM.

[Translation]

Purchasing of Power from Power Generation Units

5696. DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken a decision to allow major power consuming institutions to purchase power directly from power generation units;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the definition of major power consumers;

(c) whether the Government have decided to levy a surcharge on these consumers; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and whether the decision will lead to increase in the power tariff due to which the very purpose of the decision will be defeated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) As per provisions of Section 43A (c) of Electricity (Supply) Act 1948, a generating company can sell power to any person with the approval of the Government or Governments concerned.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Rate of Electricity

5697. SHRI BRAHMA NAND MANDAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state the rate of electricity per unit paid by the consumers on power generated by the public sector and private sector on multinational companies, separately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): The Independent Power Producers (IPPs)/Central Power Utilities generally do not sell power to the consumers directly. The power from these generators is sold to SEBs/ other State Utilities, which in turn supply power to the consumers. The estimated average tariff charged from various categories of consumers during 2000-2001 is given in Statement.

Statement

Sl. No.	SEB	Domestic	Commercial	Agricultural/ irrigation	Industrial	Railway Traction	Outside State	Overall Average
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Andhra Pradesh	174.00	426.00	14.00	399.19	420.00	0.0	182.00
2.	Assam	146.47	416.56	233.24	361.40	0.00	0.00	353.16
3.	Bihar	109.35	223.20	12.23	275.39	330.00	190.59	200.14
4.	Delhi (DVB)	273.91	401.48	276.00	367.37	N.A.	0.00	320.00
5.	Gujarat	246.00	430.00	17.00	434.72	510.00	0.00	225.00
6.	Haryana	280.00	430.00	29.47	445.11	–	–	214.91
7.	Himachal Pradesh	92.48	234.36	50.00	232.54	0.00	225.00	203.04
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	125.00	230.00	250.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	194.16
9.	Karnataka	249.00	680.00	108.66	438.10	481.00	0.00	252.88

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10.	Kerala	104.00	458.30	59.55	278.23	151.00	0.00	236.66
11.	Madhya Pradesh	120.39	410.37	11.07	410.57	530.27	265.40	166.74
12.	Maharashtra	178.00	417.76	24.61	202.23	371.50	250.00	231.18
13.	Meghalaya	130.75	205.91	52.00	202.23	0.00	169.09	174.18
14.	Orissa (GRIDCO)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	0.00	157.87
15.	Punjab	190.16	338.51	Free Supply	283.19	0.00	205.00	176.42
16.	Rajasthan	138.00	310.00	34.85	321.89	331.00	221.90	195.79
17.	Tamil Nadu	197.72	397.61	1.20	385.23	379.46	129.80	233.49
18.	Uttar Pradesh	129.53	313.25	49.97	423.36	421.00	19.14	183.35
19.	West Bengal	162.57	245.21	53.80	346.97	400.90	374.33	240.72
	Average SEBs	174.16	341.20	28.42	360.23	420.76	194.79	212.00

Sl. No.	Electricity Department	Domestic	Commercial	Agricultural/ irrigation	Industrial	Railway Traction	Outside State	Overall Average
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
2.	Goa	160.61	439.40	198.10	385.00	0.00	191.69	351.26
3.	Manipur	167.97	210.00	125.40	125.27	0.00	0.00	163.00
4.	Mizoram	115.00	176.00	0.00	217.00	0.00	0.00	167.00
5.	Nagaland	160.00	280.00	0.00	225.00	0.00	0.00	189.87
6.	Pondicherry	93.98	238.35	7.51	252.20	0.00	0.00	166.95
7.	Sikkim	100.00	225.00	0.00	130.00	0.00	0.00	115.00
8.	Tripura	95.00	130.00	75.00	120.00	0.00	107.85	97.00
	Average of Eds	129.35	286.01	52.61	293.87	0.00	127.62	214.17
	All India Average	173.40	340.43	28.48	359.04	420.76	193.76	212.02

[English]

Supply of Naphtha by Reliance Industries

5698. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Reliance Industries is illegally supplying the Naphtha for mixing with the petrol to all petrol pumps and making a net profit of Rs. 7 to 8 crores per day;

(b) if so, the action initiated against the said company by the Government;

(c) the impact of such adulteration of petrol; and

(d) the steps taken to penalise the petrol pump owners involved in such adulteration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Government have no specific information in this regard.

(d) Oil Companies takes punitive action against dealers indulging in adulteration under the Marketing Discipline Guidelines and/or in terms of Dealership Agreement. The State Governments are also empowered to take appropriate action against erring dealers under the Essential Commodities Act.

Shortfall in Revenue Collection

5699. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has suffered a shortfall of over Rs. 150 crore in revenue and 1.75 million tonne in-loading over the revised estimate for 2000-2001 presented in the budget for the current year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to make up the losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The shortfall in earning was due to drop in average lead of traffic and lesser offering of traffic in Foodgrains, Fertilizers, Iron & Steel and Cement as compared to last year's targets.

(c) The steps taken to make up the losses include extension of Volume Discount Scheme, liberalization of "Station-to-Station" rates scheme, introduction of Merry-go-round (MGR) system to attract short lead bulk traffic and monitoring the loading of high profit yielding commodities on each Zonal Railway.

Sectoral Investment in 9th Plan

5700. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL:
SHRI A.P. JITHENDER REDDY:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Sectoral investment requirement for electricity in the Ninth Plan;

(b) whether there has been substantial reduction in the revised requirement;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the actual investment in the first three years of the plan has been only 42 per cent of the revised requirement; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Government to accelerate the pace of investment in the Electricity Sector to attain the plan targets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (e) The approved Ninth Plan outlay for the power sector was Rs. 1,24,526.00 crore comprising of Rs. 53,299 crore for the Central Sector and Rs. 71,227.00 crore for the State Sector. This was based on a capacity addition target of 40245.2 MW.

According to Mid-term appraisal to 9th Plan, the requirement of funds has been assessed to be Rs. 1,13,239 crore comprising of Rs. 46,604 crore for the Central Sector and Rs. 66,635 crore for the State Sector. This requirement is based on the capacity addition programme of 24309 MW as against 40245.2 MW envisaged for the 9th Plan.

The plan expenditure during the first three years of the 9th Plan has been Rs. 57,576 crore which is 50.84% of the assessed revised requirement of Rs. 1,13,239 crore.

The Government is closely monitoring the ongoing projects through the Empowered Committee and various Task Forces which have been set up for this purpose. For private sector projects, the Government has constituted a Crisis Resolution Group to resolve the 'last mile' problems. To improve availability of power and generation capacity in the country, the following measures have been taken:

(a) Expeditious implementation of capacity addition programme.

(b) Liberalization of investment procedures.

(c) Renovation and modernisation of existing old generating units.

(d) Disbursement of loans by Power Finance Corporation for improving operation and

maintenance of thermal power stations under Accelerated Generation Programme.

(e) Disbursement of funds under the Accelerated Power Development Programme (APDP).

Revised Salary to Staff of K.V.Ks

5701. SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ICAR has implemented the Fifth Pay Commission recommendations for its staff of KVKs and paid their revised salary and arrears from January 1. 1996;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to make payment of arrears etc. to them soon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. ICAR has paid the revised salary and arrears for its staff of KVKs as per the Fifth Pay Commission recommendations. Apart from ICAR KVKs, there are other organizations implementing KVKs also.

(b) and (c) Question do not arise.

Manufacturing of Railway Engines

5702. SHRI GUNIPATI RAMAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Railways has slashed its orders for the procurement of engines;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether central trade unions have approached the Government to intervene in the matter; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to place the orders for procurement of engines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) The production of locomotives is based on the actual requirements to meet the projected traffic arisings as also the availability of funds. Since the actual materialisation of freight traffic has been less than that anticipated for the IXth plan period, the requirement of locomotives has accordingly come down. The present production level is commensurate with traffic requirement and fund availability.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The yearly production programme of locomotives is issued as per the requirements as explained at (a) above.

Electricity Connection in UT Chandigarh

5703. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rates of "minimum charges" for electricity connections in Union Territory, Chandigarh have been raised manifold recently, even for domestic consumers;

(b) the rationale for such increase for old/existing consumers where the infrastructure had been provided long back;

(c) whether the levy of such mandatory minimum charges militates against the exhortations to save electricity;

(d) whether no discount in such charges is given on account of power shut downs, cuts or break-down/failures;

(e) the number of domestic consumers in Chandigarh who have had to pay minimum charges after the recent hike in the tariff; and

(f) the total amount billed on account of minimum charges and the amount chargeable on the basis of actual consumption?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The rates of monthly minimum charges (MMC) for various categories of consumers of the UT of Chandigarh have been increased w.e.f. 1st February, 2001. The MMC of the domestic category has been increased to Rs. 35/- per KW, which is same as applicable in Punjab.

(b) The MMC are required to be paid by each consumer to cover the fixed charges incurred by the Electricity Department of the UT of Chandigarh for affording the supply to a consumer. The earlier MMC rates were fixed in 1991. The fixed expenses have increased manifold since then, therefore, the increase in MMC was considered necessary.

(c) The levy of MMC does not violate the national policy to save energy. The average monthly consumption for consumers under different ranges of load works out to be more than the units equivalent to the MMC.

(d) No discount in such surcharge is given on account of power shutdowns, cuts or breakdowns/failures since the quality of power supply in UT of Chandigarh is very satisfactory.

(e) The total number of domestic consumers who are covered under MMC is 37,868 as against the total number of domestic consumers of 1,59,726.

(f) Total amount paid on account of MMC for one cycle of billing is as under:-

1.	Revenue from 11000 consumers of the Labour Colonies, who resort to Kundi Connections, taking average consumption as 75 units per month.	Rs. 11,33,000/-
2.	Revenue from Defective/Slow running meters & being billed on MMC.	Rs. 36,74,245/-
3.	Revenue from other consumers being billed on MMC.	Rs. 8,92,755/-
	Total	Rs. 57,00,000/-
	The total amount billed on account of MMC for one cycle of billing is	Rs. 57 lacs x 2 Rs. 114 lacs (approx).

The tentative amount on the basis of actual consumption for such consumers under the computerized billing is Rs. 63 lakhs in one cycle.

Removal of QRS on Agricultural Trade

5704. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether free market system in agriculture is not inconsistent with WTO;

(b) if so, the reasons for not adopting the system in 1995 when the Government accepted to remove Quantitative Restrictions;

(c) whether Quantitative Restrictions in foreign trade have been removed before the free market mechanism in agriculture; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (d) The Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture came into being with the long-term objective of establishing "a fair and market-oriented agricultural trading system". Towards this end, disciplines were mandated in the 3 areas of market access, domestic support and export subsidies. India is signatory to the WTO and the various agreements thereunder including the Agreement on Agriculture, which came into force on 1st January, 1995. One of the objectives of the WTO is a "tariffs only" regime through a general elimination of all non-tariff barriers to trade including quantitative restrictions. At the time of signing the Uruguay Round of Agreements, India was under balance of payments cover and hence, was maintaining quantitative restrictions. Accordingly, it had not undertaken any commitments under 'market access' in the Agreement on Agriculture, except for offering ceiling bindings on agricultural commodities.

The Government has been following a consistent policy of liberalisation of trade and removal of restrictions on export and import items since 1991. Quantitative Restrictions on import of all agricultural commodities have been removed w.e.f. 1.4.2001. The Government has put in place a suitable mechanism for monitoring the imports of agricultural commodities, and is committed to providing protection to the domestic farmers, by resorting to the various WTO compatible measures which include appropriate calibration of applied tariffs within the bound levels, imposition of anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguard action under certain specified circumstances. Further, imports of agricultural products like wheat, rice, maize, other coarse cereals, copra and coconut oil have been placed in the category of State Trading.

The Government removed quantitative restrictions on export of sugar. Wheat products have also been allowed for export without any quantitative ceilings for the current year 2001-2002. However, there are certain agricultural items which are either under quantitative ceilings for

exports or their exports are allowed only through the designated state trading enterprises, for example, pulses, wheat, grain and flour of barley, maize, ragi bazra and jowar, onions, niger seeds etc.

National Agricultural Insurance Scheme

5705. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme is being implemented in the States according to the guidelines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether in the previous Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme, Central Government has 2/3 (66.66%) share in the compensation to be given to the farmers but in the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme, it has been reduced to 50%;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the State Governments have represented to the Union Government in this regard;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) is under implementation in 18 States and 2 Union Territories at present. NAIS is being implemented by them as per the provisions of the scheme. It is in operation from Rabi 1999-2000, after replacing the erstwhile Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (CCIS). The scope of coverage of NAIS in terms of farmers, crops and risk has been enlarged. Premia-structure has also been rationalized in order to achieve some degree of financial viability of the scheme.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. In view of the enlargement of the scope of coverage of the scheme and the constraint on the resources of the Government of India, sharing of financial liabilities between Central and State Government is in the ratio of 1:1 under NAIS.

(e) to (g) After the introduction of the new scheme, some States such as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal have expressed certain reservations on various issues including the sharing pattern of financial liabilities between the Central and State Governments in the ratio of 1:1 under NAIS. The issues were discussed in the Conference of State Agriculture Ministers held on 14.09.2000 in New Delhi. Thereafter the matter was examined and a decision has been taken to retain the existing pattern of sharing of financial liabilities between the Central and State Governments in the ratio of 1:1 in view of the enlargement of the scope of coverage of NAIS and the constraint on the resources of the Government of India.

[Translation]

LPG Agencies/Petrol Pumps in Bihar/Jharkhand

5706. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications received by the Government for dealership of petrol pumps and LPG in Bihar and newly created Jharkhand State; and

(b) the number of applicants awarded dealership of LPG and petrol pumps out of them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Government does not receive applications for dealerships/distributorships of petrol pumps and LPG. The locations included in the Marketing Plans are advertised by the Oil Marketing Companies and the selection of dealers/distributors is made by the Dealer Selection Boards as per prescribed procedure. It generally takes 6-12 months for commissioning the dealerships/ distributorships after the date of interview.

As on 1.4.2001 there were 777 & 401 retail outlets and 158 & 93 LPG distributorships operating in the States of Bihar and Jharkhand respectively.

[English]

Power Generation

5707. SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the hydroelectric and thermal power in megawatts targeted to be generated in the north eastern States particularly in Assam during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether adequate funds have been allocated to achieve the targets;

(c) if not, whether the Government have sought foreign assistance for this purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) A thermal capacity of 301.5 MW is commissioned/targeted to be commissioned in the N.E. States during 9th Five Year Plan of which 152.5 MW is in the State of Assam. A hydro capacity of 535 MW is commissioned/targeted to be commissioned in the N.E. States of which 25 MW is in the State of Assam.

(b) The Planning Commission has approved a financial outlay of Rs. 124526.41 crore for 9th Plan for the Power Sector. Allocations in the Ninth Plan for NER in the State Sector are as under:

Name of State	(Rs. in crore)
Arunachal Pradesh	451.00
Assam	850.00
Meghalaya	312.00
Mizoram	221.59
Nagaland	115.00
Sikkim	341.00
Tripura	171.79
Manipur	312.00

(c) and (d) A proposal for inclusion of Lakwa Waste Heat Project (1x38 MW) in Assam for World Bank or ADB Assistance is being examined in CEA. Earlier Kathalguri CCGT (6x33.5 MW+3x30 MW) of NEEPCO has been executed with JBIC loan assistance of Japan.

[Translation]

Theft of Railway Property

5708. SHRI SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a notorious gang is involved in the theft of railway property worth crores of rupees in connivance with the P.W.I. officers of Kurduwari-Latur section of Sholapur Division under the Central Railway;

(b) if so, whether any orders have been issued for conducting investigation in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the action taken against the guilty officials; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Cancellation of Interview for Group 'D'

5709. SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the interviews conducted for the appointments of Group D, posts reserved for handicapped in Samastipur Division of North East Railway were canclled again and again by the Railways;

(b) if so, whether in view of the difficulties faced by disabled, the Government propose to conduct a high level investigation in this regard; and

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government against the officials held responsible therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (c) Samastipur Division of N.E. Railway had conducted a selection in July, 1998 to recruit physically handicapped persons against 15 vacancies in Group 'D'. On receipt of some complaints, the Vigilance Department investigated into the matter and found certain procedural irregularities in the said selection. It was, therefore, decided to cancel the selection proceedings. Fresh selection is now being undertaken.

[English]

Increase in Licence Fee

5710. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of Catering/Vending/Bookstall contractors have obtained stay orders from different courts of law on each Zonal Railways against the decision of enhancement of the licence fee/royalty etc; and

(b) if so, the details thereof on each zonal railways, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. With a view to rationalise the licence fee for catering/vending licences, Railways had revised the licence fee w.e.f. 1.7.1999.

The Indian Railway Caterers Association filed a Writ Petition in the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala in the month of January 2000 and obtained a stay order against implementation of the revised licence fee. Few catering/ vending licences over the zonal railways have also filed Writ Petitions in various Courts of law and obtained stay orders. However, considering the Railway's point the Hon'ble High Courts of Mumbai, Jabalpur and Kerala have vacated the stay orders and upheld the decision taken by the Ministry of Railways in this regard.

Station-wise details of court cases are not available as cases are filed jointly by Associations of catering/ vending licencees as well as by individual licencees operating pantry cars and static units at stations.

Export of Raw Jute and Its Products

5711. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity and value of raw jute and its products exported during each of the last three years and estimated for the current year, country-wise and product-wise;

(b) whether the Government are planning any bilateral common package plan with Bangladesh to strengthen more jute exports;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have made any market survey of rest of the world where jute demand is growing;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) if not, whether the Government propose to make a study/comprehensive plan for a new approach for revival of jute mills and increase the jute production having taken the Ministry of Agriculture, Textile and the concerned State Governments into confidence; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) The total quantity and value of raw jute exported in the last three years is negligible.

A statement indicating country-wise and product-wise export of jute goods in the last three years is given below.

The target for the export of jute products for the current year has been set as US $ 185 Million (Rs. 8677 Million).

(b) and (c) At present, there are no bilateral/common agreement between India and Bangladesh on export of jute products. However, both the countries have been co-operating in various matters relating to jute development and diversification through projects undertaken by the erstwhile International Jute Organisation (IJO). A new organization, namely the International Jute Study Group (IJSG) is expected to replace the IJO.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) and (g) Yes, Sir. The Government is presently engaged in the formulation of a "Jute Technology Mission" to address the issues of the productivity, research on high yielding varieties, transfer of technology, improving productivity in the manufacturing sector, diversification of jute products and export marketing. The Jute Technology Mission envisages participation of State Govts. of jute growing States alongwith the concerned Ministries/ Departments of Governments of India.

Statement

Product-wise Export of Jute Goods

Qty: '000 MT
Value: Rs./Crores

April/March	Hessian	Sacking	C.B.C.	Others	Total (in Qty.)	Total Value
1998-99	64.5	11.1	17.3	102.0	194.9	628.92
1999-2000	57.4	5.6	6.3	99.7	169.0	571.00
2000-2001	61.4	17.3	5.9	96.8	181.40	646.34

Country-wise Export of Jute Goods

(Major destination)

Value: Rs. Crores

1998-1999		1999-2000		2000-2001	
Country	Value	Country	Value	Country	Value
USA	112.53	USA	112.31	USA	136.63
Belgium	94.14	Belgium	108.34	Belgium	131.84
UK	58.70	UK	45.10	UK	41.24
Turkey	44.31	Japan	28.57	Egypt	37.07
Japan	25.21	Turkey	24.66	Turkey	33.81
Saudi Arabia	23.66	Saudi Arabia	23.04	Japan	32.20
Egypt	19.52	Egypt	23.03	Saudi Arabia	29.12
Australia	18.86	Australia	20.71	Australia	18.26
Germany	17.53	Germany	16.81	Italy	15.12
Syria	16.13	Spain	13.62	Germany	14.86

Cotton Textile Promotion Council

5712. DR. MANDA JAGANNATH:
SHRI RAJAIAH MALYALA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to open a branch of the Cotton Textile Promotion Council at Hyderabad to facilitate the export of garments from these;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (c) The Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council, Mumbai has opened its branch office at Hyderabad in January, 2001, to facilitate the exports of cotton textiles from Andhra Pradesh.

Environmental Clearance to 290 MW Almati Dam Power House Project

5713. SHRI KOLUR BASAVANAGOUD: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether environmental clearance has been given to the 290 MW Almatti dam power house project in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated power to be generated therefrom;

(d) whether the Government have provided any financial assistance for the said project; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) The Ministry of Environment & Forests have issued the environmental clearance to Almatti Dam Power House with a total capacity of 290 MW being developed by the Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd. (KPCL) on 18.6.2001 as per the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 1994. The clearance is valid for a period of 5 Years from the date of issue.

(c) As per the Detailed Project Report (DPR) submitted by KPCL to the Central Electricity Authority

(CEA), rating of the project is 290 MW (5 Nos. x 55 MW + 15 MW) and with annual generation of 499 million Units (MU) with present flows) and 301 MU (with future flows).

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

HUDCO Loan for Development of Tourist Centres in Karnataka

5714. SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka had sought loan from HUDCO to develop Tourist centres in the State;

(b) if so, the amount of loan sought for; and

(c) the tourist centres proposed to be developed from the said HUDCO loan?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir. However a proposal in this regard is under consideration of Government of Karnataka.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

Spraying of Pesticides

5715. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:
SHRI R.S. PATIL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the spraying of pesticide called Endosulfan on the Cashew, crop along the South Canar-Kasaryod on Karnataka-Kerala border has caused different kinds of physical and mental impairments;

(b) if so, the factual position in this regard;

(c) the number of persons affected thereby; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to stop the use of this pesticide in the States of Kerala-Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) Sir, there are some reports/articles alleging the aerial spraying of Endosulfan pesticide on Cashew crop in Kerala has caused some health impairments. Government of Kerala have constituted an Expert Committee consisting of Scientists and Doctors to study the impact of aerial spraying of Endosulfan. The report of the Committee is awaited.

(d) Kerala Government, in the meantime, have issued orders stopping the aerial spraying of Endosulfan.

[Translation]

Artefacts in Museums

5716. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of artefacts kept in different museums in the country and the period to which they belong, museum-wise;

(b) the names of the States where the artefacts of 5000 years old or more and remains of civilisation are kept;

(c) the names of countries in which the artefacts of India were exhibited under the exhibition of Indian culture during the last three years, till date along with the dates on which such exhibitions were organized and the details of expenditure incurred thereon; and

(d) the names of countries from which the idols, artefacts and remains of civilisation were brought under the return of artefacts belonging to the Indian Culture from abroad during the last three years and the expenditure incurred on this work, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Problem of Flood

5717. DR. SANJAY PASWAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the measures being taken by the Government to tackle the problem of flood in Bihar where floods occur as a result of release of water by our neighbouring country Nepal;

(b) whether the Government are considering any project for flood control in association with the Government of Nepal;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the efforts being made by the Government to save the districts bordering Nepal from floods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (d) As per information received from the Ministry of Water Resources, the following steps have been taken by the Central Government to assist the State Government to tackle the problems arising out of frequent floods in Bihar:

1. Ganga Flood Control Commission which was set up by the Central Government in 1972 has so far prepared Master Plans for flood control for 23 Sub-basins. These plans have been handed over to State Government for implementation.

2. His Mejesty's Government of Nepal has been moved to provide storage reservoirs on Kosi, Bagmati, Kamla Balan rivers in Nepal.

3. Understanding has been reached with His Mejesty's Government for extension of Flood embankments on Lalkelya, Kamla, Bagmati and Khando from North Bihar into Nepalese territory.

4. Setting up of Hyderometeorological Stations under the service "Flood Forecasting and Warning Systems on rivers common to India and Nepal has also been taken up.

5. Inter-country consultation for suitable projects on Mahakali and Kosi rivers are at an advanced stage of planning.

6. Mechanism of a Standing Committee exists to deal with the problems of inundation on the Indo-Nepal border to take timely action.

[English]

National Disaster Management Authority

5718. SHRI Y.V. RAO:
SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL:
PROF. R.R. PRAMANIK:
SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have constituted the 'National Disaster Management Authority' as announced by Prime Minister recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) A National Committee on Disaster Management has been set up by the Government of India under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister having representation of the Presidents of the National and State Level Political Parties. The National Committee will suggest:

(i) Short-term, medium term and long term steps for relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction in the earthquake affected areas of Gujarat,

(ii) Deliberate on the necessary institutional and legislative measures needed for an effective and long-term strategy to deal with major natural calamities in the future.

(iii) Look into the parameters that should define a National Calamity.

(c) Does not arise.

Illegal Fishing in Orissa

5719. SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the illegal fishing is increasing in the Orissa's coastline by trawlers of neighbouring States;

(b) if so, whether it has been jeopardizing the livelihood of local fishermen; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to stop such illegal fishing in the Orissa coast?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Information has been received from the State Government that under the provisions of Orissa Marine Fishing Regulation Act (OMFRA)/Rules, the authorized Officers are regularly monitoring the fishing activities in

the coast of Orissa by patrolling with the help of Police personnel to safeguard the interests of coastal fishermen in Orissa.

Permanent Lok Adalats

5720. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:
RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH:

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

(a) the name of the States in which permanent Lok Adalats have been established; and

(b) the name of States in which permanent Lok Adalats are likely to be established during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) Permanent and continuous Lok Adalats are being set up in every district throughout the country for providing an additional forum to the litigants for conciliatory settlement of their disputes as also to reduce the pendency of the regular courts which are already over burdened. Besides this, Lok Adalats on old pattern are also being regularly held.

Extortion of Money from Passengers on Delhi Rohtak Section

5721. SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of unlawful and illegal extortion of money from the commuters on Delhi Rothak Section by some unscrupulous employees of Railway;

(b) if so, whether a number of representations/ complaints have been received from commuters/ passengers against these unscrupulous employees and refund of money extorted; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and action taken or proposed to be taken against these employees and to refund the money to commuters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (c) Only one complaint has been reported regarding alleged extortion of money on Delhi-Rohtak Section by a TTE in the recent past. The inquiry revealed that the complainant was travelling in sleeper class coach on the authority of season ticket which is not permitted as per rules. The TTE had correctly charged the due amount and issued a proper receipt. The complainant has accordingly been replied.

[Translation]

Opening of Hotels/Cottages in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

5722. SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of hotels/eco-friendly cottages opened in Andaman and Nicobar Islands to promote tourism industry during each of the last three years, till date;

(b) the number of islands obtained clearance in this regard; and

(c) the time by which the tourist sports are likely to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) The number of hotels/eco-friendly cottages that have opened in Andaman and Nicobar Islands are 2 during the year 1998; 9 during the year 1999; 15 during the year 2000 and 4 upto August 2001.

(b) and (c) 14 Islands which have revenue land and are not Tribal Reserve Areas can have hotels/eco-friendly cottages. Except Tribal Reserve Areas, all the areas are open for Indian tourists. However, areas which are open for foreign tourists are as follows:

For day halt-Ross Island, South Cinque Island, Interview Island, Brother Island, Sister Island, Narcondum Island, Barren Island (can be visited on board vessels only).

For night halt-South Andaman Island, Middle Andaman Island, Little Andaman Islands (except tribal reserve), Neil Island, Havelock Island, Baratang Island, North Passage Island, Long Island, Diglipur. Islands in the Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park (excluding Boat, Hobday, Twin Tarmugli, Malay and Pluto Islands, night halt in the Marine National Park with permission only).

Contract Farming

5723. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the contract system has been introduced in the agriculture sector under the new agriculture policy;

(b) if so, the areas in the country where the multinational companies have started work in agriculture sector along with the area of land in which they have undertaken the cultivation so far; and

(c) the category of farmers to which the said area of land belongs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) No specific programme for promotion of agriculture on contract basis been initiated under the National Agriculture Policy announced in July, 2000. Contract Farming, however, is already being practiced in different States for production of various crops such as sugarcane, tobacco, oil palm, horticultural crops, plantation crops etc., besides production of seeds of different crops.

Under the Contract Farming arrangements, the farmers carry on cultivation on contract basis with buyback arrangements with the companies, including multinational companies. Contract Farming promotes and facilitates transfer of technology, in flow of quality inputs and funds, improved post harvest practices and assured market for agricultural produce.

Data bases on the coverage and operation of contract farming practices in different States have not yet been developed.

[English]

Gauge Conversion and Extension of Lalkuan-Bareilly Rail Line

5724. SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether after the approval of Parliament, the Railways have sanctioned the conversion of the Lalkuan-Bareilly Railway line into broad gauge to be extended later on to Bareilly-Pilibhit-Tanakpur sections; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) It has been decided to take up work of conversion of Lalkuan-Bareilly section as an extension of Kanpur-Kasganj-Mathura and Kasganj-Bareilly gauge conversion project.

Preliminary works for preparation of plans and detailed estimate have been taken up.

[Translation]

Production of Wheat and Paddy

5725. SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether excess production of wheat and paddy has resulted in the problem of storage in the country;

(b) if so, the scheme of the Government in this regard;

(c) whether this excess production has caused loss to the farmers instead of giving benefits;

(d) if so, whether the Government consider change in or breaking of crop cycle responsible for this;

(e) if so, the action proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard; and

(f) the reasons for loss to the farmers even after excess of production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) The storage problem can not be ascribed to a single reason like the excess production of wheat and rice. Even though huge procurement operations have been undertaken by Food Corporation of India (FCI), the storage problem has been effectively managed during the Rabi 2000-2001 season.

(b) For the next Kahrif season, the Government has advised FCI as well as the State Governments to create additional storage capacities. FCI's target is to construct additional storage capacity of 1.29 lakh MT during 2001-2002. During this period, the Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) will be constructing 2.00 lakh MT of storage capacity. Further, steps have been taken to create additional capacity of 64.00 lakh MT on long-term basis

through the State Governments, State Warehousing Corporation (SWCs), CWC, etc.

(c) to (f) The Government has taken several steps to protect the interests of farmers and these include fixation of minimum support prices of major agricultural commodities and procurement operations thereof, implementation of Market intervention Scheme, etc.

Power Project in U.P.

5726. RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made by the Government to set up 133KV Power Stations in U.P. during the last three years;

(b) the number of such stations set up in the country during the said period, location-wise;

(c) whether the Government propose to set up such station in Pratapgarh district; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The proposals for setting up of 132 KV sub-stations (not 133 KV) are drawn up, sanctioned and implemented by the SEBs/generating companies. The schemes costing below a capital expenditure of Rs. 250 crores are not required to seek the techno-economic clearance of the Central Electricity Authority.

The Schemes to set up 132 KV sub-stations in UP are being submitted to different financial institutions like Rural Electrification Corporation (REC), Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and the World Bank. Till date, an amount of Rs. 4136.00 lacs by PFC and Rs. 2753.2 lacs by the World Bank has been sanctioned to UP as loan for setting up 132 KV sub-stations.

According to information received from UPPCL, the details of 132 KV stations set up during the last 3 years are given in the statement.

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

(c) and (d) There is a proposal to set up a 132 KV sub-station at Patti in Distt. Pratapgarh. The scheme for 132 KV Sub-station at Patti has been posed to PFC for financial assistance. The sub-station will be energized within 18 months after the release of the funds.

Statement

132 KV sub-stations set up during the last 3 year

Sl. No.	Name of Sub-station	Distt.	Capacity (MVA)	Date of commissioning
Year 1998-99				
1.	Etmadpur	Agra	1x40 MVA	13.8.98
2.	Kayamganj	Kannoj	1x20 MVA	29.1.99
3.	Dada Nagar	Kanpur Nagar	1x20 MVA	21.3.99
Year 1999-2000				
1.	Moradabad III	Moradabad	1x40 MVA	29.8.99
2.	Pinhat	Agra	1x20 MVA	15.9.99
3.	Agra Cantt	Agra	1x20 MVA	7.10.99
4.	Noida III	Gautam Budh Nagar	1x40 MVA	20.11.99
Year 2000-2001				
1.	Rath	Hamirpur	1x20 MVA	16.3.2001
Year 2001-2002				
1.	Shastripuram (Bodla)	Agra	1x40 MVA	30.4.2001

[English]

Seed Crop Insurance Facilities

5727. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have launched a pilot scheme on seed crop insurance to facilitate growth of seed industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of the crops covered under the scheme; and

(d) the details of sum insured for each crop, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government have launched a pilot scheme on Seed Crop Insurance in Rabi 1999-2000 with the following objectives:

— to provide financial security and income stability to the Breeder/Seed Growers in the event of failure of seed crop;

— to strengthen confidence in the existing seed breeder/grower and stimulate participation of new breeder/growers to undertake seed production programme of newly released hybrid/improved varieties;

— to provide stability to the infrastructure established by the State owned Seed Corporations/State Farms;

— to give a boost to the Modern Seed Industry to bring it under scientific principles.

The scheme is implemented by the General Insurance Corporation of India.

(c) Seed crop of Paddy, Wheat, Bajra, Jowar, Maize, Arhar, Gram, Groundnut, Soybean, Sunflower and Cotton are covered under the scheme in the State of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal.

(d) The details of sum insured for each crop, State-wise are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

The State-wise/Crop-wise details of sum insured under pilot scheme on Seed Crop Insurance

Rabi 1999-2000

State	Crop	Sum insured) (Rs.)
Haryana	Gram	1171440
Karnataka	Sun-Flower	96000
Orissa	Paddy	671364
Rajasthan	Gram	4449875
Uttar Pradesh	Wheat	7300000
	Total	13688679
Kharif-2000		
Orissa	Paddy	2655288
Gujarat	Groundnut	1724526
	Total	4379814
Rabi 2000-2001		
Karnataka	Jowar-Hybrid	469050
	Total	469050

Urban Transport Project-II

5728 SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have finalised the terms and conditions of the Maharashtra Urban Transport Project-II for the improvement of Mumbai suburban railway;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the work on the project is proposed to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) There is no project designated as "Maharashtra Urban Transport Project-II". The project formulated for improvement of Mumbai subruban railway system has been designated as Mumbai Urban Transport

Project (MUTP). The terms and conditions of finance and execution of this project have been finalised.

(b) To execute the MUTP projects, Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation (MRVC), a public sector undertaking under Ministry of Railways, has been formed formed with equity participation in the ratio of 51:49 between Indian Railways and Govt. of Maharashtra. Govt. of Maharashtra has also agreed to share 50% of the cost of rail components of MUTP. World Bank is expected to finance Phase-I projects to the extent of around 65%. Negotiations with World Bank for sanction of loan are in an advanced stage. The World Bank Loan will be availed by the Ministry of Finance and passed on to Railways as budgetary support.

The terms and conditions of MUTP Phase-II are yet to be finalised.

(c) Work on Phase-I of the project has already started and is expected to be completed by the year 2007.

[Translation]

Impact of Globalisation on Agriculture

5729. SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA:
SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:
SHRI TUFANI SAROJ:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to review those provisions of the World Trade Organisations agreement which are against the interests of the farmers of the country;

(b) if so, the details of such provisions; and

(c) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to do away with such provisions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The WTO Agreement on Agriculture envisages a rule based predictable multilateral trading system in agricultural commodities. In accordance with the mandate under Article 20 of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, negotiations for further progressive liberalization in order to establish a fair and market oriented agricultural trading system have begun from 1st January, 2000. Experience in implementation of the agreement has, however, shown that the Agreement on Agriculture has not brought about the anticipated deepening of world trade in agriculture or improved returns to farmers in developing countries or greater transparency in agricultural trade. A number of provisions of the Agreement on Agriculture appear to contain ambiguities leading to the possibility of varying interpretations and thus, problems in implementation. Persistent trade distortions on account of high tariffs, excessive domestic support and export subsidies by developed countries are also factors, which have hindered the expansion of exports from developing countries. Keeping in view all these factors as well as the peculiar nature of agricultural activity in the country, India's objectives in the negotiations are 2-fold:-

- To protect its food and livelihood security concerns and to protect all domestic policy measures taken for poverty alleviation, rural development and rural employment.
- To create opportunities for expansion of agricultural exports by securing meaningful market access in developed countries.

(c) The initial Indian proposals submitted to the WTO on 15.1.2001, place emphasis on increasing the flexibility enjoyed by developing countries for providing domestic support to the agricultural sector under the special and differential provisions as also further strengthening of trade defence mechanisms with a view to ensuring the food security and to take care of livelihood concerns. Demands also include substantial and meaningful reduction in tariffs including elimination of peak tariffs and tariff escalation, substantial reductions in domestic support and elimination of all forms of export subsidies by the developed countries so as to get meaningful market access opportunities.

[English]

Introduction of Bullet Train

5730. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:
SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways has received a credit of Rs. 50 crore from Spain to undertake a survey and prepare the feasibility report fro introduction of bullet train services in the 550 km. stretch between Mumbai and Ahmedabad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways has examined the said proposal;

(d) if so, the manner in which the said amount is likely to be utilised; and

(e) the time by which the survey and feasibility report is likely to be prepared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (e) Ministry of Railways has not received any credit from Spain. However, an MOU has been signed between the Indian Railways and the Spanish Railways (RENFE) agreeing in principle for a techno-economic feasibility study for running of a High-speed train services for a nominated corridor to be funded by the Spanish Government.

Ministry of Finance and Ministry of External Affairs have been approached by this Ministry for processing the proposal further through the Spanish Embassy at Delhi.

[Translation]

LPG Agencies/Petrol Pumps in Rajasthan

5731. SHRI RAMESHWAR DUDI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to open new LPG agencies and petrol pumps in various districts of Rajasthan during 2001-2002; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) At present, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies have 164 LPG distributorships and 179 Retail Outlets pending for commissioning in the State of Rajasthan under various approved Marketing Plans. The selection of distributorships and Retail Outlets is made through Dealer Selection Boards (DSBs) in a phased manner and it may not be possible at this stage to indicate the exact number of allotments for LPG distributorships/Retail Outlets during 2001-2002.

[English]

Loss Suffered by Konkan Railways

5732. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Konkan Railway Corporation Limited has suffered a loss of Rs. 21.77 crore by entering into a sale and lease track agreement which was in essence contrary to the spirit of the agreement forming it; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) Sale and lease back is a standard and universally accepted procedure of relasing funds against existing assets of an organisation. The Corporation has used the same procedure for raising funds, worth Rs. 98 crores, that were utilised for construction of further assets. The Corporation would be paying back Rs. 136.66 crores over a period of 7 years *i.e.* Rs. 14.7 crores in 1st Year, Rs. 18.82 crores in 2nd to 5th year and Rs. 23.34 crores in 6th and 7th year. The ownership of the track will revert to the Corporation on completion of the lease period. However, the transaction is based on market value of the asset, which has led to recording of loss in the books of accounts.

The Corporation has taken the valuation of the track based on the current cost and prices prevailing at the time of sale. The valuation of the assets was not on the basis of historical cost. Due to this, the published accounts of the Corporation show a loss of Rs. 3.77 crores in 1995-96 and Rs. 11.38 crores in 1997-98 and Rs. 0.47 crores in 2000-2001; totaling Rs. 15.62 crores.

Clause 30 of Memorandum of Association provides for sale of whole or part of the Corporation's properties for consideration and take back the same on leasing terms and thus, such leasing by Corporation did not violate the spirit of agreement forming it.

Reliance Petroleum Status with Oil Companies

5733. DR. RAJESWARAMMA VUKKALA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Reliance Petroleum has represented and sought a level playing field at par with Public Sector Oil Companies;

(b) if so, the details of their grievances; and

(c) the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY

AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Reliance Petroleum Limited (RPL) has represented to the Government that they should be treated at par with Public Sector Oil Refineries. In this regard, it is stated that production of all controlled products as offered by all the refineries, including RPL except HSD, are considered at the time of preparation of supply plan on monthly basis. In the case of HSD, the following decision taken by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas in May, 2000 would apply:

(a) the quantity of HSD from individual refineries to be considered for preparing distribution plan would be limited to their OEB production numbers and for this purpose all refineries of a particular company would be clubbed together.

(b) Since non-upliftment of HSD from North-Eastern Refineries and Narimanam Refinery of CPCL would have an adverse impact on their crude thruput, which would ultimately affect the indigenous crude production, the entire production of HSD as per numbers tabled by them during the SPM would be uplifted.

(c) If any refinery revises its production downwards, for a particular month compared to OEB, the same would be used for deciding upliftment for that refinery.

[Translation]

Closure of Offices by Oil PSUs in Eastern States

5734. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some public sector oil companies have closed their offices in eastern States;

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

(c) the extent of revenue loss as a result thereof; and

(d) the details of the decision taken by the Government in regard to the future of the employees of these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Electrification of Kharagpur-Karakavalasa Rail Line

5735. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had approved the electrification of Kharagpur-Karakavalasa Rail route via Cuttack, Bhubaneswar during the last many years;

(b) if so, the total amount allocated for the implementation of the schemes so far;

(c) whether the electrification work of the said route is progressing in slow pace;

(d) if so, the progress achieved so far; and

(e) the time by which electrification work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Section from Karakavalasa to Kottavalasa is already electrified. From Kottavalasa to Kharagpur, the total amount spent upto March, 2001 is Rs. 382.28 crores and allocation during the current year is Rs. 40.30 crores.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. The work is progressing as per schedule and targeted for completion by March, 2003.

Compliance of ILO Standards

5736. SHRI TARACHAND BHAGORA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Jute Commissioner of India has been directed to ensure compliance of ILO standards of 50 kgs (or less) packaging in jute bags;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether jute sector is violating these norms; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (d) International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No. 127 prescribes the maximum permissible weight to be handled manually as 55 kgs. This is pending for ratification. However, efforts have been made to shift to packaging in 50 kg bags. 50 kg jute bags are being manufactured as per BIS specifications for packing wheat and paddy. As regards packing of Sugar, suitable jute bags have been developed and are awaiting final approval of Bureau of Indian Standards. Jute Bags of 50 kg capacity are being supplied by jute industry to the consumers on demand.

[Translation]

Setting up of Bio Gas Plants

5737 SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI:
SHRI RAJO SINGH:

Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of bio-gas plants set up during the last three-years, State-wise;

(b) the number of plants closed out of them;

(c) the reasons for their closure; and

(d) the target in regard to setting up of bio-gas plants during the current and ensuing financial years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) Details of biogas plants set up in different States during the last three years, *i.e.* 1998-99 to 2000-2001 under the Central Sector Schemes, namely, National Project on Biogas Development (NPBD), which caters to family type biogas plants and Community, Institutional and Night-soil based Biogas Plants Programme are given in the statement attached.

(b) The number of non-functional (closed) plants varies from State to State. While the Programme Evaluation Organisation, Planning Commission has taken up an evaluation survey study on plants set up in the last five years, an analysis of the monitoring reports for the last three years received from various State nodal departments and agencies, Ministry's Regional Offices and Biogas Development and Training Centres indicates that on a national average basis, only twelve per cent of the inspected plants were found non-functional.

(c) The reasons for non-functioning of plants are: (i) structural problems caused due to improper construction and natural calamities, such as cyclone, floods etc.; (ii) operational problems, including lack of interest on the part of beneficiaries to follow day-to-day operation and maintenance schedule and migration of cattle due to drought; and (iii) social problems, such as division in families, litigations, etc.

(d) For 2001-2002, a target of setting up of 1.80 lakh family and 400 community, institutional and night-soil based biogas plants has been planned. The targets for the ensuing financial years would depend on finalisation of the biogas programme for the Tenth Plan (2002-2007).

Statement

Number of biogas plants set up under the National Project on Biogas Development and Community, Institutional and Night-soil based Biogas Plants Programme during the last three years, i.e. 1998-1999 to 2000-2001.

State/Union Territory	No. of biogas plants set up	
	Family type plants	Community, institutional and night-soil plants
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	71339	12
Arunachal Pradesh	731	—
Assam	19033	—
Bihar	13593	4
Goa	436	2
Gujarat	29610	27
Haryana	7103	24
Himachal Pradesh	2666	4
Jammu & Kashmir	279	—
Karnataka	72162	14
Kerala	18698	92
Madhya Pradesh	43987	2
Maharashtra	48591	107
Manipur	448	4
Meghalaya	1295	4

1	2	3
Mizoram	900	—
Nagaland	677	10
Orissa	26263	7
Punjab	19401	194
Rajasthan	3335	17
Sikkim	977	—
Tamil Nadu	6675	53
Tripura	646	—
Uttar Pradesh	45695	486
West Bengal	54329	26
Other States/U.Ts	12	28
Total	488881	1117

[English]

Export Subsidy for Farmers

5738. SHRI B. VENKATESHWARLU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some State Governments, particularly the Government of Andhra Pradesh has urged to consider a hike in export subsidies for farmers; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Grants to Exporters

5739. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government provides grants to the exporters for export of handloom products and handicraft times;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of exporters to whom such grants have been provided during each of the last three years;

(c) whether any case of getting such grants by the bogus agencies has come to the notice of the Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken against them by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Presently grant to the exporters of handloom and handicrafts is extended through the Handloom Export Promotion Council, the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts and the Carpet Export Promotion Council under (i) Market Development Assistance Scheme (MDA) of the Department of Commerce for participation in fairs/ exhibitions and for sales cum study team abroad, and (ii) Development of Exportable Products and their Marketing Scheme (DEPM) for development of exportable varieties of handloom products. Apart from the exporters, the grant is also provided to the National and State Level Handloom Corporations, Apex Cooperative Societies, Primary Weavers Cooperative and Handloom Cooperative Societies affiliated to/registered with and sponsored by Councils/Corporations/ State Governments under the Development of Exportable Products and their Marketing Scheme.

The number of exporters and the handlooms agencies to whom grants have been provided during last three years are as under:-

	Number of Exporters (Under MDA Scheme)	Number of Handloom agencies (Under DEPM Scheme)	No. of Exporters (Under DEPM Scheme)
1998-99	18	9	—
1999-2000	56	23	2
2000-2001	48	15	—

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Passenger Amenities

5740. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to provide better facilities to rail passengers at all railway stations of the country;

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

(c) whether these facilities include provision of sheds, proper boundary of platforms, drinking water, separate, toilets for men and women and construction of over-bridges connecting each platform;

(d) whether these facilities also include provision of good quality public address system at all stations and ensuring non-halting of goods trains at passenger platforms;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir. There are over 7000 railway stations on Indian Railways. Upgradation/extension/ renovation/modernisation of railway stations is a continuous process and the same is undertaken every year wherever warranted on traffic needs and on condition basis. Every year adequate allocations are made for this purpose. In the Railway Budget 2001-2002, an allocation of Rs. 200 crores has been made for Passenger Amenity works.

(b) and (c) The stations have been categorised into six categories based upon the annual earnings and the different norms have been laid to provide appropriate passenger amenities according to the category of the station. The list of facilities include provision of platforms, drinking water, separate toilets for men and women and FOBs. The scale of provision is dependent on category of station.

(d) to (f) The facility of Public Address System is provided at stations where there is sizeable traffic. Since railway infrastructure which, *inter-alia* includes, railway, trains, station yard etc. is commonly shared by freight and passenger services, it is not possible to ensure that no goods trains halt at passenger platforms.

Preservation of Hampi Monuments

5741. SHRI R.S. PATIL:
SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has decided to form the Hampi Development Authority for the systematic development of Hampi, conservation of the monuments and providing facilities for tourists;

(b) if so, whether this step has been taken following the fiat from the UNESCO that Hampi would be deleted from the list of World Heritage Sites if steps are not taken to protect the ancient monuments;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government are providing any financial assistance for reviving the glory of these sites; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No final decision has been taken by the Government of Karnataka in this regard.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. A suggestion to form a Hampi Development Authority was made during the proceedings of the World Heritage Site Management Work Shop held in October 2000 at Hospet in Bellary district of Karnataka.

(d) and (e) Under Conservation programme, for day-to-day maintenance and structural repairs of centrally protected monuments at Hampi following expenditure is incurred during the last three years:

1998-1999	Rs. 18,78,056
1999-2000	Rs. 27,10,337
2000-2001	Rs. 25,90,083

CNG Outlets in Uttar Pradesh

5742. SHRI CHANDRA VIJAY SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the need to decrease pollution from vehicle emissions, the Government are planning to extend C.N.G. outlets in Uttar Pradesh and in Moradabad district in particular;

(b) if so, the details of the proposed scheme and the time by which it is likely to be implemented; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Government of India have made an allocation of 0.1 MMSCMD and 0.05 MMSCMD of natural gas for city gas distribution project in Lucknow and Bareilly respectively in Uttar Pradesh. The gas will be used for domestic, commercial and as CNG. However the projects are still at conceptualization stage.

Non Payment of Deposits by PCML

5743. SHRI C.N. SINGH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Prudential Capital Markets Limited (PCML), Kolkata, mobilised a huge money as fixed deposits during 1993-97 and stopped payment of matured fixed deposits in 1998;

(b) whether the Company Law Board has received a number of complaints from the depositors;

(c) if so, whether Company Law Board directed the said company on May 27, 1998 to refund depositors' money within one year with interest and ordered GM, Reserve Bank of India, Regional Office, Kolkata, for monitoring and ensuring compliance of Company Law Board's orders and take penal action against the company in case of default;

(d) if so, whether PCML has still not making payments to the depositors; and

(e) if so, the action taken by GM, RBI, Regional Office Kolkata, against the PCML?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) The amount of fixed deposits mobilised by the company during the period 1993-97, as per the company's balance sheets is furnished below:-

(Rs. Lakh)

As on:				
31.3.1993	31.3.1994	31.3.1995	31.3.1996	31.3.1997
Nil	Nil	21.08	4066.55	7433.28

The Reserve Bank of India has conducted inspection of the company's books of account and other records in June 1999. The inspection revealed that the company has not been making payments to the depositors as required in the CLB order dated May 27, 1998.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Company Law Board passed an order dated 27.5.1998 directing the company to make repayment to the depositors in a phased manner within a period of four and half years.

The Company Law Board vide its above order had directed the RBI to take appropriate action against all concerned in case of non-compliance of the said order under relevant provisions of RBI Act, 1934.

(d) and (e) The Reserve Bank of India has conducted inspection of the company's books of account and other records in June 1999. The inspection revealed that the company has not been making payments to the depositors as required in the CLB Order dated May 27, 1998. Consequently, the RBI has filed a criminal complaint under Sec. 58E (1) read with Sections 45QA and 58B (4AAA) of RBI Act, 1934 on November 16, 1999 before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Calcutta against the Company and its directors for non-compliance of the Company Law Board Order. Since then several hearings have taken place in the matter from time to time. However, the Court has not passed any final order so far and the case is still pending. The next date of hearing has been fixed for September 12, 2001.

[Translation]

Production of Betel Leaves

5744. CH. TEJVEER SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the types of betel leaves being produced in the country;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the betel leaf is becoming costlier day by day;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto and the steps taken by the Government to check the escalating price of betel leaves;

(d) whether the betel leaves are exported abroad; and

(e) if so, the names of the countries where it is exported?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) There are number of varieties of betel leaves produced in the country, based on shape, size, brittleness, taste of leaf blade and other characters. Betelvine is classified in different types namely pungent and non-pungent, some of the important varieties grown in India are given below:

Karapaku, Chennor, Tallaku, Bangla Assam Patti, Awani pan, Desi pan, Calcutta, Paton, Maghi, Kalkodi, Puthukodi, Kapoori, Nova Cuttak, Sanchi, Vellaikodi, Pachai, Deswari, Mitha and Kali Bangla.

(b) As per available information the price of betel leaves has exhibited declining trend in local markets of Kerala during 2001. No unprecedented increase in price of betel leaves has been reported.

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

(d) and (e) Betel leaves from India are main exported to Canada, Pakistan, United Kingdom, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

[English]

Dropping of 500 MW Sawali Power Project by ICOL

5745. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation Limited has decided to drop the 500 MW Sawali Power Project in Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The project is not being pursued further by Indian Oil Corporation Limited for the following reasons:-

(i) The additional provision of Flue Gas Desulphurisation unit to meet the environmental stipulations coupled with US Dollar appreciation resulted in sharp increase in the project cost.

(ii) Steep hike in crude oil prices resulted in increase in the fuel cost.

(iii) Non availability of payment security mechanism has resulted in uncertainty of power off-take.

Introduction of new train between Mangalore and Trivandrum

5746. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from Government of Kerala to start one more train from Mangalore to Trivandrum Central via Alleppey;

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

(c) the time by which the new train is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir. During the meeting of the Chief Minister, Kerala and some MPs of Kerala with Minister of Railways, the proposal for introduction of a train between Mangalore and Trivandum via Alleppey came up.

(b) and (c) The proposal is under examination.

Sky-Bus Metro System

5747. SHRI ANANT GUDHE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Konkan Railway Corporation has envisaged an ambitions sky-bus metro project to ease traffic congestion with speedier public transport facility;

(b) if so, the details of the projects formulated along with main features technology developed;

(c) the reaction of the Government to the proposal;

(d) whether World Bank finance is likely to be available to undertake the project; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) The Konkan Railway Corporation has suggested that the Sky-Bus Metro System

could be one of the possible solutions to the Urban Transport problems faced by some major cities.

The elevated system envisages almost no land acquisition; does not interfere with the existing road traffic, is energy efficient and environment friendly. Operation of this system would be outside the purview of Indian Railway Act and under the Tram Way Act.

However, the proposal is still at a conceptual stage.

(c) The State Governments of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have evinced interest in this proposal are in dialogue with Konkan Railway Corporation. The Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India has considered the proposal as technically sound and suggested to establish an experimental system for a limited distance of minimum 10 Kms in order to evaluate the system.

(d) and (e) Konkan Railway Corporation have approached World Bank Authorities for funding such projects. However, the response of World Bank is still awaited.

Quake Evaluation Centres

5748. SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN:
SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR:
SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to set up some quake evaluation centres;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) Evaluation of the earthquake is undertaken through network of the seismic observatories. There are about 57 such observatories operated by the India Meteorological Department, which are located in various regions of the Country.

[Translation]

Lack of Distribution System of Milk

5749. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether several areas in the country do not receive any milk supply due to lack of distribution system though adequate quantity of milk is available in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken or being contemplated by the Government to streamline the distribution system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (c) In most of the parts of the country distribution of milk is undertaken by the cooperatives, public sector dairies, private organised and unorganised dairies and small milk vendors. The cooperatives aim at supplying milk in major as well as smaller towns that are located in their areas of operations. The primary village dairy cooperatives also sell milk in the villages depending on the local demand.

Development of Tourist/Pilgrims Places

5750. SHRI RAMSHAKAL:
SHRI BHAL CHANDRA YADAV:
SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any scheme to develop the tourist spots/pilgrim places through the revenue generated from tourism;

(b) whether the revenue generate by the Government would increase through the tax levied on tourists besides creation of employment opportunities;

(c) if so, whether the Government have formulated any scheme to develop the tourist spots pilgrim places after identifying such places all over the country at a large scale;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether Vindhyanchal, Ashtbhuja, Chunar Quila, Vindrum Kal, Sidhinathadari, Jargo Jalasaya and Sirsi Jalasaya in Mirzapur district in Uttar Pradesh have been included into the list of the places to be developed as tourists spots; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (d) The Deptt. of Tourism, Govt. of India on the recommendations of

the State Govts./UT Administrations identifies travel circuits/destinations and pilgrim centres for the development and promotion of tourism. The Deptt. of Tourism Govt. of India does not have any scheme to develop tourist spots/pilgrim places through the revenue generated from tourism. However, Deptt. of Tourism, Govt. of India grants Central financial assistance of the State Govts./UT Administrations in consultation with them every year for development and promotion of tourism. The Deptt. of Tourism has prioritised 550 projects amounting to Rs. 159.90 crores for the year 2001-2002 for the purpose.

(e) and (f) The Department of Tourism, Government of India, has not received any proposal for inclusion of these places in the list of travel circuits for development.

Setting up of LPG Agencies and Petrol Pumps

5751. SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made an announcement in regard to setting up of LPG agencies and petrol pumps at every twenty-five kilometres during 2000-2001; and

(b) if so, the steps taken for the implementation of the said announcement so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Government have not made any specific announcement for setting up of LPG agencies and Retail Outlets at every twenty five kilometers during the year 2000-2001. However, regular surveys are conducted by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies for identification of viable locations for setting up of Retails Outlets and LPG distributorship in the country as per the Oil Industry norms. Such viable locations are included in various Marketing Plans for selection of LPG distributorships and Retail Outlets through Dealer Selection Boards (DSBs).

[English]

Power Project in North Eastern States

5752. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Central Power projects which have been sanctioned, but not started yet in the North-East States;

(b) the reasons for delay in starting these projects; and

(c) the funds sanctioned and released so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Only one central sector power project in North East States viz. Loktak Down Stream HEP (3x30 MW) in District Tamenlong of Manipur which was accorded Government approval has not been taken up for active project work. This project was accorded Government approval on 30.12.1999 for execution by NPHC at an estimated cost of Rs. 578.72 crore for commissioning by June, 2006. However, active work could not be taken up in the project on account of security consideration and problems in land acquisition. The State Government has been requested to firm up all the requisite arrangements urgently so that work could commenced by 1.10.2001 on road construction.

(c) The approved allocation for this project during 2001-2002 is Rs. 20.00 crore. An expenditure of Rs. 1.45 crore up to 7/2001 has been incurred. The cumulative expenditure incurred on this project is Rs. 15.44 crore.

[Translation]

Power Generation Projects under Public and Private Sector

5753. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any project is being executed in the public sector and private sector for power generation from the non-conventional energy sources like wind energy, sulabh energy, solar energy and biomas etc. in the rural areas of the country;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to accelerate the pace of rural electrification by executing such projects at a large scale?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Wind power capacity of 1339.8 MW; biomass power and bagasse co-generation projects 292.3 MW capacity; biomass gasifier projects of 40.2 MW capacity; and, solar photovoltaic power projects

of about 1.95 MW capacity, have been created in the rural areas in different States by the State Electricity Boards. State Nodal Agencies and the private sector. State-wise installed capacity of different renewable sources in given in the statement attached.

(d) Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources propose to implement a programme for the electrification of villages in remote and difficult areas which cannot be electrified through conventional grid extension. State Governments have been asked to send lists of such villages. It is proposed to initiate implementation of this programme in about 500 villages during 2001-2002. All the identified remote villages are proposed to be electrified by the end of the 11th Plan, *i.e.* March 2012, under the proposed programme.

Statement

State-wise installed capacity of Wind Power, Solar Photovoltaic Power, Biomass Power/Co-generation and Biomass Gasifiers in rural areas

S. No.	States	Wind Power (MW)	SPV Power (kWp)	Biomass power/co-generation (MW)	Biomass Gasifier (MW)
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	—	149	—	0.2
2.	Andhra Pradesh	91.9	21	53.7	15.3
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	—	8	—	0.2
4.	Assam	—	3	—	0.1
5.	Gujarat	166.9	14	0.5	4.3
6.	Haryana	—	24	4.0	0.9
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	—	40	—	0.1
8.	Karnataka	44.6	3	63.6	4.0
9.	Kerala	2.0	5	—	0.6
10.	Lakshadweep	—	285	—	—
11.	Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh	22.6	122	5.0	4.5
12.	Maharashtra	189.8	6	9.0	3.8
13.	Orissa	—	36	—	—
14.	Punjab	—	96	12.0	0.7
15.	Rajasthan	7.3	26	—	0.2
16.	Tamil Nadu	812.6	191	98.0	2.5
17.	Uttar Pradesh & Uttaranchal	—	479	46.5	1.1
18.	West Bengal	0.5	352	—	1.0
19.	Others	1.6	87	—	0.7
	Total	1339.8	1947	292.3	40.2

[English]

Facilities at Tourist Places

5754. SHRI SAHIB SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the main tourist places in the country where maximum number of foreign tourists visited during 2001-2002, till date;

(b) whether all the modern facilities are available at the said tourist places;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the number of complaints lodged by the visitors and the nature of these complaints;

(e) the action taken by the concerned authorities on these complaints; and

(f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to encourage inflow of more foreign tourists into the country?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Tourist places on the basis of number of visits made by the foreign tourists are not identified every year. According to the International Passenger Survey Report on Foreign Tourists dated December, 1999, tourist places visited by significant number of foreign tourists are Delhi, Mumbai, Agra, Chennai, Kolkata, Jaipur, Varanasi, Bangalore, Panjim and Udaipur.

(b) Facilities at tourist places are provided by the concerned State Governments/U.T. Administrations. Department of Tourism, however, provides financial assistance to the State Governments/U.T. Administrations for improvement in infrastructure facilities including wayside amenities, signages, public conveniences, parking areas, tourist reception centres, etc.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) During the year 2001 so far, 23 complaints mainly on cheating, harassment, etc. to tourists have been received in the Department of Tourism, Govt. of India and forwarded to the concerned authorities for appropriate action.

(f) Various measures taken/proposed to be taken to attract foreign tourists include development and improvement of tourist infrastructure facilities, publicity and marketing efforts in the overseas market and use of information technology.

Variety of Vegetable Crop Seed

5755. SHRI DAGGUBATI RAMANAIDU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Central scheme is running for the supply of improved varieties of vegetable crop seed to farmers;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) the amount earmarked and allotted to the States during this Scheme during 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, State-wise; and

(d) the success achieved by this Scheme so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) A Central Sector Scheme for production of foundation and certified seed of vegetable crops was in operation since 1995-96. However, from October, 2000 onwards this scheme has been transferred to Macro Management Programme wherein States have been given the flexibility to allocate funds to various components according to their priorities and requirements.

(c) Details of amount earmarked/allotted to the States for the production and supply of vegetable seeds to farmers under Macro Management Mode during the years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 is given in statement.

(d) During the year 2000-01, (Kharif and Rabi), 19321960 kgs. of vegetable seed was available to farmers.

Statement

Details of amount earmarked/allotted to the States for the production and supply of vegetable crop seeds to farmers under Macro Management Mode of work plan

(Amount Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	State	Funds earmarked/allotted to the States	
		2000-2001	2001-2002
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	200.00	146.42
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	23.90	23.90
3.	Andaman & Nicobar Island	—	4.50
4.	Bihar	7.66	8.92

1	2	3	4
5.	Chhattisgarh	7.50	21.61
6.	Gujarat	7.00	11.50
7.	Goa	—	6.75
8.	Haryana	76.00	54.00
9.	Himachal Pradesh	17.50	65.00
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	27.07	114.46
11.	Karnataka	5.00	11.00
12.	Kerala	—	105.00
13	Maharashtra	117.50	111.00
14.	Madhya Pradesh	29.50	67.39
15.	Manipur	9.00	9.00
16.	Meghalaya	15.50*	25.00*
17.	Mizoram	6.25	6.25
18.	Orissa	62.00	150.00
19.	Punjab	5.00	46.80
20.	Rajasthan	6.56	12.50
21.	Sikkim	23.13	32.50
22.	Tamil Nadu	66.00	71.28
23.	Tripura	1.50	—
24.	Uttar Pradesh	13.50	13.50
25.	Uttaranchal	—	32.42
26.	West Bengal	—	70.00
	Total	727.07	1220.70

*Including Plant Protection chemicals and Printing material.

Cases of Litigation

5756. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases of litigation are increasing on account of not following the laid down procedures, rules and regulations and laws of the land by the authorities in the Government, autonomous bodies, Government controlled consumer co-operative societies etc; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government to bring down such litigation cases?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Support Price for Linseed Crop in M.P.

5757. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Madhya Pradesh has been requesting the Union Government for many years to announce the support price for linseed crop;

(b) if so, the reasons for not announcing the support price therefor so far;

(c) whether the Government propose to announce the same this year; and

(d) if not, the reasons for such a long delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government of India received a proposal from the Government of Madhya Pradesh for fixing the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of linseed in 1999. The case was examined and was found not feasible to agree to the proposal on grounds that the production of linseed is localized in nature and MSPs are being fixed for the commodities having All India importance in terms of area and production.

[English]

Catering/Vending/Book Stalls

5758. MOHD. SHAHABUDDIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Members of Parliament made references on catering/vending and bookstalls etc. are still pending in the Commercial Department of the Railway Board and no specific reply has been issued on each reference;

(b) if so, the details along with the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is any yard-stick has been laid down for the issue of the final reply to the Member of Parliament references; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (d) Instructions exist to give utmost attention to communications received from MPs. Draft replies to such communications should be put up within 10 days of the date from which the reference has been received in the Directorate and in cases where information is to be called for from the Railways, within 15 days. However, in a few cases, replies take little more time to collect information from Zonal Headquarters/Divisions and/or examination in consultation with other Directorates/Departments.

Licence Fee on Bookstalls

5759. SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rate of licence fee/royalty has been enhanced from Rs. 750/- per annum to 5% on gross sales turnover of the bookstalls by different divisions on Northern Railway;

(b) whether this enhancement of licence fee/royalty is also applicable to bookstalls owned by unemployed graduates; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No policy change has been made.

(c) Does not arise.

Uniformity in Refill rates of LPG Cylinders

5760. SHRI A.P. ABDULLAKUTTY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that LPG customers residing at Cherukunnu in Kannur district get refill from Pazhayangadi at Rs. 240.63 whereas another customer in the same area gets refill from Puthiyatheru or Kannur at Rs. 255.35;

(b) if so, the reasons of difference in the rates of LPG from different dealers in an area; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to bring uniformity in the refill rates of LPG cylinders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) The price difference on the supplies effected by the distributors has arisen because the concerned distributors at Pazhayangadi and Puthiyatheru were attached to different markets with different pricing points. However, the necessary instructions have been given to remove the subject anomaly and ensure that the customers get the refill supplies at the uniform rate.

[Translation]

Scheme to Privatise Delhi Milk Scheme

5761. SHRI VINAY KATIYAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi Milk Scheme is running in losses;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to reduce the said losses;

(c) whether the Government have any scheme to privatise Delhi Milk Scheme;

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be privatised; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Delhi Milk Scheme is adopting professional approaches in different areas of operations such as marketing, transportation and plant operations to reduce the losses.

(c) No, Sir.

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

[English]

Animal Disease-Free Zones

5762. DR. V. SAROJA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to create animal disease-free zones to strengthen animal/cattle health system; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying has proposed a Scheme 'Creation of Disease Free Zones' to be initiated during the 9th Five Year Plan. Initially, the States of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and twenty districts of Western Uttar Pradesh (Zone-I), Gujarat (Zone-II), and Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh (Zone-III) have been included.

[Translation]

New Textile Import Policy

5763. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have announced the new Textile Import Policy;

(b) if so, the comprehensive details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are facing the opposition from the handloom weavers in the country on account of the said new policy;

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and

(e) the remedial measures taken/being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Government have not announced any new Textile Import Policy. However, on the basis of the Report submitted by Expert Committee (Sathyam Committee), Government has recently formulated and announced the National Textile Policy 2000 which aims at strengthening the textile industry to make it globally competitive, and for this purpose lays down objectives and specific targets, and defines the thrust areas for focused attention. It proposes measures and programmes for facilitating and promoting, inter alia, technological upgradation of all manufacturing segments of the industry; increase in the raw material base; improvement in productivity and quality; value added production in the handloom industry, and modernization of the weak areas of weaving, processing and garment making.

(c) to (e) As regards Handloom sector, the policy has as one of its objectives, the endeavour to strengthen and encourage handloom industry to produce value added item and assist the industry to forge joint ventures to secure global market. Recognizing the sector's heritage, tradition of excellent craftsmanship, inherent strengths like flexibility, innovation, low requirement of capital, diversity of design and its importance to creation of employment, the Policy requires continued to priority to the sector along with steps to promote and develop its exclusiveness for the global market through upgradation of skills of weavers, comprehensive welfare measures and effective support systems for research and development, design inputs and marketing linkages. The Policy also asks for review, keeping in mind the needs of the handloom weavers, of the implementation of the Hank Yarn Obligation Order and the Reservation Order issued under the Handloom (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985.

The Policy has been drawn up taking into account the recommendations contained in the Report of the Expert Group set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Sathyam for review of the sector in which one of the recommendations was the withdrawal of the Hank Yarn Obligation Order and the repeal of the Handloom Reservation Act. Handloom weavers had expressed apprehensions that these recommendations might be accepted, and there were some misgivings in this regard. However, after the Policy was announced and the first review, as per the Policy directive, of these two pieces of legislation, with the status quo was continued for the time being, it is gauged that much of the apprehension is allayed.

[English]

Safe Drinking Water in Trains

5764. DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that in some trains there is no provision for supply of safe and unpolluted drinking water for the passengers particularly in long distance trains; and

(b) if so, the remedial steps, the Government propose to take up in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) Safe drinking water requirements are met by strengthening arrangements at

stations. Further free water pouches are supplied alongwith meals and water bottles are sold on trains from pantry cars.

Safety Norms for CNG

5765. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first generation distributor based technology used in CNG conversion kits are not within the safety norms;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has legislated separate safety rules for CNG buses;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the first generation distributor based technology used in CNG conversion kit was commented by the Bhurelal Committee;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) the other recommendations made by the Bhurelal Committee;

(h) whether the Bureau of Indian Standards is preparing a status report on safety norms for CNG run vehicles; and

(i) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The Bhure Lal Committee in its Report on Standard of CNG Vehicles and Refilling Stations, submitted to the Hon'ble Supreme Court in response to order dated 04.04.2001 have stated that the CNG cylinders meet the common standard set for all high pressure gas cylinders by Bureau of Indian Standards and approved by the Chief Controller of Explosive. However the NZS nozzles have been shown as prone to O-Ring failure which creates risk of fire due to release of significant amount of high-pressure gas.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir.

(e) and (f) Same as (a) & (b) above.

(g) Other recommendations *inter-alia* include the following:

(i) Standardization of all vehicles refueling receptacles on the NGV 1 standard

(ii) Review of the type approval procedure used by testing agencies

(iii) Need for enforcement of safety regulations on On-Board, high pressure gas cylinders mounted on cascades

(iv) On conversion of old vehicles to CNG mode recommendation has been given for retrofitting rather than conversion.

(v) Both converted and retrofitted vehicles should meet Bharat Stage-II emission standards.

(vi) Setting up of inspection norms for visual check of component relevant to emissions, measurement of CO, HC, CO2 and O2 level with engine idling.

(vii) Determination of NOx and CO level under fuel engine loads.

(viii) All new CNG buses should meet Bharat Stage emission standard.

(ix) Need for more emissions standard for CNG vehicles.

(h) and (i) The Bureau of Indian Standards has prepared following Draft Indian Standards pertaining to the Safety of the CNG Fuel System, General Requirements and Definitions and Methods of Tests for the CNG Fuel System:

(i) Road vehicles - Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel system components - Safety requirements.

(ii) Road vehicles - Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel system components - Performance and general test methods.

(iii) Road vehicles - Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel system components - General requirements and definitions.

(iv) Road vehicles - Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel system - Test methods.

Besides this, 18 draft standards pertaining to the different components used in the CNG fuel system are also under process.

Stoppage of Power Generation in Andhra Pradesh

5766. SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether power generation in power plant of Lanco Kondpalli Power Company Ltd. in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh has been stopped;

(b) if so, the reasons for such type of failure;

(c) whether the closure of this power plant affect the Government owned financial institutions, banks etc; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The Government of Andhra Pradesh have informed that power generation in the Lanco Kondalpalli Power project has been stopped from 9.8.2001 onwards as per merit order despatch with reference to load-generation balance.

(b) Depending on the load versus generation availability, APTRANSCO issued dispatch instructions to M/s. Lanco not to run their units from 9.8.2001 till further instructions.

(c) No, Sir. The project developer gets paid annual fixed capacity charges and fuel costs based on generation as per power purchase agreement.

(d) Does not arise.

Oil Seeds Production

5767. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR:
SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of oil seeds production during 2000-2001, State-wise;

(b) whether the technology mission on oil seeds has achieved its target of 2000-2001;

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

(d) the names of the States where this programme is in operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) State-wise production of oilseeds for 2000-2001 is not available. However, according to advance estimates total production of oilseeds is expected to be 18.20 million tonnes as against the target of 27.00 million tonnes. The fall in production is due to severe drought prevailing in major oilseeds growing States.

(d) To increase the production of oilseeds, Technology Mission on Oilseeds has launched a centrally sponsored Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) in 28 States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, West Bengal and Goa.

Fresh Water Fisheries in Karnataka

5768. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a vast scope to promote inland fresh water fisheries in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard during the last three years;

(c) whether any Central assistance has been released to the State for promoting fresh water inland fisheries during the said period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Government of India is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on "Development of Freshwater Aquaculture" through Fish Farmers Development Agencies (FFDAs) in the States/UTs for promoting Inland Freshwater Fisheries. Under the scheme, 18 FFDAs have been sanctioned for establishment in the State of Karnataka. The expenditure on developmental activities such as construction of new ponds, renovation of ponds and tanks, first year inputs (fish seed, fertilisers, manures, etc.), running water fish culture, integrated fish farming, fish seed hatcheries, fish feed mills, establishment of laboratories, training of fish farmers, etc. is shared on 75:25 basis between the Government of India and the State Governments/UTs. During the last three years (1998-2001), the State Government have been provided Rs. 61.24 lakh as Central share.

Gas Through Pipeline in Gandhinagar, Gujarat

5769. SHRI G.J. JAVIYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Gujarat and the residents of Gandhinagar have submitted any representation to provide fuel gas to the Gandhinagar city through pipeline;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to solve this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, the availability of gas being much less than the allocations already made to consumers in Gujarat, there is no proposal at present to supply piped gas for the city distribution in Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

Functioning of Institutions/Factories

5770. SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the institutions/factories functioning under South Eastern Railway Zone along with the total investment made on each of them so far;

(b) the income earned from each of them during each of last three years;

(c) whether budgetary support from Railway Budget is being provided to any of them; and

(d) if so, the details thereof during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) South Eastern Railway has 5 Mechanical workshops covered under the Factories Act undertaking repair/periodic overhauling (POH) of rolling stock located at Kharagpur (West Bengal), Raipur (Chhattisgarh), Mancheswar (Orissa), Moti-bhagh (Maharashtra) and Adra (West Bengal). In addition, there is one Signal workshop at Kharagpur (West Bengal) and Engineering workshop at Sini (Jharkhand). The Capital at charge in these 5 mechanical workshops is Rs. 245.12 crores as on 31.03.2001, Rs. 1.03 crores is Signal workshop and Rs. 94.5 lacs in Engineering workshop. Individual break-up is not available as some of these workshops were set up over 100 years ago and their block account was merged in 1978-79.

However, Mancheswar for which work commenced in 1982 was set up at a cost of Rs. 31 crores.

(b) These workshops are engaged in in-house repair and POH of rolling stock, manufacture of spares related with rolling stock maintenance and repair of signal related equipment, manufacture of Steel girders, platform shelters, foot over bridges, etc. The income for these workshops is not, therefore, calculated separately in the present accountal system. However, some workshops do undertake deposit work for Public Sector Units and other customers.

(c) and (d) No budgetary support is separately given to these workshops but provision for revenue expenditure and certain capital expenditure is, however, being made every year.

Utilisation of Funds of Ninth Plan

5771. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether budget provision for Ninth Five Year Plan for the Ministry was Rs. 78401 crore out of which a balance of Rs. 30700 crores is still available and only about one year has left for the plan to be completed;

(b) if so, the reasons for the poor utilisation of funds;

(c) whether the target set for the plans by the Ministry is to be achieved with this speed of utilisation of funds; and

(d) if so, the steps the Government propose to take to achieve the target and utilise the funds fully?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Planning Commission has approved an overall outlay of Rs. 78,401.00 crores for petroleum and natural gas sector during Ninth Five Year Plan including Rs. 4054.37 crores for its petrochemical and Rs. 332.45 crores for its engineering operations. The approved outlay is only in respect of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) in Oil sector. The above outlay approved by Planning Commission does not provide for any Budgetary support to oil PSUs.

Planning Commission does not approve the outlays for the private sector.

The actual expenditure during April 1997 to July 2001 has been of the order of Rs. 45,082 crores approximately.

During 2001-2002, Planning Commission has approved on outlay of Rs. 17,147.26 crores for various on-going and new plans of public sector oil companies, against which approximately Rs. 2,469 crores has been spent during April-July 2001.

The reasons for under utilisation of funds, interalia, include non materialisation of joint venture (JV) projects due to withdrawal by JV partners, delay in execution of the linked projects, demand recession in petrochemical sector, delay in receipt of environment clearances in some cases, shelving/droping of some project proposals which have meanwhile become economically unlivable etc.

The progress in this regard is reviewed by Planning Commission at the time of Annual and Mid Term Plan discussions, by Department of Public Enterprises at the time of memorandum of understanding with public sector undertakings, by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in various meetings such as Quarterly Progress Report Meetings etc.

Operation Flood

5772. SHRI SAIDUZZAMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether under Operation Flood project liquid milk marketing capacity of 100.2 lakh litres per day has been set up;

(b) if so, the present per cent utilisation of this capacity, plant-wise;

(c) whether processing capacity in rural dairies was 180.9 lakh litres per day and for metro dairies this was 38.8 lakh litres per day;

(d) if so, the corresponding utilisation thereof, State-wise;

(e) the corrective steps taken in this regard;

(f) whether as per the policy paper circulated by the Government in August, 2000 a single authority to administer all food was to be set up; and

(g) if so, the present position in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (e) The information is being collected.

(f) and (g) Department of Food Processing Industries (DFPI) organized four Regional Seminars at Calcutta, Mumbai, Bangalore and Lucknow to elicit regional inputs towards formulation of National Food Processing Policy. In these seminars, there was a consensus that apart from formulation of a National Food Policy an appropriate development oriented legislation be conceived as the present enactments are impending the growth of the sector. Accordingly an approach paper towards formulation of a processed food development act has been prepared and circulated to various Central Govt. Departments, State Govt. Industrial Associations, Research & Development organization and experts. Taking into consideration the input received from the cross sections, a draft bill has been drawn up. The draft bill envisages harmonization and simplification of existing laws, Development orientation in defining standards through Processed Food Development Act.

[Translation]

Corruption in Railway Recruitment Board at Patna

5773. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of corruption cases detected in selection procedure of Railway Recruitment Board, Patna, during the last three years;

(b) the number of cases handed over to various investigating agencies;

(c) the number of cases disposed of alongwith the action taken thereon; and

(d) the number of cases lying pending with the Department alongwith the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Two.

(b) One.

(c) Two cases have been closed after investigation by vigilance as no substance was found in the allegations levelled in the complaints. Further investigation in one case was discontinued when it was discovered that State Police was already seized of the matter.

(d) One case is pending, as investigation is in process.

[English]

Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline

5774. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tata Energy Research Institute has tied up with the Hydrocarbon Development Institute of Pakistan for jointly studying all aspects of the proposed Indo-Iran gas pipeline project; and

(b) if so, the time by which their findings are expected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Government has no information in the proposed joint study by the Tata Energy Research Institute, as Government approval is neither required nor sought by the Institute.

[Translation]

Lands for Co-Operative Movement

5775. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Rajasthan has sought financial assistance from the Union Government for promotion of Co-operative movement;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

MS/HSD Control Order Under EC Act

5776. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether MS/HSD Control Order under EC Act or Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) are having overriding effect on the provisions of the Weight and Measures Act, 1985 regarding authorisation, checking and putting penalties for the offences under this Act;

(b) if so, the final authority who can give verdict regarding the short measurement by the traders including RPO dealers;

(c) whether the Government are aware of the judgement that the provisions of the Cr. PC shall not apply in the presence of the provisions of special statute;

(d) if so, whether the Government shall direct the inspecting authorities of petrol pumps to follow and honour the judgement of different Hon'ble High Courts on the issue and different provisions of special statute; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The Standards of Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Act 1985 has been enacted by the Parliament to provide for the enforcement of the standards of weights and measures established by or under the Standards of Weights and Measures Act 1976 and for matters connected there with or incidental thereto. There is no conflict between the Standards of Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Act 1985 and the MS and HSD Control Order 1998. Similarly, there is no conflict between Marketing Discipline Guidelines and the Standards of Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Act 1985.

Various authorities have been prescribed under MS/HSD Control Order, Marketing Discipline Guidelines and the Standards of Weight and Measures (Enforcement) Act 1985 for exercising the powers and discharging duties conferred on them. These authorities can independently take action as provided under the relevant Act/Order/Guidelines.

(c) to (e) Government are not aware of any such judgement.

Harmful Effects of Agro-Chemicals

5777. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the harmful effects of agro-chemicals are showing up and greater interest is being shown towards organic products all over the world;

(b) whether in western countries demand of organic produce is outstripping supplies and estimated market is about $ 10 billion (Rs. 44000 crores);

(c) if so, whether in view of environmental and health considerations, the Government is considering to have National Commission on Organic Farming with sufficient funds; and

(d) if not, the manner in which the organic farming is proposed to be promoted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) The average consumption of plant nutrients in India through chemical fertilizers was about 95.00 kg/ha during 1999-2000. This level of consumption is not considered excessive for causing adverse effects on soils/crops. However, the Government encourages Balanced and Integrated use of chemical fertilizers, organic manures and biofertilizers for achieving optimum results.

To reduce the use of chemical pesticides Integrated Pest Management (IPM), an eco-friendly approach which encompasses cultural, mechanical and biological methods has been adopted. IPM practices are being popularized among the farmers through Farmers' Field Schools. Further, the Insecticides Act, 1968, regulates the import, manufacture, distribution, transportation and use of pesticides, for safety to human beings and animals.

(b) The demand of organic farming is on increase. However, no specific assessment of worldwide demand about the organic food is available.

(c) and (d) The Government has no proposal to set up National Commission on Organic Farming. However, the Government has set up a Task Force on Organic Farming with following terms of reference:

(i) Collection of information on Organic farming including experiments undertaken/actions taken in this field by Government/Non-Government bodies, Voluntary Organisations, Farmers Groups, Individual farmers, etc.

(ii) Assessment and propagation of appropriate techniques/technology of Organic-Farming.

(iii) Setting up of standards in connection with the organic farming.

(iv) To suggest short-term, medium terms and long-term measures for development and propagation of Organic Farming; and

(v) To suggest measures for the marketing of the Organic Farming Produce.

Closure of Petrol Pumps in U.P.

5778. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of petrol/diesel pumps closed down in Uttar Pradesh particularly in Kheri Lakhimpur during each of the last three years;

(b) the reasons for their closure; and

(c) the number out of them restarted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) 17 retail outlets including one in Kheri Lakhimpur district were closed down in the State of Uttar Pradesh during the last three years, *i.e.*, 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, for various reasons like benami operation, irregularities, adulteration, malpractices, poor performance, etc.

Out of the above, only one retail outlet located at Moradabad was re-started on court orders.

[Translation]

Financial Assistance for Agro Projects of Maharashtra

5779. SHRI UTTAMRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has sent any proposal to the Union Government seeking Central assistance to launch various agro projects in the State:

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action being taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) No proposal, other than the ongoing Central Sector/ Centrally Sponsored Schemes, seeking Central assistance for agro projects has been received by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation from Government of Maharashtra

Increase in the Power Generation Capacity of Jharkhand

5780. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of increase in the power generation capacity of each power station in Jharkhand during the last three years, year-wise; and

(b) whether the Government propose to augment the power generation capacity of these power stations in the State, and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) During the last 3 years, Unit-1 (120 MW) of Jojobera Thermal Power Project was added during 2000-2001. Unit-2 (120 MW) of this Station is expected to be added in September, 2001.

The following Thermal Power Station (TPS) in Jahrkhand have been identified for taking up Life Extension programme during 10th Plan; to augment power generation capacity:-

1. Patratu (Jharkhand State Electricity Board), Units 4 to 8 (430 MW)
2. Chandrapur (Damodar Valley Corporation), Units 1 to 6 (750 MW)
3. Bokaro (Damodar Valley Corporation), Units 1 to 3 (135 MW)

Renovation, Modernisation & Uprating of following two hydel stations of Damodar Valley Corporation are also under implementation:

1. Maithon (3x20 MW)
2. Panchet (1x40 MW)

[English]

LPG Agencies/Petrol Pumps to Weaker Sections/ Widows of Soldiers

5781. SHRI T. GOVINDAN:
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY:

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

(a) the details of LPG dealership/petrol pump allotments made to weaker sections/widows of soldiers etc. duing the last three years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(b) the details of persons to whom LPG Agencies and retail outlets allotted since July 1, 2000 to till date in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The details of Retail Outlets/LPG distributorships allotted to the weaker section (SC/ST categories) and widows of soldiers under Operation Vijay Scheme (OVS) during the last three years are as under:-

Year	Retail Outlet	LPG distributorship
1998-99	44	53
1999-2000	97	144
2000-2001	304	185

(b) In Haryana, 64 Retail Outlets and 35 LPG distributorships have been allotted including under OVS, by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies since July 1, 2000. Similarly in Himachal Pradesh, 8 Retail Outlets and 12 LPG distributorships have been allotted.

Joint Venture Between GAIL/IGL

5782. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH BARWALA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any joint venture exists between GAIL/ IGL and Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi for the supply of 10 Compressors for CNG stations in Delhi;

(b) if so, the total cost incurred thereon;

(c) whether an order is placed for 5 more compressors in February, 2001; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No Sir. The joint venture existing between GAIL/IGL and Government of NCT of Delhi is for supply of piped gas & CNG to Delhi.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Orders for five 1150 SMSC/h capacity compressors have been placed on M/s Galileo of Argentina.

Status of Power Projects

5783. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of various power projects in the country, State-wise, location-wise and capacity-wise;

(b) the number of projects likely to come up during the current plan; and

(c) the capacity of power likely to be generated by these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The present status of various thermal and hydro power projects in the country is given in statements-I & II, respectively.

(b) and (c) Planning Commission had fixed a capacity addition target of 40245.2 MW for the 9th Five Year Plan. A capacity of 20419.7 MW is likely to be added by the end of 9th Plan.

Statement-I

Status of Thermal Power Projects

As on: 1-Aug-2001

Project Name, Sector and State	Unit No.	Cap. (MW)	Thermal Cap. Addition During Balance Period of 9th Plan	10th Plan and Beyond	Likely Date of Synchronisation	Remarks/Critical Areas
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Projects where Construction Work has started						
Central Sector						
AP						
Simhadri TPS (NTPC)	U-1	500	500	—	Mar-02	Readiness of power evacuation system
	U-2	500	—	500	12/2002	
Orissa						
Talcher STPP-II (NTPC)	U-3	500	—	500	11/2003	
	U-4	500	—	500	8/2004	
	U-5	500	—	500	5/2005	
	U-6	500	—	500	2/2006	
TN						
Neyveli FST Ext. (NLC)	U-1	210	210	—	12/2001	
	U-2	210	—	210	6/2002	
Sub-Total (Central Sector)		3420.0	710.0	2710.0		
State Sector						
AP						
Rayalaseema St-II (APGENCO)	U-1	210	—	210	34 months from advance payment to EPC contractor (COD)	Tying up of balance 15% funds from IFIs

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	U-2	210	—	210	37 months from advance payment to EPC contractor (COD)	
Delhi						
Pragati CCGT (DVB)	GT-1	104.6	104.6	—	1/2002	Project was envisaged subsequent to the
	GT-2	104.6	104.6	—	3/2002	mid-term appraisal.
	ST	121.18	—	121.18	11/2002	
Gujarat						
Akrimota (GMDCL)	U-1	125	—	125	12/2002	-Finalisation of Escrow Agreement/Financial Closure
	U-2	125	—	125	6/2003	
Karnataka						
Raichur TPS (KPCL)	U-7	210	—	210	30 Months from FC	
Manipur						
Leimakhong DG (Govt of Manipur)	DG-1	6	6	—	10/2001	
	DG-2	6	6	—	10/2001	
	DG-3	6	6	—	10/2001	
	DG-4	6	6	—	10/2001	
	DG-5	6	6	—	10/2001	
	DG-6	6	6	—	10/2001	
Rajasthan						
Suratgarh TPP St-II (RRVUNL)	U-3	250	250	—	11/2001	
	U-4	250	—	250	5/2002	
Suratgarh TPP St-III (RRVUNL)	U-5	250	—	250	33 months from placement of order	
Tripura						
Baramura GT (Power Deptt. Govt. of Tripura)	GT-1	21	—	21	9/2002	
Rokhia GT Ext Ph-II (Govt of Tripura)	GT-7		21	21	— 2/2002	Cleared by State Govt. Project envisaged subsequent to the mid-term appraisal
Private Sector						
A&N Islands						
Bambooflat DG (Suryachakra Power)		DG-1	5	5	—	
	DG-2	5	5	—	Mar-02	
	DG-3	5	5	—	Mar-02	
	DG-4	5	5	—	Mar-02	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
AP						
LVS DGPP (LVS Power Ltd.) mid-term appraisal	DG-1	18.4	18.4	—	9/2001	Project was envisaged subsequent to the
	DG-2	18.4	18.4	—	9/2001	
Peddapuram CCGT (BSES Andhra Power Ltd.)	GT	142	142	—	9/2001	Project cap revised to 220 (142+78) MW
	ST	78	78	—	2/2002	
Ramagundem TPP (BPL Power Project) Agreement		U-1	260	—	260	33 months from FC (COD)-Achievement of Escrow Financial Closure
	U-2	260	—	260	39 months from FC (COD)	
Jharkhand						
Jojobera TPS (Tata Power Co Ltd.)	U-2	120	120	—	8/2001	
Karnataka						
Tanir Bavi CCGT (Tanir Bavi Power Co	ST	50	50	—	9/2001	Capacity revised to 220 (4x42.5+50) MW
Mah.						
Dabhol CCGT Ph-II (Dabhol Power Co.)	Block-1	722		722	— —	Commissioning of the projet is due to the dispute between MSEB and Dabhol Power Co
	Block-2	722	722	—	—	
MP						
Ratlam DG (GVK Power Ltd.)	DGs	118.632	—	118.632	14-17 Months from FC	Standing instructions to SBI is yet to be issued by MPEB
TN						
Neyveli Zero TPS (ST-CMS Electnc Co.)		U-1	250	—	250 7/2002	Approval of TNEB on the Lig Transportation Scheme proposed by IPP
Samayanallur DGPP (Balaji Power Corpn.)	DG-1	15.143	15.143	—	Likely to slip	Likely to slip as lenders have stopped the release of funds due to non-operationalisation of Escrow cover by
	DG-2	15.143	15.143	—	Likely to slip	
	DG-3	15.143	15.143	—	Likely to slip	
	DG-4	15.143	15.143	—	Likely to slip	
	DG-5	15.143	15.143	—	Likely to slip	
	DG-6	15.143	15.143	—	Likely to slip	
	DG-7	15.143	15.143	—	Likely to slip	
						to establish 2x125 MW TPP. However no reference in this regard has been received by CEA from WBPDCL.

Statement-II

Status of Hydro-Electric Power Projects

Central Sector

	Nathpa Jhakri (NJPC) H.P.6x250 05.04.89	1678.02 7666.31	1996-97 2003-2004	Consequent on flooding on 01.08.2000 the restoration of infrastructural works in dam and intake areas, desilting chamber and power house have been completed. Diversion tunnel made operational on 01.03.2001. Dam concreting has been started and 52% concreting has been completed. HRT heading excavation has been completed and 96% benching excavation has been completed 38% invert and 48% overt concreting has been completed. Both EOT cranes have almost made operational. Functional load setting are in progress. Cleaning of E & M equipment submerged in power house have been completed. Rectification works of generating units are in progress. Negotiation with suppliers of E & M equipment and insurance companies for restoration of submerged equipment are in progress. Erection of TG equipment for Unit I to Unit VI is at various stages. Erection work of GIS-I and GIS-II is in progress. Erection of 16 generator transformers compiled. Units are now scheduled to be commissioned by 12/2003.	Delay in award of civil works, Completion of Dam, desilting chamber and HRT works. In the night intervening 31st July and 1st Aug., 2000; the flash flood submerged the power house complex and damaged various roads and bridges in the Dam complex.	Exchange rate variation. General price escalation.
2	Dulhasti (NHPC) J&K/3x130 12.7.89 (Bilateral)	1262.97 3559.77	1994-95 2003-04	Diversion Tunnel completed. Excavation and concreting of Dam and PH is completed. Works of Desilting Basin, HRT and Tail Race Tunnel are in progress. The TBM suffered extensive damage as it buried under debris due to sudden rock burst on 21.02.2000 and it is irreparable. U/S tunneling is now being done by DBM. 66% excavation completed in U/S HRT. Erection of 130T capacity EOT crane completed. Excavation for pressure shaft, expansion gallery, surge tank and draft tubes completed. 70.76% erection and 99.33% supply of hydro electro-mechanical equipment has been completed.	-Geological problems in HRT. -Law and order problem leading to contractual problems. -Suspension of work due to militant activities in the project area.	-Exchange rate variation -General price escalation.
3	Chamera St. II (NHPC) H.P.3x100 18.05.99	1684.02 1684.02	10th Plan 10th Plan (2004-05)	The project is being implemented on turn-key Basis. Agreement between NHPC and consortium (M/s Indo Canadian Hydro Consortium, New Delhi, Lead by M/s Jai Prakash Industries Ltd.) was signed on 18.7.99. Diversion tunnel excavation and concerting completed. Adit I & II excavation to HRT completed. Excavation of HRT 84% and TRT excavation 78% completed.		
4	Teesta St.-V (NHPC) Sikkim.3x170 11.02.2000	2198.04 2198.04	2006-07 2006-07	Infrastructure development & survey works commenced at the project site. In diversion tunnel open excavation at inlet and outlet areas are in progress. One diversion tunnel day-lighted on 28.06.2001. Construction of water treatment plant in PH has completed. Construction of miscellaneous stores and quality controls lab at Dam site started. Contracts for Dam, HRT, Power House have been awarded. Tenders are under finalisation for Hydro-Mechanical and Electro-Mechanical works. In dam works, the approach road to Adit-I and intake are in progress. In HRT works, the portal excavation of Adit-II and Adit-III are in progress. In power house works, the open excavation of Main Access Tunnel at Adit to bottom of pressure shaft is in progress.		

	Tehri St. I (THDC) U.P. 4x250 29.06.72 (4x150 MW) PIB-25-01-92 CCEA 15-03-94	3391.40 5690.64	1997-99 2001-03 (2002-03) As per THDC	Works of coffer dam and diversion tunnels completed. Contracts for supply of E/M equipments awarded to consortium of Russian/Ukraine firms and ABB (Germany) in 4/97. Order for supply of generator transformer. Erection of 2 Nos. EOT cranes 375/75T completed. Erection of spiral casing for unit-4 is in progress. All sector of Draft tube Elbow Line are welded and ready for erection. It is proposed to plug the diversion tunnel T3 & T4 in October, 2001.	-Funds constraints -Award of major civil works -Rehabilitation -Uttarakhand agitation -Acquisition of Land	-Change of capacity -General price escalation
6	Koteshwar Dam and Power Project (THDC) U.P. 4x100 10.04.2000	1301.56 1301.56 (Incl. IDC)	2005-06 2005-06	Govt. sanction accorded on 10.04.2000. Infrastructural works are in progress. Construction of diversion tunnel is in progress. Pre-qualification tender for Civil, Hydro-Mechanical and Electro-Mechanical works have been invited and are in process.		
	Dhauliganga-I (NHPC) U.P. 4x70 08.04.91	601.98 1578.31	1998-99 2004-05	Forest and defence land acquired. Private land is under acquisition. All major works awarded. NHPC has signed agreements for the major work packages as under 1. Lot 1- (Civil works) on 28.2.2000 2. Lot-2 (Civil works) on 25.2.2000 3. Lot-3 (Electro-Mech. works) on 15.2.2000 4. Lot-4 (Hydro-mech. Works) on 1.2.2000 River divided through diversion tunnel on 21.04.2001. 54% spillway excavation completed. 4.30% and 9.75% D/S excavation of HRT completed 23% tail race excavation completed	Acquisition of private land and agitation by oustees for employment in NHPC	-General price escalation
8	Indira Sagar (NHDC M.P. 8x125 06.09.89 Joint Sector Project of NHDC-51%)	1190.12 3381.32	1997-2000 2003-06	Civil works for HRC Completed and for dam, PH, & TRC are in progress. LOI for procurement of EOT crane issued on M/s Mukund Ltd. Mumbai. Order for TG equipments placed on BHEL in Feb. 97. DT liners for units 2 to 8 installed and pier nose for all the units erected. Draining & Dewatering pipes, Penstock Drain Valves for all units installed except DT drain header. Penstock drain valve for all units installed. State Govt. have handed over construction of project to Narmada Hydro Electric Development Corpn. a joint venture of Govt of MP and NHPC.	-R & R problem -Project finance	-Slow progress due to Fund constraints -R & R problems
9	Loktak D/s (NHPC) Manipur 3x30 30.12.99	578.62 578.62 (Incl. IDC)	2006-07 2006-07	Development of infrastructure facilities at the project was in progress. The desired progress at working site is not possible unless the State Govt. provides requisite security. As decided in the meeting held on 11.06.2001 Govt. of Manipur following the stay order by the Honorable High Court of Manipur has constituted a joint inquiry Team which includes a member from NHPC for assessment of land/crops compensation Govt of Manipur also in co-ordination with CRPF will make security arrangements and accommodation one battalion of CRPF with in 2-3 months.		
10	Ranganadi (NEEPCO) Ar.P. 3x135 04.87 April, 87 (CCEA)	312.78 1446.09 (Inc. IDC)	1994-95 2001-02	Diversion tunnel, Dam, HRT, surge shaft including steel liner almost completed. Civil works for PH, TRC and switchyard in progress. EOT cranes (2 nos.) in operation. Unit erection work in progress. Unit-1: Boxed up. Order for almost all other E/M equipments placed. Supply of equipment and erection in switchyard are in progress. 132/400KV ICT Ordered.	-Delay in procurement of tunneling equipment -Delay in award of major works of PH and dam. -Fund constraints Slow progress of Dam & HRT civil works. -Delay of award of major civil works	-General price escalation

11	Tuirial (NEEPCO) Mizoram/2x30 07.07.98 (CCEA)	448.19 448.19	2005-07 2005-07	Pre construction work completed. Infrastructure work in progress. Project area and some submerge area have been acquired. Taping of 11 Kv line completed and charged. One No. DG set hired. Tenders issued for all the major packages. Pre-bid meeting have been held. Last date of submission of tender have fixed. Construction of 132 Kv SC transmission line is in progress.		
12	Kopili Stage-II (NEEPCO) Assam/1x25 06.07.99 (CCEA)	76.09 76.09	2001-02 2003-04	Pre-construction & infrastructural works are being taken up. Work orders for Package-I & II (Civil works) issued to M/S GSJ Envo. On 01/10/99 and M/S P. Das on 07.06.2001 respectively. The works under these packages are in progress. For package-III, TG sets have been ordered on BHE and 100/25T EOT crane ordered on M/s WMI, Mumbai. Supply is in progress. Tenders for package III are under preparation.	Delay in awards of major civil works.	
STATE SECTOR						
Northern Region						
13	WYC-II Har 2x7.5 04.02.2000 (State Govt	70.0 94.00	10th Plan 10th Plan	The scheme was approved Techno-economically by CEA in 3/90, however the work of the project could not be taken up due to non-settlement of Inter-State dispute about sharing of Yamuna water, which was resolved on 12.05.1994. The scheme was sanctioned by State Govt. on 04.02.2000. Works of Hathnikund barrage has been completed. PFC has sanctioned a loan of Rs. 56 crores to HPGCL. Civil work of PH, Hydel channel etc. awarded to M/s. Hansh Chandera India Ltd., New Delhi. Excavation of PH completed & 60% excavation of Hydel channel completed. The excavation of silt ejector has been completed & lean concreting work has been completed..		General price escalation.
14	Larji H.P./3x42 14.07.2000 (CEA)	796.98 796.98 (Compl. Cost)	2002-03 2003-05	HPSEB had proposed some changes in the scope of this scheme and revised DPR was submitted to CEA in March 1999. Fresh TEC has been accorded by CEA on 14.01.2000. Excavation of Diversion tunnel completed. Excavation of HRT, Surge shaft, Pressure shaft and PH in progress. The E/M works including supply, erection & commissioning of turbine, generator and associated auxiliaries and transformers awarded to BHEL on 15.02.2001.	Delay in award of civil works. Delay caused for following route of ICB for ward of TG sets.	
15a	Upper Sindh-II J&K/2x35 22.11.85	76.46 399.50	1988-89 1999-02	All civil works almost completed except some works of Sumbal link. PFC have sanctioned a loan of Rs. 6.74 Crs. for the project. Unit-1: Rolled on 05.01.2000. Commissioned on 09.07.2000. Unit-2: Rotor has been lowered & alignment in progress. Boxing is expected to be done shortly.	-Law and order problem. -Delay in fabrication of penstocks. -Funds constraint.	-General price escalation.
15b	Upper Sindh Ext J&K/1x35 26.06.89	20.69 42.27	1993-94 2001-02	Stay order for fabrication & erection of penstock has been vacated and works are awarded to M/s TSL. Generator barrel has been concreted. Rotor has been assembled, in service bay and is ready for lowering. The assembly of stator is in progress.	-Law and order problem. -Funds constraint.	Do
16	Sewa St. III J&K 3x3 (Sanctioned by sate Govt	16.92 60.00	1997-98 2001-02	Civil works almost completed. There was flooding of PH on 16th June 2000 submersing the E&M equipments. Before flooding the erection of Unit-1 was almost completed. PFC has sanctioned a loan of Rs. 6.56 Crs. for the project and erection works have been resumed.	-Flooding of PH. -Funds constraint.	-General price escalation

	Lakhwar Vyasi S Uttaranchal/3x100+2x60 Jan. 1976	140.97 1446.00	1989-90 2004-06	At present the works are at stand still due to fund constraints. MOU has been signed on 25.02.2000 between Ministry of Power, GOI & Govt. of UP to complete the project as joint venture between NHPC & UPJVNL. The progress of works is as under. 65% land acquired, contract for Vyasi & Lakhwar dams, intake Power-tunnel, Lakhwar U/G PH, Hathuari PH, HRT etc. awarded in 7/87. 100% excavation of heading portion of TRT & 98% excavation for Vyasi Hathuari HRT completed. LOI for TG sets for both PHs placed on BHEL in June, 1991 but cancelled in 1995.	-Works held up due to fund constraints	-General price escalation
	S Works of the project are held up.					
18.	Manen Bhali-II S Uttaranchal/4x76 21.02.2000 TEC	1249.18* 1249.18 *(Compl. Cost)	2003-05 2003-05	At present the works are at stand still due to fund constraints. The Govt. of U.P. had assigned the construction to UP Jal Vidyut Nigam Ltd. in Jan., 2000 & TEC was also transferred to UPJVNL. CEA has accorded revised TEC to UPJVNL on 21.02.2000. MOU was signed on 25.02.2000 between Ministry of Power, GOI & Govt. of UP to complete the project as joint venture between NHPC & UPJVNL. But it is understood that execution of the project has now been given to THDC. The progress of works made so far is as under 100% excavation & 83% concerting for barrage achieved. Excavation & concreting for HRT, intake, surge tunnel, penstock, PH partly completed. EOT crane switchyard structures received. Order placed on BHEL in 3/83 for the Gen. Units has been cancelled.		
	S Works of the project are held up.					
Western Region						
19.	Sardar Sarovar Guj/M.P./Mah. (6x200+5x50 Joint project of Guj/MP/Mah. In ratio of 16:57:27. 05-10-88	1551.86 3267.25	1994-96 10th Plan	87.27 concreting of main dam completed. CHPH: Erection, Testing & Pre-commissioning checks of all five units completed. All units are under preventive maintenance. RBPH: 98.6% open excavation, 92% under ground excavation & 74% concreting of power house completed. Excavation and steel lining of all six nos. pressure shafts completed and bulk head installed. Erection of penstock gates is nearing completion and erection of hoist for penstock gates is in progress. Supreme Court has given verdict on 18.10.2000 to revise dam upto 90 m and thereafter with the clearance of NCAs' Rehabilitation Sub-Group. The dam works completed up to 90m. Supply of TG Sets for unit 1&2 completed and for unit-3 turbine components like runner, shaft and head cover received at site from Sumitomo Corporation Japan. Order for erection of TG Sets placed on M/S PES Engineering Hyderabad in December 1999. Erection of embedded and IInd stage concreting is under progress.	-Stay by Supreme Court on construction of main dam for raising of spillway blocks height -R & R Problem. Cancellation of W.B. Loan	-Increase in R & R scope -General price escalation
20.	Bansagar Tons II & III (M.P.) 2x15+3x20 30.06.84	301.17 incl. PH-I 966.81 incl. PH-I	1989-91 PH-II 2002-03 PH-III 2000-02	The Bansagar Dam has been completed upto crest level. Works of common water conductor nearing completion. PH-II:- Civil works of PH in progress. TRC completed. Embedded parts of TG equipment received and LOI issued to BHEL for supply of balance TG equipments. Supply started. Erection	-R&R problem of oustees of Bansagar dam -Fund constraints. -Slow progress of works	-General price escalation.

				of DT of both units completed. LCI for procurement of 75/150T EOT crane issued. PH-III:- Civil works are in advanced stage of completion. TG equipments have been received. Barrel concreting of generators of all units completed and generator floor casted. Erection of EOT crane completed. Order for erection and commissioning of TG sets placed on BHEL. **Unit-1 Rolled on 26 Nov., 2000.** 75% of unit-II & 45% works of unit-III completed Commissioning of Unit-III delayed due to failing of about 50% stator coil in HV test.		
21	Bansagar Tons PH IV M.P. 2x15 31.07.92	41.86 84.97	1996-97 2002-03	Jhinna head regulator works have been re-awarded & works in progress. Order for PH civil works & fabrication and erection of penstock awarded and fabrication of sheels commenced. Excavation of PH pit & TRC have been almost completed and balance works will be taken up along with raising of Bansagar Dam to its full height. (TBL 347m)	R&R problem of oustees of Bansagar dam. -Finalisation of executing agencies. -Raising of dam upto FRL.	-Slow progress due to fund constraints.
22	Mahikheda MP 2x20+1x20 11.05.01	177.38 177.38	10th Plan 10th Plan	The project has been sanctioned by State Govt. on 11.05.2001. Infrastructure works are being taken up.		
23	Ghatghar PSS Mah. 2x125 11.08.92	485.96 830.00	1995-96 2004-05	Works of approach tunnel to TRT, Approach tunnel, Link tunnel, Verification Tunnel, Construction of adit, Central drift to machine Hall and Transformer Hall completed. Excavation of TRT completed and for Tail Surge is in progress. Civil works of upper intake structure, pressure shaft of power house awarded to M/S Patel Eng. and PES (Joint Venture) on 06.06.2000. Excavation of Pressure shaft is also in progress. TG sets ordered on M/s NISSHO IWAI corporation Japan. Model test on the pump turbine model conducted and report approved. Supply of TG sets commenced. Order for 2 Nos 150/30T EOT cranes & 1 No 30T EOT placed on M/S ACME & KM Engg. 30T EOT crane Commissioned.	-Low priority by State Govt. -Delay in land acquisition. -Delay in award of Roller compacted concrete dam and PH works	-Low priority by State Govt. resulting in delay and general price escalation.
Southern Region						
24	Srisailam LBPH A.P. 6x150 31.03.86	418.00 2482.00	1993-95 2000-03	All Civil works of HRT, Pressure shaft, Penstock, TRT and surge chamber completed. Unit-1: Rolled on 30.03.2001 and commissioned on 26.04.2001. Unit-2: Runner has been lowered. Rotor assembly is in progress. Stator segments being transported to P.H. Unit-3: Concreting of spiral and stay ring foundation completed. Unit-4, 5 & 6: Erection of pier nose liner completed. Concreting is in progress. Inlet valves for units 4, 5 & 6 installed.	-Delay in award of civil works. -Delay in civil works of HRT & TRT on a/c of revision of rates by contractor. -Strike by contractor from Feb., 95 to Aug. 95.	-General price excavation. -Variation in -exchange rates.
25	Sharavathi T.R. Kar. Adv. (MW 06.05.87	160.59 420.00	1993-94 2000-02	Civil works almost completed. Penstocks for all the 4 units have been erected. Unit-1 Commissioned on 20.02.2001 Unit-2 Commissioned on 15.05.2001. Unit-3 Spiral casing concreting is in progress. Unit-4 Assembly of spiral casing completed. Alignment and welding of spiral segments is in progress.	-Cancellation of WB loan. -Suspension of works due to withdrawal of MOEF clearance -Contractual problems of dam & PH civil works.	-General price escalation. Devaluation of Rupee. -Rates revision for dam & PH works.

26	Maiankara (Muvattupuzha) Ker. 3x3.5 Aug., 1986 for 1x6 MW)	7.80 (for 1x6 MW) 41.57	1990-91 2002-03	The dam constructed by PWD. Part excavation of P.H. completed. Detailed design of power house building is in progress. Design of water conductor system has been received. Fresh tenders for the work on the scheme has been invited and re-awarded in 10/99. The contractor started the preliminary works and 80% of the earth work excavation completed. M/S SILK awarded for supply & erection of T.G. sets. 3 Nos Generator with excitation system, 3 Nos main inlet valve with spairs received at site. The supply of balance items is in progress.	-Delay in award of civil works & TG unit -Revision in capacity	-General Price escalation -Revision in capacity
27	Kuttiyadi Tail Race Ker 3x1.25 MW May, 1989 Rev 2x1.25 MW	3.97 12.92	2000-01 10th Plan	Construction of channel and allied works completed. Works of Forebay, P.H. and Penstock are in progress. Most of the TG parts for 2 Nos. units received at site. Order for 3rd unit placed. Power transformers received at site. D/T, Runner Chamber and Stuffing box assembly for Unit-III despatched. The excavation of the component structures and the construction of the tail race bridge is in progress.	-Delay in commencement of works	-Change in installed capacity from 2x1.25 to 3x1.25 MW
28	Pykara Ultimate T.N. 3x50 MW 98.88	70.16 373.06	1994-95 10th Plan	Gate shaft, HRT, Surge shaft completed. P.H. & pressure shaft works in progress. TRT is through and 95% lining completed. Orders for Generator Transformers and 220 KV cables placed. EOT crane received at site. TG equipment for all the three units received at site.	-Delay in award of works of TRT and access tunnel -Delay in finalisation to tenders for TG equipments	-General price escalation
29	Kalpong A&N Islands 5.2 MW	49.37 47.31	2001-02 2001-02	Unit-I has been commissioned on 01.07.2001 Unit-II and III has been erected likely to be commissioned during July-2001.		
Eastern Region						
30	Chandil Jharkhand/2x4 14.04.87	12.95 32.49	1988-90 2001-02	Dam completed. Out of 13 No. radial gates, 8 No. erected. PH building almost completed. For penstocks, fabrication and erection completed. Erection of escape channel & cross & head regulator gates in progress. EOT crane commissioned. Unit-1: Boxing up has been completed except fixing of chequered plates in the platform over the wicket gates, some pressure gauges and paint works. Unit-2: Stator and Runner assembly completed and tested in service bay. Rotor core building completed and fixing of poles (24 Nos.) is being taken up. Supply order for Power transformer issued on M/s Synergy Power equipment, Pvt. Ltd, Jamshedpur, transformer received at site. Erection of drainage & de-watering equipment, compressor Unit and Unit Auxiliary transformer completed. UABs and SSB are available at site. The switchyard has been leveled and all the switchyard equipments have been procured except isolator and Lighting Arrestors. For transmission lines the work order has been issued Ms. Jay Bee Enterprises. Erection works is being taken up.	-Fund constraints -Slow pace of PH civil works -Supply shortage of BHEL.	-General price escalation -Fund constraints
	North Koel S Jharkhand 2x12 10.03.84	21.94 47.34	1988-89 10th Plan	At present civil works by NPCC are at standstill since August 1997 due to contractual and law & order problem. Dam completed upto crest level by Irrigation Deptt. of State Govt. Penstock fabrication and erection completed except last piece. PH 1st sage concreting completed 95.5% TRT boring	Delay in civil woks of TRT & power house civil works -Poor cash flow	-General price escalation -Fund constraints

				& 90% TRC excavation done. TG sets, EOT cranes, Switchyard equipments & Power transformer received at site. Erection of EOT crane pending due to non-completion of civil works by NPCC. TG supervision awarded to BHEL.	-Delay in Award of of unit erection contract. -Law & Order problem. -Contractual problem with NPCC.	-Law & Order problem.
	\$ Works of the project are held up					
32	Potteru Or: 1x3+1x5 26.02.84	5.46 16.83	1989-90 2001-02	Intake works completed Power & TR channel 70%, 75% and 65%, 30% for power house I & II respectively completed, labynnth work cross drainage work 40%, 40% and 90%, 100% completed respectively for PH-I & II. Civil works of both Power houses completed. Erection of penstock completed for both PH-I & PH-II. Works of Labyninth Weir, HRC/TRC and cross drainage were standstill due to Law & Order Problem and contract failure. The work order has been issued to M/s. OCC Ltd. for balance works which have been resumed for PH-I in April 2001. EOT cranes erected in both power house. Operation trial of DT gates in progress in both PHs. DT erected & concerted for PH I & II. Erection of penstock. Turbine & auxiliaries completed in both PHs. C & R panels and other panels erected in PH-II. Erection of generator completed in PH-I except grouting of foundation. Installation of all switchyard equipment completed for both PHs. Erection of gear box completed in both PH-I & PH-II. 33 Kv lines between PH I & II and PH II to Kalimela S/Stn. Completed. Equipments for communication transported to site by M/s. GRIDCO. PTCC clearance already received.	-Delay in land acquisition. -Forest clearance. -Contractual problems in PH works. -Damage of control panels in fire. -Slow progress at site due to law & order problem. -Delay in deposit work by Potteru irrigation division.	-Fund constraints. -Delay in forest clearance at PH-I
33	Balimela Dam Toe \$ Or:2x30 26.02.77	17.77 69.301	1982-83 10th Plan	Excavation of PH was held up since Nov, 84 due to objection from Govt. of Orissa. Govts. of AP & Orissa have now decided for execution of project by OPCL as an IPP. PPA and DPR being examined by GRIDCO. M/s BHEL & M/s MECON appointed for assessing the cost of existing equipments and works at site, their reports is awaited.	-Interstate disputes.	-General Price escalation.
	\$ Works of the project are held up					
	Purulia PSS W.B 4x225 09.02.94	1456.56 3188.90	2002-03 2004-06	OECF loan agreement signed in March, 95. Infrastructural works in progress. Tecno-commercial evaluation completed. Evaluation of price part for Hydro-Mech. equipment completed. For Hydro-Mechanical equipment letter of award placed on Mitsubishi Heavy industnes Ltd. (MHI) on 30.03.2001, acceptance received. Concurrence received from JBIC on 11.06.2001. JBIC concurrence obtained for E & M equipment. For civil due to filing of writ petition by two bidders the case got delayed and finally letter of award placed on M/S Taisai Corporation on 27.06.2001. For Lot 6.1 (Pump, turbine, Generator motor of other PH auxiliaries) Letter of Award placed on Mitsui & Co. Ltd. Zero date is on 07.03.2001.	-Loan agreement with OECF signed after one year of sanction. -Delay in placing order for civil works due to litigation.	-General price escalation
35	Rotep-I* SIK:2x3 09.8.97 (State Govt.) (Cap. Revised to 2x4.5 MW)	35.13 45.00	2001-02 2003-04 (PL-1999)	No active construction work has been started due to paucity of funds. Project has been handed over to Sikkim Power Development Corporation Limited for execution on Build Own and Operate basis.	-E&F clearance. Funds constraints	Funds constraints.
	* Works of the project are yet to be taken up					

North Eastern Region

Karbi Langpi S (Lower Borpani) Asm:2x50 MW 24.09.79	36.36 288.37	1985-86 2003-04	80% excavation, 18% conc. & 97% slush clearance for dam completed. HRT, HP tunnel & penstocks work completed. TG sets received at site. The erection of BF valve and portion of TG equipment completed. 65% erection of control panels, 10% cabling works, 40% sw.yd foundation work, 30% transformer and sw.yd equipment erection completed. Due to poor performance in joint sector the contract was cancelled and Govt. of Assam handed over the project to ASEB for execution as per Supreme Court's verdict of January, 1999. Preparation of inventory of the assets taken up. Execution of balance works has not been started. Funds are being tied up with PFC.	-Frequent change of contractor for dam works -Delay in completion of Dam -Frequent change of executing agency -Funds constraints	-General price escalation due to non-completion of dam
3. Works of the project are held up.					
Dhansiri S Asm: 5x3x1.33 26.02.85	10.53 70.00	1988-89 2002-03	Head works for irrigation project Barrage completed. Intake completed except guide Bunch. By passes for PH-I completed as part of irrigation project. 98.43% excavation & 46.46% concreting in all PHs. And erection of DT in PH-I to IV completed. TG sets received. Contract for TG erection awarded. Alignment of draft tubes in PH-I to IV completed. Order placed for EOT crane. Power Transformers, Sw.yd equipment & Battery/Battery charger etc. Part of supplies received. Works are at standstill due to poor cash flow and Law & order problems since April, 1996.	-Law and order problem -Fund constraints	-General price escalation -Fund constraints
5. Works of the project are held up.					
32. Likim-Ro Nagaland:3x8 18.10.89	33.84 186.59	1993-94 2001-02	Diversion weir completed. Power channel: 99.59% excavation and 87% concreting completed. Rest is being executed by Naga Land builders. Saddles & Anchor blocks. Initial casing of all 24 Nos and final casing up to ABs 20 completed. PH: Building ready for unit and other installation works, only finishing works remain. T.R.C.: Completed. Cross drainage: Completed. Balancing reservoir-Completed. Forebay: Completed. Penstocks: Fabrication completed, erection of pentues from AB 21 to AB 23 remains to be complete. TG sets supply completed. Unit No. 1 & 2 ready for testing. Erection of unit-3 is in progress. Generator, Transformer reached at site. EOT crane in operation. Erection of switchyard equipment and 66 Kv line completed.	-Delay in award of civil works. -Slow progress of civil works. -Fund constraints. -Delay in erection of units. -Law & Order problem.	-General price escalation.
					Private Sector
33. Baspa St. II HP:3x100 29.04.94 (CEA cl 16.01.98 (TEC revalidated.	949.23 949.23	2001-02 10th Plan 2003-04	The agreement for implementation of the project was signed with M/s. Jai Prakash Industries in Oct. 92. PPA was signed in 6/97, TEC cleared by CEA in favour of M/s JPI but later on transferred in favour of JHPL. Infrastructure works are completed. Civil works are in progress. Excavation of HRT completed. Contract agreement for most of the E & M equipments, signed. Contract agreement for TG sets Signed with M/S Siemens AG Germany. Submission date of firm financial package has been extended upto 30.06.2001 by CEA. The works of the project which came to stand still due to flood in river Sutluj on 31st July-1st August, 2000 have resumed. Since 3/2000 the zero date to restart the project works is now taken as 01.03.2001 and project is excepted to be commissioned in 2003-04.	-Flash flood in July/August 2000	

40	Vishnu Prayag Uttaranchal 4x110 30.06.97 TEC	1614.66 1614.66	10th Plan 10th Plan	TEC has been cleared by CEA in 6/97. The project is being executed by M/S Jai Prakash Power Venture Ltd. Infrastructure works are in progress. Contract for supply of TG sets is in advanced stage of award M/S JPVL has applied fore extension of firm financial package up to 31.12.2001.	-Financial closure.	
41	Srinagar $
Uttaranchal 4x82.5 14.06.2000 $ Works of the project are held up	1699.12 1699.12	2005-06 2005-06	World Bank loan cancelled on 28.8.92 MOU was signed by Govt. of U.P. with M/s. Duncan Agro on 27.8.94 for execution in Private Sector. TEC accorded by CEA on 14.06.2000 to M/s. Duncans North Hydro Power Co. Ltd.	-Financial closure.	
	Maheshwar M.P. 10x40 31.12.96 TEC	1569.75 1673.00	2001-02 2003-05	The project is being executed by Shree Maheshwar Hydro Power Corporation Ltd. in Private Sector. Electro-Mechanical & Hydro-Mechanical equipments awarded to M/S Siemens Germany & Asea Brown Brovery, Amadora, Purtgal respectively Civil works awarded to M/S Southern Engg. Works Ltd. Hyderabad. Excavation of Dam, PH, TRT etc. are in progress. The basic infrastructure already in place. Land acquisition and R & R works are in progress. Financial Package approval by CEA accorded on 06.04.2000.	-Delay in financial closure. -R&R problems.	General price escalation.
42	Bhathanikotta $ Kerala 4x4	32.83 47.26	2000-01 10th Plan	Agreement for implementation of the project was executed with M/S Silical Mettulergic Ltd. during 12/94. Civil works have been temporarily stopped due to problem in land acquisition from irrigation Deptt.		
	$ Works of the project are held up					

Drought in Andhra Pradesh

5784 SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has submitted a report to the Union Government in which it has expressed concern at the drought like conditions in 900 mandals of the State;

(b) if so, whether a detailed report in this regard forwarded to the Centre in July, 2001; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that parts of the State have been affected by drought due to deficient rainfall. The State Government had recently submitted a Memorandum seeking Central assistance in the wake of drought. An Inter-Ministerial Central Team visited the State from 6th to 9th August, 2001 for assessment of the situation. Central share of Calamity Relief Fund for 2001-02 amounting to Rs. 77.985 crores have so far been released to the State for undertaking immediate relief measures in the wake of natural calamities including drought. Further, 3 lakh MTs of rice, free of cost, have been made available to the State for undertaking Food for Work Programme in the affected areas.

Procurement of Ragi and Jowar

5785. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:
SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have promised to take a decision on the procurement of ragi and jowar, the staple foodgrains from Karnataka;

(b) if so, whether this assurance was given by Union Agriculture Minister to Karnataka Agriculture Minister during his visit to New Delhi;

(c) whether the Union Government have also taken a decision to provide more foodgrains for the 'food for work programme' in Karnataka;

(d) if so, the total foodgrains released by the Union Government so far; and

(e) if so, the extent to which this scheme has affected the districts in the Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The Chief Minister of Karnataka met Union Minister of Agriculture early this month to discuss drought situation in Karnataka. He also mentioned about procurement of coarse cereals in Karnataka. The Food Corporation of India is required to intervene in the market and procure coarse cereals including jowar and ragi in case their market prices fall below the minimum support prices fixed by the government. A quantity of 15413 MT of ragi has been procured during the current Kharif marketing season in Karnataka. However, no quantity of jowar has been procured so far.

(c) to (e) A quantity of 57460 tonnes of rice and 42540 tonnes of wheat has been allotted to the Government of Karnataka free of cost for Food for Work Programme on 14.08.2001. Since the quantities have been allotted recently, it is difficult to assess the effect of this scheme in the districts in Karnataka.

Production of Energy by NCES in Maharashtra

5786. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of energy production by non-conventional method/sources in Maharashtra;

(b) whether there is any new programme under consideration in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) The Ministry of implementing wide ranging programmes based on major non-conventional energy sources such as solar, wind, small hydro and biomass for production of non-conventional energy throughout the country including the State of Maharashtra. It is estimated that about 576.38 million units of energy have been produced in the State of Maharashtra from these major power generating programmes of non-conventional energy sources during 2000–2001.

(b) and (c) Apart from the regular decentralized and grid connected programmes of non-conventional energy, the wind energy generation programme is also being promoted in the State of Maharashtra in recent years. As a result, the wind generation capacity installed in the State of Maharashtra has gone up from 0.23 MW in 1997-98 to 110.60 MW in 2000-2001.

[Translation]

Fishermen Found Missing During Cyclone

5787. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of fishermen have been found missing or dead due to cyclones in the country during the last three years and till date;

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

(c) whether the meteorological department had forewarned such cyclones; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) As reported by the Governments of Gujarat and Orissa, more than 1200 persons had died in the June, 1998 cyclone in Gujarat and about 10,000 persons had died in the 2 cyclones of October, 1999 in Orissa. Separate Figures of fishermen dead or missing in those cyclones are not available.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Power Generation Projects based on Liquefied Fuel

5788. SHRI SUBODH ROY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of power generation plants based on Liquefied fuel in operation in the country along with the dates of their being operational;

(b) the details of equity composition of companies operating such plants; and

(c) the details of power generations by each plant and their power tariff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) As per information available with the Central Electricity Authority

(CEA), the details of Thermal Power Projects in operation using liquid fuel/gas alongwith the respective dates of commissioning (First Unit of the Project) have been given in the Statement-I.

(b) and (c) A Statement-II indicating the details of equity, installed capacity and the indicative levelised tariff based on norms notified by the Government of India, considering 68.5% PLF, 12% discount rate and the tentative Financial Package submitted by the project developer at the time of Techno-Economic Clearance accorded by CEA is enclosed.

Statement-I

Details of Thermal Power Project using Liquid Fuel/Gas

Name of Project	Monitored Capacity (MW)	Date of Commissioning (First Unit)
1	2	3
NTPC		
Faridabad CCGT (Haryana)	430	29.06.1999
Anta GT (Rajasthan)	413	20.01.1989
Auriya GT (Uttar Pradesh)	652	29.03.1989
Dadri GT (Uttar Pradesh)	817	21.02.1992
Kawas GT (Gujarat)	644	22.03.1992
Gandhar GT (Gujarat)	648	17.03.1994
Kayamukulam (Kerala)	350	02.11.1998
DVC		
Maithon GT (Jharkhand)	90	10/1989
NEEPCO		
Kathalguri (Assam)	291	18.03.1995
Agartala GT (Tripura)	84	05.02.1998
SEB"s		
D.V.B.GT (Delhi)	282	14.05.1986
Pampore GT (J&K)	175	21.03.1989
Ramgarh GT (Rajasthan)	38.5	15.11.1994
Dhuvran GT (Gujarat)	54	1970-71
Utran (Gujarat)	39	1959-60
Utran GT (Gujarat)	144	28.01.1992

1	2	3
Uran GT (Maharashtra)	912	20.02.1982
Vij'swaram (Andhra Pradesh)	272	1990-91
Basin Bridge (Tamil Nadu)	120	12.02.1996
Narimanam (Tamil Nadu)	10	14.01.1992
Kovikalapal (Tamil Nadu)	107	05.02.2001
Karaikal GT (Pondicherry)	32.5	16.10.1998
W. Bengal GT (West Bengal)	100	1979
Namrup GT (Assam)	133.5	1965-66
Lakwa+Mobil (Assam)	141	1981-82
Baramura GT (Tripura)	16.5	1986-87
Rokhia GT (Tripura)	48	21.03.1990
Pvt. Utility		
Vatwa GT (Gujarat)	100	19.12.1990
Trombay GT (Maharashtra)	180	29.07.1973
IPP (Independent Power Producer)		
Hazira (IMP) (Gujarat)	515	10.08.1995
GIPCL I (Gujarat)	145	03.02.1991
GIPCL II (Gujarat)	167	26.08.1997
Paguthan GT (Gujarat)	655	22.10.1997
Dabhol (Maharashtra)	740	11.12.1998
Jegurupadu (Andhra Pradesh)	235.4	04.07.1996
Godavari GT (Andhra Pradesh)	208	09.01.1997
Kondapalli (Andhra Pradesh)	350	19.09.2000
Cochin CCGT (Kerala)	174	06.06.1999
DLF Assam (Assam)	24.5	01.08.1997
Pillaiperumalnallore GT (Tamil Nadu)	330.5	22.02.2001
Tanir Bavi CCGT (Karnataka)	170	08.05.2001
Samalpatti Power Co. Ltd. (Tamil Nadu)*	105.66	1.3.2001

*Status as informed by Tamil Nadu Electricity Board.

Statement-II

Details of Equity and Tariff for Techno-Economically cleared Liquid Fuel Thermal Power Stations

S. No.	Name of Project/Promoter	Capacity (MW)	Equity Composition (as per (TEC)	Levelised tariff (as per TEC) (Rs./kwh)
1	2	3	4	5
1	Hazira CCGT, (Gujarat) M/s Essar Power Ltd.	515	1. Essar Gujarat Ltd. Rs. 100 crs 2. Essar Investment Ltd. Rs. 100 crs 3. Public Issue Rs. 319 crs	2.18
2	Baroda CCGT GIPCL-II (Gujarat)	167	1. PCD-Rs. 60 crs 2. Internal Accurals Rs. 55.48 crs.	2.47
3.	Paguthan GT Gujarat Power Generation Energy Corpn. Ltd. (Gujarat)	655	Promoter's Equity. 1. GPCL-Rs. 177.51 crs 2. Torrent-Rs. 170.68 crs 3. Public Issue-Rs. 334.51 crs	2.33
4.	Dabhol CCGT M/s Dabhol Power Co. Ltd. (Maharashtra)	2015	Promoter Equity Public Issue-US$ 738 million	2.86 (Ph.I)
5.	Jegurupadu M/s GVK Industries (Andhra Pradesh)	216	GVK Group US$ 34.5m+Rs. 26.20 crs CMS-US$ 15.6M APSEB-Rs.26.2 crs ABB-US$ 4.2M IFC-US$ 8.3M Asian Infrastructure- US$ 3.9M	2.22
6.	Godavari GT AP by M/s Spectrum Power (Andhra Pradesh)	208	Stusa-Rs. 28.5 crs RR/WH & DCD, UK- Rs. 76.01 crs Domestic Rs. 123.52 crs	1.98
7.	Kondapalli CCGT M/s Kondapalli Power Corp. Ltd. (As per FFP dated 12.8.1999) (Andhra Pradesh)	350	TML-US$ 27.153 m WEB-US$ 30.28 m Lanco-Rs. 25.437 crs Hanjung-US$ 11.1m CDC-US$ 25.33m	2.49
8.	Pillaiperumalnallur GT, TN M/s Dyno Makowaski (As per FFP dated 15.5.1998) (Tamil Nadu)	330.5	CEA PPN Energy -US$ 20.4033 m PPN Mauritius-US$ 26.5243m Marubeni Corpn- US$ 26.5243m Reddy Group-Rs. 95.69 crs As per TEC: Foreign Inter Gen-Rs. 198 crs Reddy-Rs. 119 Crs Indian-Reddy-Rs. 13 crs	2.12 (As per TEC)

1	2	3	4	5
9.	Basin Bridge DG, TB M/s GMR Vasavi (As per final completed cost approved by CEA dated 28.2.2001) (Tamil Nadu)	220	Foreign-US$ 54.00 m Indian-Rs. 23.719 crs	2.693
10*.	Samalpatti Power Co. Ltd. (Tamil Nadu)	105.66	Shapoorji Palonji Infrastructure Capital Co. Ltd. (15%), Fenmore Energy Ltd. (14%), Wartsila India Power Investment Ltd. (11%), Coventa Energy India (Samalpatti) Ltd. (48%), Goa Holdings Ltd. (11%), Foreign Equity-US$ 26.93M Domestic Equity-204.3 MINR	4.08

*Status as informed by Tamil Nadu Electricity Board.

Expenditure on Remote Sensing Project of IASRI

5789. SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a research project on remote sensing/ GIS has been in operation at the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute, under ICAR;

(b) if so, the details of budget allocation made for the project;

(c) the details of amount spent on laboratory equipment, laboratory development, official tours and other items, during 1998-2001 category-wise and year-wise;

(d) whether a major part of the money was spent on renovation/furnishing of office rooms etc; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are two projects on remote-sensing. The budgetary details are as under:—

(i) "Use of Remote Sensing Satellite Data in crop Surveys"- Adhoc Scheme funded from AP Cess Fund.

(ii) "Study on land use Statistics through-Integrated Modeling using GIS"- Adhoc Scheme funded from AP Cess Fund.

Budget allocation for the project at (i) above : Rs. 25,13,800/-

Budget allocation for the project at (ii) above : Rs. 20,58,000/-

(c) Details of amount spent on project (i) above till 31.03.2000 *i.e.* date of termination of the project (in Rs.)

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	Total
Lab equipment	1217879	279608	31207	1528694.00
Lab development	132728	—	22587	155315.00
Tours	655	4461	9435	14551.00
Other Contingencies	23200	31456	36402	91058.00
Salary	37113	119200	203460	359773.00
Total	1411575	434725	303091	2149391.00

Details of amount spent on project (ii) above (in Rs.)

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001	Total
Lab equipment	0	955999	164000	1119999.00
Lab development	0	0	0	0.00
Tours	6000	57309	32000	95309.00
Other Contingencies	27188	43498	3000	73686.00
Salary	21697	137280	34320	193297.00
Total	54885	1194086	233320	1482291.00

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Not applicable.

Harmful Aerial Spraying of Pesticides

5790. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that aerial spraying of pesticides over cashew plantations in Kerala has caused congenal defects in children;

(b) if so, whether the Government have sent any team to probe this findings;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being proposed to stop such harmful spraying of pesticides on the harvests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) There are reports alleging that congenital defects observed in some children might be due to aerial spraying of pesticides over cashew plantations in Kerala. Keeping the reports in view, the Government of Kerala has constituted a committee to study the alleged ill effects of this pesticide. The report of the committee is awaited.

(d) Government of Kerala has issued orders to stop the aerial spraying of endosulfan on cashew plantations.

Incentives to Drivers and Train Staff

5791. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to give incentives to drivers and train staff for every safe journey;

(b) if so, the details of the incentive scheme worked out for the running staff; and

(c) the specific steps being taken by the Railways in the next three months to improve rail safety?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) a scheme of accident-free service award exists on Indian Railways. As per the scheme, certain safety categories of staff associated with train running are eligible for this at the time of their retirement as per the scale laid down and the quantum of award depends on their safety record.

(c) Rail safety is a continuous process and constant endeavors are being made to improve the same.

Pending Projects in Maharashtra

5792. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways are not providing any information to the concern States about the latest position of projects pending with them;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether State Governments have made repeated requests to the Government in this regard;

(d) if so, whether the Government would provide the latest position of pending projects to the concerned States; and

(e) if so, the details of those projects along with their present position and by when final decision of those projects would be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) All requests from State Governments for information regarding the position of Railway projects are met by the Railways.

(e) There are 24 projects under New Lines, Gauge Conversion, Doubling, Railway Electrification and Metropolitan Transport Project which are pending for clearances. The process for obtaining the clearances for these projects has been initiated. Work on them will start after the clearances are available.

A list of projects for which clearances are in various stages of processing is enclosed as statement.

Statement

1. Etawah-Mainpur New Line
2. Kaptanganj-Thave-Chapra Gauge Conversion
3. Katihar-Jogbani Gauge Conversion
4. Gonda-Bahraich Gauge Conversion
5. Samastipur-Khagaria Gauge Conversion
6. Abohar-Fazilka New Line
7. Rewari-Sadulpur Gauge Conversion
8. Dharmavaram-Pakala Gauge Conversion
9. Thanjavur-Villupuram Gauge Conversion
10. Bangalore-Whitefield Quadrupling
11. Mysore-Chamrajnagar Gauge Conversion
12. Patna-Gaya Electrification
13. Ganga Bridge at Patna
14. Kottayam-Erumeli New Line
15. Kakinada-Pithapuram New Line
16. Kuttupuram-Guruvayoor New Line
17. Ganga Bridge at Munger
18. Naupada-Gunupur Gauge Conversion
19. Gonda-Gorakhpur Gauge Conversion
20. Sarupsar-Ganganagar Gauge Conversion
21. Jallandhar-Jammu Tawi Doubling
22. Mughalsarai-Jafrabad Electrification
23. Thane-Mumbra 5th & 6th Line
24. Virar-Dahanu Road Development of facilities for introduction of EMU service

Expenditure on Publicity

5793. SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a huge sum of amount is spent on publicity in Indian Railways;

(b) whether it is necessary to spend such a huge amount only on publicity;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the measures the Government have taken to curtail the expenditure on publicity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Expenditure on Publicity is restricted to the occasions requiring dissemination of rail-user related information on new projects, services, facilities and generating public awareness towards safety measures, etc in rail travel.

(d) Guidelines have already been issued to the Railway Administrations to restrict the expenditure on Publicity by reducing the size of the advertisements, reducing the number of insertions and using the publications approved by the Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity (which have comparatively lower rates) and restricting to the occasions mentioned in reply to parts (b) & (c) of the question.

[Translation]

Ban on Imported Food Products

5794. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to impose a ban on the imported food products like garlic, onion, milk power etc.;

(b) whether Indian agriculture sector has been affected by the import of foreign products; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) There is no such proposal.

(b) and (c) There has not been any significant shift in the import scenario of agricultural commodities in the liberalized trade under the WTO Agreement on Agriculture except in case of edible oils. The Government has put in place a suitable mechanism for monitoring the imports of agricultural commodities, and is committed to providing adequate protection to the domestic farmers against the indiscriminate imports, by resorting to various WTO compatible measures which include appropriate calibration of applied tariffs within the bound levels, imposition of anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguard action under certain specified circumstances. During the year 2001-2002, the import duty on tea, coffee, copra and coconut and certain other agricultural commodities has been increased.

[English]

Excavation of Archaeological Sites

5795. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ASI has excavated any archaeological sites belonging to Sangam period or post-Sangam period coeval with the early centuries of Christian era;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the artefacts brought to light from these excavation are found dumped in the stores of ASI and no detailed report on the findings of excavations have been made; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Sir, without going into the academic debate about the historicity of the Sangam or post-Sangam period, the ASI has excavated early historical and historical sites in Tamilnadu and Pondicherry, which are primarily the areas of the Sangam literature and details of those sites along with the status of publications are given in the statement.

(c) and (d) the artefacts which have been excavated have been kept in the safe custody of the Archaeological Survey of India.

Statement

Details of Sangam Period Sites Excavated by ASI

Sl. No.	Name of site	Cultural sequence	Status of publication
1	2	3	4
1.	Kanchipuram, District Kanchipuram	The excavation revealed four successive structural periods belonging to early historical times ranging from *circa* 300 BC to medieval period. The remains include fragmentary ring-wells, megalithic black and red ware, bright red slipped ware, Rouletted, Satavahan copper coins, amphorae, seals, bone objects, arrow heads, glass bangles and beads, etc.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology A Review 1953-54 & 1962-63.
2.	Kaveripattinam, District Nagapattinam	Excavation and exploration at the site have brought to light a brick-built wharf, a water reservoir and a Buddhist monastery, habitation sites with brick structures and a few ring-wells, square copper coins with royal crest of the Cholas, sherds of Black and red ware, beads of semiprecious stones.	Detailed report published as Memoir of Archaeological Survey of India No. 90,1994
3.	Arikamedu, District Pondicherry	Indo-Roman trading station with remains of an oblong building identified as a warehouse with single partition wall and a side chamber was	Detailed report published in Ancient India No. 2, 1946

1	2	3	4
		exposed, two tanks, drains, pavements, Arretine ware, Amphorae, Rouletted ware and local ceramics, all dating between 1st century BC to 200 AD.	
4.	Mammallpuram District Kanchipuram	The site belongs to Historical period and excavated remains are broken pillars and pottery, etc.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology A Review 1990-91
5.	T. Kallupatti, District Madurai	The site belongs to the Mesolithic & Neolithic period. The excavated assemblages are burnished grey ware, black and red ware, white painted black and red ware, white painted black ware, Russet-coated white, painted ware, coarse red ware and black on red ware.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1976-77
6.	Kambermedu, District Thanjavur	The site belongs to the Early Historical period. The cultural assemblage are beads of glass and semi-precious stone, copper coins and associated pottery.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1982-83 & 1983-84
7	Perur, District Coimbatore	The recovered antiquities of the Early Historical period are Iron objects, glass bangles, terracotta lamps. Besides the pottery of Megalithic black and red ware, red ware, all black ware, Russet-coated Painted Ware etc. have been found.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1970-71
8.	Auroville, District South Arcot	It is a Megalithic site, the recovered antiquities are Iron objects and megalithic pots.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1984-85 & 1985-86
9.	Paiyampalli, District Vellore	Megalithic hand made grey ware, burnished grey ware, megalithic black and red ware, ground stone axes, russet-coated Painted ware, etc.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1964-65 & 1967-68
10.	Sittanavasal, District Pudukottai	Megaliths, black and red ware, red ware, black polished ware, all black ware, iron implements etc.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1975-76
11.	Karaikudu, District north Arcot	An Indo-Roman trading station yielding Red slipped ware, black and red ware, Rouletted ware. Important finds include beads of semiprecious stones, glass, etc.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1966-67
12.	Amrithamangal am, District Tiruvalur	Site yielded immense number of hand made coarse and thick Urn burials, oval to roundish in shape. The Urns contained excarnated skull, long bones, loosened teeth and rib fragments.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1954-55
13.	Sannur, District Kanchipuram	The site yielded three types of megalithic burials (1) Cairn Circle type, (2) Dolemoid Cist type, and (3) Dolmenoid Cist with flush capstone. Other finds include pottery, iron and shell objects and skeletal remains including skulls.	Detailed report published in Ancient India No. 15
14.	Kunnattur, District Kanchipuram	three main types of Megalithic burials were exposed along with the remains of early historical and late historical periods. The megalithic types found were the Cairn Circles, State dolmenoid Cist and Sarcophagi. Pottery included Black and red ware and red and black ware.	Annual reports in Indian Archaeology a Review 1955-56, 1956-57 & 1957-58.

Equity in LNG Venture

5796. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made it mandatory for Indian Shipping Companies to own a minimum of 26% equity in the LNG venture throughout the course of contract;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other conditions being put up by the Government for foreign shipping and Indian Shipping companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir. However, in the case of Petronet LNG Ltd. (PLL) project, it was mandatory to include an Indian shipping company in the LNG shipping consortia and the Indian shipping company either alone or with an Indian financial partner/partners should own not less than 26% equity in the consortium throughout the course of contract.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Employment Provided to the People for Hydel Projects of NHPC

5797. SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether employment has been provided to the persons of the concerned States in the on going or completed hydel projects;

(b) if so, the number of persons employed in various categories, State-wise and project-wise;

(c) whether the Government of Himachal Pradesh in its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the NHPC with regard to Parbati Hydel Power Project has fixed a percentage for providing employment to the local people in the recruitment of staff class I, II, III and IV posts;

(d) if so, whether the NHPC is following the percentage norms in the recruitment of staff as per the MoU; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) National Hydro-electric Power Corporation (NHPC) has provided employment to the local people in its projects in accordance with the agreements/understanding with the concerned State Governments. The scope for fresh employment in new projects is limited as NHPC needs to redeploy existing surplus staff from completed/on-going projects to new projects.

In accordance with the agreements/understandings reached with the various State Governments, NHPC has provided employment in categories III & IV to 700 persons at Chamera H.E. Project Stage-I in Himachal Pradesh, 8 persons at Chamera H.E. Project Stage-II in Himachal Pradesh, 36 persons at Dhauliganga H.E. Project in Uttaranchal, 12 persons at Rangit H.E. Project in Sikkim and 59 persons at Koel Karo H.E. Project in Jharkhand.

(c) to (e) The agreement dated 20.11.1998 with the Govt. of Himachal Pradesh for the execution of Hydro-electric Projects on river Parbati stipulates that 30% of the staff at each executive level required by the Corporation for the execution of the project as well as for the Survey & Investigation Works of Stages-I & III shall be taken on deputation from HPSEB subject to their suitability on the usual terms and conditions of deputation. All the unskilled, Class-III and Class-IV staff as may be required for the execution of the project after deployment of surplus workers from other projects of the Corporation as on the date of signing of this agreement, shall be recruited through employment exchanges located in Himachal Pradesh and through other prescribed means.

As NHPC carries surplus workers the requirement of Parbati Hydro-electric Projects for unskilled, Class-III and IV so far is being met by redeployment of surplus workers from other projects of the Corporation, in accordance with the agreement entered with the Government of Himachal Pradesh.

[English]

Organization of Training Programme in IASRI

5798. SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI) under ICAR has been organizing training in Agricultural statistics and computer applications regularly;

(b) if so, the number of training programmes so organized, the number of trainees participated and funds

mobilised for the same during each of the last three years, training programme-wise;

(c) whether the food for trainees is arranged through any contractors(s) appointed as per rules;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the total amount paid to him/them during each of the last three years;

(e) whether there was any complaint about quality of food supplied. and

(f) if so, the action taken against the supplier?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Number of training organised:

Year	No. Trainings	No. Participants
1998-99	33	577
1999-00	44	564
2000-2001	23	277

List of trainings so organized is given in the statement.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Contractor-M/s Megha Caterers, New Delhi. Total amount paid during last three years:

1998-1999	Rs. 1,24,637/-
1999-2000	Rs. 1,72,241/-
2000-2001	Rs. 1,24,456/-

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Not applicable.

Statement

1998-99

Sl. No	Name of the Training	Period	No. of Trainees	Funds Mobilised (Rs.)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Design and analysis of field experiments	30.3.98 to 14.4.98	19	111000
2.	Introduction to MS Office	13.4.98 to 18.4.98	19	28500
3.	Introduction to Statistical Packages	27.4.98 to 2.5.98	8	12000
4.	Introduction to SPSS	27.4.98 to 2.5.98	8	12000
5.	Use of Computers in Agricultural Research	11.5.98 to 23.5.98	21	63000
6.	Introduction to MS Office	1.6.98 to 6.6.98	18	27000
7.	Recent Advances in Survey Sampling relating to Agricultural Statistics	8.6.98 to 13.6.98	13	111000
8.	Introduction to Statistical Packages	16.6.98 to 20.6.98	5	7500
9.	Advances in Statistical Design for Agricultural Research	24.6.98 to 14.7.98	25	177000
10.	Use of Computers in Information Processing	16.7.98 to 5.8.98	20	177000
11.	Advances in Statistical Genetics and Bio-Statistics	31.7.98 to 14.8.98	22	111000

1	2	3	4	5
12.	Recent Advances in the Analysis of Survey Data	24.8.98 to 29.8.98	17	83000
13.	Research Methodology with special emphasis on Statistics	1.9.98 to 30.9.98	20	277000
14.	Introduction of MS Office	14.9.98 to 26.9.98	23	34500
15.	Research Methodology with special emphasis on Statistics	6.10.98 to 5.11.98	20	277000
16.	Introduction to MS Project	12.10.98 to 17.10.98	11	16500
17.	Introduction to Windows, MS-Office and E-mail	2.11.98 to 13.11.98	20	111000
18.	Use of Computers in Agricultural Research	16.11.98 to 28.11.98	22	66000
19.	Introduction to Windows, MS-Office and E-mail	1.12.98 to 7.12.98	21	31500
20.	MS-Office-97 (I)	7.12.98 to 12.12.98	20	50000
21.	Introduction to internet	14.12.98 to 19.12.98	22	33000
22.	Research methodology with special emphasis on Statistics	5.1.99 to 3.2.99	20	277000
23.	MS-Office 97 (I) and SPSS	11.1.99 to 16.1.99	20	50000
24.	Introduction to MS-Office	11.1.99 to 23.1.99	24	36000
25.	MS-Office-97 and SPSS	1.2.99 to 6.2.99	20	50000
26.	MS-Office-97 and SPSS	8.2.99 to 13.2.99	18	45000
27.	MS-Office-97 and SPSS	15.2.99 to 20.2.99	22	55000
28.	Efficient designing of experiments and analysis of experimental data	16.2.99 to 2.3.99	20	111000
29.	Computer and graphical assisted multivariate data analysis	8.3.99 to 20.3.99	21	111000
30.	Methodological aspects in sample surveys	8.3.99 to 13.3.99	17	83000
31.	Small area estimation theory and applications	22.3.99 to 27.3.99	15	83000
32.	Recent developments in crop forecasting and related areas under FAO Project SRL/91/023-Market intelligence and food information system	2.11.98 to 13.11.98	13	126459
33.	Remote Sensing and GIS Applications	11.1.99 to 23.1.99	3	US$ 4050
	Total		577	2843959

1	2	3	4	5
1999-2000				
1.	Introduction to MS-Office	12.4.99 to 17.4.99	3	9000
2.	Use of Computers in Agricultural Research	19.4.99 to 1.5.99	23	92000
3.	Introduction to MS-Office	19.4.99 to 24.4.99	2	6000
4.	Introduction to Web Programming and Internet Technologies	10.5.99 to 22.5.99	7	42000
5.	Statistical Modelling for Forecasting Biological Phenomena	10.5.99 to 19.5.99	20	111000
6.	Introduction to Window-95 and MS-Office	21.5.99 to 29.5.99	20	0
7.	Introduction to MS-Office	31.5.99 to 5.6.99	8	24000
8.	Introduction to SPAR-I	4.6.99 to 5.6.99	7	0
9.	Introduction to MS-Office	14.6.99 to 19.6.99	7	21000
10.	Relational Database Management System and Access-97	28.6.99 to 3.7.99	3	9000
11.	Research Methodology with special emphasis on statistics	5.7.99 to 30.7.99	25	277000
12.	Object Oriented Programming using C++	12.7.99 to 24.7.99	2	12000
13.	Use of Windows-95 and MS-Office	14.7.99 to 30.7.99	17	0
14.	Workshop on NISAGE	19.7.99	20	40000
15.	Introduction to Windows and MS-Office	22.7.99 to 30.7.99	20	0
16.	Relational Database Management System and Access-97	2.8.99 to 7.8.99	6	18000
17.	Research Methodology with special emphasis on statistics	9.8.99 to 29.8.99	20	136000
18.	Qualitative Aspects in Collection and analysis of Survey Data	9.8.99 to 14.8.99	20	83000
19.	Introduction to MS-Office	16.8.99 to 21.8.99	18	54000
20.	Economic Theory and Econometrics	23.8.99 to 10.9.99	11	177000
21.	Quantitative Methods in Agricultural Economics	24.8.99 to 2.9.99	25	70000

1	2	3	4	5
22.	Research Methodology with special emphasis on Statistics	6.9.99 to 17.9.99	24	136000
23.	Introduction to MS-Office	13.9.99 to 18.9.99	3	9000
24.	Introduction to MS-Office	20.9.99 to 25.9.99	13	39000
25.	Recent Development in Survey Sampling in relation to Agricultural Research	14.9.99 to 4.10.99	19	131000
26.	Project Monitoring and Management Information System	27.9.99 to 29.9.99	10	0
27.	Introduction to MS-Office	4.10.99 to 9.10.99	5	15000
28.	Introduction to MS-Office	11.10.99 to 16.10.99	18	54000
29.	Web Programming and Internet Technologies	25.10.99 to 6.11.99	17	102000
30.	Relational Database Management System & Access-97	15.11.99 to 20.11.99	2	6000
31.	Introduction to MS-Office	29.11.99 to 10.12.999	17	102000
32.	Object Oriented Programming using C++	13.12.99 to 24.12.99	4	24000
33.	Use of Computers in Agricultural Research	13.12.99 to 28.12.99	9	36000
34.	Advanced Statistical Techniques for research in crop and animal improvement	3.1.2000 to 17.1.2000	19	111000
35.	Web Programming and Internet Technologies	10.1.2000 to 22.1.20000	8	48000
36.	Computer Intensive Techniques in Agricultural Surveys	20.1.2000 to 4.2.2000	18	111000
37.	Introduction to MS-Office	31.1.2000 to 5.2.2000	6	18000
38.	Web Programming and Information system on Internet	7.2.2000 to 26.2.2000	19	177000
39.	Introduction to MS-Office	14.2.2000 to 19.2.2000	9	27000
40.	Introduction to MS-Office	21.2.2000 to 4.3.2000	6	36000
41.	Introduction to MS-Office	6.3.2000 to 11.3.2000	20	60000
42.	Introduction to MS-Office	13.3.2000 to 18.3.2000	4	12000
43.	Designs for Generation of Agricultural Technologies	16.3.2000 to 30.3.2000	19	111000
44.	Energy requirement in Agricultural Sector - Analytical Techniques and Statistical Software Packages.	27.3.2000 to 5.4.2000	11	79400
	Total		564	2625400

1	2	3	4	5
2000-2001				
1.	MS-Office-2000 (I)	3.4.00 to 8.4.00	7	21000
2.	MS-Office-2000 (II)	10.4.00 to 15.4.00	5	15000
3.	Basic Computer Concepts & Operating systems	8.5.00 to 13.5.00	7	21000
4.	Training programme on Visual Basic	22.5.0 to 3.6.00	8	48000
5.	Web Programming & Internet Technologies	19.6.00 to 1.7.00	19	114000
6.	Building MIS using Visual Basic & Access	10.7.00 to 22.7.00	3	18000
7.	MS-Office-2000 (I)	31.7.00 to 5.8.00	25	75000
8.	MS-Office-2000 (II)	7.8.00 to 12.8.00	5	15000
9.	SPSS	21.8.00 to 26.8.00	6	18000
10.	Web Programming and Internet Technologies	9.10.00 to 21.10.00	6	36000
11.	RDBMS & MS Access	30.10.00 to 4.11.00	3	9000
12.	MS-Office-2000 (I)	13.11.00 to 18.11.00	25	75000
13.	MS-Office-2000 (II)	20.11.00 to 25.11.00	20	60000
14.	Java Programming	4.12.00 to 16.12.00	8	48000
15.	MS-Office-2000 (I)	18.12.00 to 23.12.00	20	60000
16.	Web Designing (HTML Front Page, Dreamweaver)	26.2.01 to 3.3.01	4	12000
17.	Visual Basic Programming	12.3.01 to 24.3.01	3	18000
18.	MS-Office-2000 (I)	26.3.01 to 31.3.00	7	21000
19.	Design and Analysis of Agricultural Experiments	15.9.00 to 5.10.00	14	177000
20.	Development of Database and Information System	10.1.01 to 31.1.01	20	177000
21.	Recent Advances in the Analysis of Survey Data	6.2.01 to 26.2.01	17	177000
22.	Project Data Entry on Computer System and its Management	7.6.00 to 8.6.00	20	0
23.	Economic Evaluation of Productivity Improvement and Technical change in Agricultural Sector	24.8.00 to 2.9.00	25	70000
	Total		277	1285000
	Grand Total:	Number of Trainings:	100 (33+44+23)	
		No. of Trainees:	1418 (577+564+277)	
		Funds mobilised :	Rs. 67,54,359 (28,43,959+26,25,400+12,85,000) + US $ 4,050	

Disappeared Companies

5799. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:
DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:

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

(a) whether some of the companies registered with different Stock Exchanges of the country under SEBI which had collected money from the small investors in the shape of share, deposits or mutual funds since 1994 have wound up their business and disappeared;

(b) if so, the names thereof alongwith the total amount collected by them; and

(c) the action taken by the Government against each of them?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Out of 229 companies (as identified by SEBI), only 21 companies were not traceable even after due enquiries by Department of Company Affairs. The names of these companies and amount collected by them through public issue is given in the statement.

(c) Prosecution under the provisions of the Companies Act, 1956 were launched against these companies. Besides, police complaints for tracing out these companies and their directors were filed. The matter has also been referred to the concerned State Governments for taking necessary penal action against the concerned/companies.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the company	Amount collected (Rs. in crores)
1	2	3
1.	Shakti Sai Flowers & Tissues Ltd.	3.30
2.	Cilson Finance & Investment Ltd.	2.51
3.	Star Electronics Ltd.	2.47
4.	Star Exim Ltd.	2.76
5.	Kalyani Finance Ltd.	3.21
6.	Hatron Networks Ltd.	3.40
7.	Bhavna Steel Cast Ltd.	1.80
8.	Topline Shoes Ltd.	4.65
9.	Gujarat Bonanza Auto Ltd.	5.40
10.	Janak Intermediaries Ltd.	2.80
11.	Rajadhiraj Industries Ltd.	2.50
12.	Hi-Tech Drugs Ltd.	3.24
13.	Madhyavart Exxoil Ltd.	2.30
14.	Sterling Kalks and Bricks Ltd.	4.44
15.	Universal Vita Alimentaire Ltd.	1.80
16.	Maa Capital Market Services Ltd.	1.44
17.	Nagarjuna Jiyo Industries Ltd.	2.70
18.	Bafna Spinning Mills & Exports Ltd.	9.18
19.	Rizvi Exports Ltd.	2.75
20.	Saket Extrusion Ltd.	2.98
21.	Global Finance Corporation Ltd.	N.A.
	Total	65.63

National Energy Policy

5800. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY:
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY:
SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR:

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

(a) whether the Government propose to formulate a national energy policy in view of rising global prices of crude oil following on Iraqi decision to stop sales;

(b) if so, the salient features of the new energy policy and whether the demand of gas and oil in the country have been increasing continuously;

(c) if so, the details of alternative strategies to be adopted to curtail consumption of oil and gas;

(d) whether the Government propose to seek help from the developed countries in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) An Energy Policy Committee has been set up in the Planning Commission to formulate an Energy Policy for the country. Overall demand of oil and gas in the country has been increasing continuously.

(c) Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), set up under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, undertakes schemes and programmes that help avoiding wasteful consumption and for promotion of conservation of petroleum products. These include awareness campaigns, training programmes in the transport sector, introduction of efficient boilers, furnaces & other oil operated equipments in the industrial sector, rectification of existing pumps to make them more energy efficient in the agriculture sector, development & promotion of fuel efficient equipments and appliances like kerosene and LPG stove in the household sector etc.

(d) There is no proposal under consideration of Government.

(e) Does not arise.

Super Thermal Power Plants at Kanniha

5801. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons lost their land due to the establishment of Super Thermal Power Plant at Kanniha, Orissa;

(b) whether the government have a proposal to provide job at least to one member of each family whose land has been acquired for the power plant;

(c) whether it was also proposed to provide due compensation to the oustees; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (d) At Talcher (Kanhia) Super Thermal Power Project of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), 1615 persons have lost more than 1/3rd of their agriculture land and they have been termed as Substantially Affected Persons (SAPs) who are entitled to rehabilitation benefits.

The amount of land compensation as per the Land Acquisition Act had been deposited by NTPC with the State Government. All the land oustees have received the compensation.

NTPC projects deploy the latest state of the art technology for generation. Therefore, the potential for direct employment in NTPC is limited to very few technically qualified and experienced persons.

As per Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) plan of Talcher STPP, each SAP has to exercise one of the rehabilitation option including employment in NTPC, as indicated in the following table. Rehabilitation assistance already extended has also been shown in the table:

Sl. No.	Option	Substantially Affected Persons	Rehabilitation assistance extended	Balance
1.	Purchase of Land	850	850	NIL
2.	Shop Allotment	21	21	NIL
3.	Cash Deposit	38	38	NIL
4.	Self-Employment	42	42	NIL
5.	Employment in NTPC Talcher STPP	664	250	414*
	Total	1615	1201	414

*(1) Balance SAPs will be considered for employment subject to their suitability and meeting the qualification requirement, age and medical fitness and other prescribed job specifications like experience, test, interview etc. as per NTPC policy.

(2) SAPs not meeting the requirement at (1) above will be allowed to exercise other options than employment options.

Supply of Injected Milk

5802. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether mostly the milk being supplied in Delhi is indeed a milk received through drug injected cattle to increase the volume of milk into cow or buffalo;

(b) if so, the steps taken to ban the use of drug and oxytocin and its sale in the markets all over the country;

(c) whether doctors of all India Institute of Medical Sciences and other hospitals have also warned of the widespread use of the hormonal drug and its ill effects; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) There is no official report of supply of milk in Delhi received through drug injected cattle. Oxytocin is a peptide hormone naturally produced in the hypothalamus of the brain responsible for normal delivery and let down of milk. However, synthetic oxytocin is used both in human as well as veterinary medicine in a number of ailments including complications related to let down of milk following parturition. Oxytocin is a Schedule H drug regulated under Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945. As it is a highly potent, valuable, indispensable life saving drug that is applied advantageously both in human as well as veterinary practice, use of injection oxytocin is not banned in the country. However, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have restricted its use by making it a prescription drug, and to check its misuse, the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945 have been amended for manufacture of oxytocin injection in single unit blister pack only.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have informed that according to Indian Council of Medical Research and Indian Veterinary Research Institute, there is no published (scientific) reports on the adverse effects of milk containing high amount of oxytocin since the hormone gets rapidly metabolized in the liver and kidney of the animal to undetectable levels. Since the half life of oxytocin varies from 3 to 12 minutes, continued presence of this drug in milk is unlikely. The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying have, however, advised the State Animal Husbandry Departments to educate the farmers about the appropriate use of oxytocin and for not using this product without the prescription of registered veterinary practitioners.

Rajasthan Share of Power in Hydro Stations in Punjab

5803. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received a number of representations from the Government of Rajasthan for referring the case to Supreme Court about sharing of power generated from Hydro-Electric Power Projects/ stations, Thein Dam, Anandpur Sahib Dam, Mukerian, UBDC Stage II and Shahpur Kandi as agreed upon and signed by the Union Power Minister, Governor of Punjab, Chief Ministers of Haryana and Rajasthan on May 10, 1984;

(b) if so, whether the Government have referred this issue to the Supreme Court for its opinion;

(c) if so, the time by which this case is likely to be referred to the Supreme Court;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government are reactant to refer it to the Supreme Court due to political compulsion or is trying to find out amicable settlement between constituent States; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (f) The State Governments of Rajasthan and Haryana have been raising the issue of share of power in the following Hydro-electric Projects in Punjab:-

(1) Anandpur Sahib HEP (B4 MW)

(2) Mukerian HEP (207 MW)

(3) Thein Dam (Ranjit Sagar HEP) (600 MW)

(4) Upper Bari Doab Canal Stage-II (45 MW)

(5) Shahpurkandi HEP (168 MW)

To settle the issue of claims of Rajasthan and Haryana for a share of power generated in the above Projects in Punjab, an agreement was drawn up on 10.5.1984 amongst Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and the Central Government for making a reference to the Supreme Court on the question of entitlement of Rajasthan and Haryana in these Projects and in case there being such an entitlement, to determine the share of each State. In order to arrive at an amicable settlement, Ministry of

water Resources have convened several meetings with the concerned States. However, on consensus could be reached.

Thereafter, the subject was also discussed in the meetings of the Northern Zonal Council held in October'97 and February'99. In the meeting held on 28.2.1999 it was resolved that a separate meeting of the Chief Ministers and concerned Ministers of State in Northern Zone would be convened to undertake in-depth study of all the relevant issues and factors relating to share of water and power and evolve a consensus on mutually agreeable parameters.

A meeting of the Chief Ministers/concerned Ministers of States in the Northern Zone was scheduled in April, 1999. However, the meeting could not be held due to Tricentenary celebrations in Punjab and subsequent announcement of General Elections. The meeting was again scheduled for on 29.7.2000 but had to be cancelled due to administrative reasons. However, an official level meeting under the chairmanship of Secretary (Power) has held on 29.7.2000 at New Delhi which was attended amongst others, by the representatives of State Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. In this meeting also, no consensus could be reached.

The Central Government is committed to an amicable settlement amongst the State concerned. In February'2001, the Ministry of Power have approached the concerned State Governments for indicating their convenience for holding the Conference of Chief Ministers in terms of the resolution of Northern Zonal Council. However, it has not been possible to convene the meeting because of absence of consensus amongst the States concerned.

Increase in Prices of Crude Oil by OPEC

5804. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recently asked the OPEC to keep oil prices under control;

(b) if so, the reaction of the OPEC on such demands of the Government;

(c) the number of times OPEC increased the prices of crude oil during the last three years;

(d) whether OPEC have increased prices of oil under some pressure of developed countries; and

(e) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Government have requested OPEC member countries for concessions in the form of extended credit periods, soft loans and discounts by the oil exporting countries to the developing oil importing countries in situation of high oil prices.

(b) Three of the OPEC member countries have responded so far stating that this issue is beyond the scope of OPEC's functioning and that the matter needs to be taken up bilaterally with the oil exporting countries.

(c) to (e) The prices of crude oil in the international market are market driven and are not set by OPEC. The prices trend of Dubai and Brent (Dated) crude oils since 1994 are given in the statements-I & II respectively.

Statement-I

Price Trend - Crude Oil

Month	Dubai Crude Oil ($/bbl)
1	2
1994	14.75
1995	16.10
1996	18.54
1997	18.14
1998	12.16
1999	17.21
Jan-Mar 2000	24.41
Apr-June 2000	25.17
Jul-Sept 2000	27.68
Oct-Dec 2000	27.49
Jan, 2001	22.85
Feb, 2001	24.80
March, 2001	23.45
April, 2001	24.18
May, 2001	25.60

1	2
June, 2001	25.65
July, 2001	24.58
1st Aug 2001	23.76
2nd Aug 2001	24.54
3rd Aug 2001	24.02
6th Aug 2001	24.21
7th Aug 2001	24.60
8th Aug 2001	24.34
9th Aug 2001	24.66
10th Aug 2001	25.35
13th Aug 2001	25.66
14th Aug 2001	25.87
15th Aug 2001	25.38
16th Aug 2001	24.25
17th Aug 2001	23.57
20th Aug 2001	24.07

Source : Platt's

Statement-II

Price Trend - Crude Oil

Month\	Brent (Dated) Crude Oil ($/bbl)
1	2
1994	15.82
1995	17.02
1996	20.67
1997	19.09
1998	12.72
1999	18.15
Jan-Mar 2000	26.93
Apr-June 2000	26.89
Jul-Sept 2000	30.44
Oct-Dec 2000	29.54
Jan, 2001	25.66
Feb, 2001	27.45
March, 2001	24.42
April, 2001	25.66
May, 2001	28.59
June, 2001	27.83
July, 2001	24.58
1st Aug 2001	24.91
2nd Aug 2001	25.80
3rd Aug 2001	25.27
6th Aug 2001	25.42
7th Aug 2001	25.65
8th Aug 2001	25.15
9th Aug 2001	25.38
10th Aug 2001	25.84
13th Aug 2001	25.71
14th Aug 2001	25.92
15th Aug 2001	25.35
16th Aug 2001	25.15
17th Aug 2001	24.33
20th Aug 2001	25.13

Source : Platt's

Mango Research Institute

5805. SHRI MANJAY LAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to establish Mango Research Institute in Samastipur district of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Not applicable.

[Translation]

MRTP Commission

5806. SHRI MANSINH PATEL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the functions of the M.R.T.P. Commission; and

(b) the number of cases registered by the MRTP Commission during the last three years and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Commission has been established under section 5 of the MRTP Act, 1969 with effect from 01.06.1970 and seeks to achieve the following objectives:-

(i) Prevention of concentration of economic power to the common detriment;

(ii) Control of monopolies; and

(iii) Prohibition of Restrictive, Monopolistic and Unfair Trade Practices.

The Commission can enquire into any restrictive, monopolistic and unfair trade practices. The Commission is empowered to award compensation arising out of complaints filed on allegation of adoption of unfair/ restrictive trade practices. The Commission is also empowered to grant temporary injunctions pending finalisation of regular enquiries of unfair, restrictive and monopolistic trade practices.

(b) The number of cases registered by the MRTP Commission during the last three years are as under:

1.1.1998 to 31.12.1998	1.1.1999 to 31.12.1999	1.1.2000 to 31.12.2000
1067	901	847

The Commission has disposed of the following cases during the last three years:

1.1.1998 to 31.12.1998	1.1.1999 to 31.12.1999	1.1.2000 to 31.12.2000
488	696	501

Transfer of Officers

5807. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some officers of Railway Board are being transferred to Zonal headquarters and circles in view of a large number of such officers concentrating at the Railway Board;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said transfers have already been effected;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the expenditure being incurred by the Government as a result of a large number of surplus officers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (e) In the Ministry of Railways, the posts are being partly manned by the officers belonging to the Railway Board Secretariat Service and partly by officers drawn from the Zonal Railways. The officers who come from Zonal Railways have a prescribed tenure for posting in Board's Office, after which they are transferred to the Zonal Railways. The tenure puts a ceiling for their stay in Board though the officers can and sometimes in administrative exigencies, are transferred even before completion of their tenure.

With the increase in the work load in the Ministry of Railways over a period of time, some of the posts/ elements of the Zonal Railways posts, where the work

load comparatively was not as much, were transferred for operation in the Ministry to meet the requirements of work. Of late, however, an exercise has been initiated to streamline the work and to surrender/repatriate or hold in abeyance some of these posts/elements as a measure of economy in expenditure. In the process, mostly officers who had completed their tenure in Board's Office only have been repatriated to the Railways.

Transfer of posts/elements and officers are effected in administrative interest and requirement. Keeping with these requirements, 27 Officers in various grades have been transferred to Zonal Railways out of Railway Board during the last one year, upto July, 2001.

[English]

Coal Bed Methane in West Bengal

5808. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether coal bed methane (CH4) gas is available at Raniganj coal based area in West Bengal;

(b) if so, whether the exploration work has been undertaken with the help of UNDP and GEF (Global Environment Facility) by CIL and ONGC separately for experiment;

(c) if so, the reasons for not undertaking the job by the Union Government; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to supply coal bed methane gas to fertilizer units in the West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Preliminary studies and Research & Development (R&D) activities have indicated the presence of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) in Raniganj in West Bengal.

(b) and (c) Ministry of Coal, jointly with United Nation Development Programme (UNDP)/Global Environment Facility (GEF), has undertaken a CBM recovery and commercial utilization project for safer extraction of coal and also to demonstrate economic viability of harnessing CBM in India. This project is being executed by Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL), a subsidiary company of Coal India Ltd. (CIL) which is a Public Sector Undertaking under Ministry of Coal. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has not undertaken any such project.

(d) Supply of CBM to any consumer including fertilizer units would depend upon techno economic feasibility.

Pay Scale of Group 'B' Accounts Officers

5809. SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pay scale of Group 'B' posts of Accounts Officers, Asstt. Personal Officers, Private Secretaries, Vice Principals, Asstt. Hindi Officers were Rs. 2000-3500 to 2375-3750 since 1993;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether pay scale of any of the categories had been given on the pattern of posts under other Ministries;

(d) if so, whether scale of such categories was revised in other ministries since 1993;

(e) whether the Group 'B' of Railways have been denied the said benefits; and

(f) if so, the details of all such posts alongwith the reasons for not granting the revised pay to them since 1993?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) Pay Scales for Group 'B'posts on Zonal Railways & Production Units were revised from Rs. 2000-3500 (all Departments)/ Rs. 2375-3500 (Accounts Deptt.) to Rs. 2375-3750 with effect from 30.7.1993. The above revision was effected in compliance of the directions contained in order dated 30.7.93 of Hon'ble CAT/New Delhi in O.A. No. 731/87 (Northern Railway Class II Officers' Association Vs. UOI) which was upheld by Hon'ble Supreme Court. There are no Group 'B' posts of Vice Principals in the Railway Schools.

(c) Yes, Sir. Prior to revision in 1993, the pay scale of Accounts Officers was on the pattern of pay scales adopted for Indian Audit and Accounts Department.

(d) There was no revision of pay scales for such categories in other Ministries between the years 1993 and 1996. However, the pay scale of certain similar posts had been revised w.e.f. 1.1.96 on the basis of recommendations of Fifth Central Pay Commission.

(e) and (f) Group 'B' (Gazetted) posts in Railway Board (Ministry of Railways) and Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO), Lucknow were not given

the revised scale of Rs. 2375-3750 effective from 1993 from the reason that they were/are on the pattern of Central Secretariat Services. In case of RDSO, however, the revised pay scale has been provisionally granted arising out of Court decision. Presently two court cases are pending in this connection before Hon'ble Court/Delhi and, as such, the matter is subjudice.

Savings by Oil Sector

5810. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the savings made by the oil sector during the last three years, quarter-wise;

(b) whether the savings are satisfactory as compared to the quantum of production turnover/sales etc;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps the Government propose to take to increase the savings in oil sector to face the stiff competition from the private sector in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The savings achieved by the Public Sector Enterprises in the oil sector during the last three years, as a result of cost reduction/efficiency improvement measures were as follows:

Year	Savings (Rs. Cr)
1998-99	378.11
1999-2000	(—) 75.23
2000-2001	470.00

Savings during the year, 1999-2000 had declined due to the impact of pay revisions, etc.

(b) and (c) The raw material cost (price of crude oil and natural gas) and elements such as duty and taxes, depreciation, financing cost etc, over which the oil sector PSUs have little control, constitute about 95% of their overall cost. The controllable cost therefore, generally constitutes only about 4 to 5% of the total cost.

(d) Government have taken a number of measures to improve the savings in these enterprises. These, inter alia, include adoption of various cost cutting measures, reducing cost of borrowings, adoption of latest financial tools, upgradation of technology, manpower redeployment, etc., to improve efficiency and productivity.

Seeds Act

5811. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has sought the Union Government's approval for enactment of separate Seeds Act in the State;

(b) if so, whether Ministry of Home Affairs has demanded certain clarifications from the State Government on the proposal in response to State Government's letter dated June 16, 2000;

(c) if so, whether the State Government has sent the said clarifications to the Government on March 12, 2001; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government of Maharashtra has sought the Union Government's approval for enactment of separate Seeds Act in the State. This proposal was examined and the Government of India did not support the proposal as the Central Government proposes to amend the Central Seeds Act, 1966. A letter from the Government of Maharashtra, dated 12th March, 2001, was received containing various suggestions for incorporation in the proposed Central Seeds Act. The suggestions have been taken into consideration in drafting the proposed Central Seeds Act.

(d) Doesn't arise.

Suigeneris Legislation

5812. SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government assure to protect plant varieties through "Suigeneris Legislation"; and

(b) the steps taken to protect the peasants from use of terminator and traitor technology or from genetically engineered seeds which are also detrimental to the health of people and environment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) "The

Protection of Plant Varieties & Farmers' Rights Bill, 2001" which is based on a "Suigeneris System" has been passed by the Lok Sabha on 9.8.2001.

(b) This Bill has a provision that no registration shall be made of a variety which involves any technology including Terminator Technology and Genetic Use Restriction Technology, which is injurious to the life or health of human beings, animals or plants.

[Translation]

Foreign Capital Investment in Hydel Power Sector

5813. DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new project in Hydel Power Sector has been started wherein direct foreign investment from private sector is proposed;

(b) if so, the names of these projects;

(c) the foreign capital investment made in these projects by private sector; and

(d) the generation capacity of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (d) Since the inception of the private power policy of the Government of India in 1991, 4 schemes for setting up hydro electric power projects in the private sector, involving foreign direct investment, have been accorded techno-economic clearance of Central Electricity Authority (CEA). Details are given below:

Sl. No.	Name of the Project/Promoter/State	Capacity (MW)	Estimated/completed cost
1.	Vishnuprayage HEP, M/s. Jaiprakash Power Ventures Ltd., Uttar Pradesh.	400	US$ 107.35 Million+Rs. 1233.37 Crs. (1 US$ = Rs. 35.50)
2.	Shrinagar HEP M/s. Duncans North Hydro Power Co. Ltd., Uttar Pradesh	330	US$ 95.04 Million+Rs. 1299.89 Crs. (1 US$ = Rs. 42/-)
3.	Maheshwar HEP, M/s. Shree Maheshwar Hydel Power Corp. Ltd., Madhya Pradesh.	400	US$ 213.29 Million+Rs. 812.09 Crs. (1 US$ = Rs. 35.50)
4.	Dhamwari Sunda HEP, M/s. Dhamwari Power Co., Himachal Pradesh.	70	US$ 10.91 Million+Rs. 393.04 crores (1 US$ = Rs. 43/-)

The actual amount of foreign investment involved in the above projects will crystallize only after they achieve financial closure and complete construction.

[English]

Amount Paid for Units of Electricity

5814. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the units of electricity received and the amount paid therefor to different agencies by the Union Territory of Chandigarh during each of the last three years; and

(b) the units supplied to the consumers during the corresponding period and the amount billed on this account?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The total quantity of units purchased from the different agencies and the amounts paid therefor during the last three years by the Union Territory of Chandigarh are as under:-

Year	Total Units Purchased (MUs)	Payments made to different Agencies (Rs. in lakhs)						
		NHPC	NTPC	PGC	NAPP	BBMP	RAPP	Others
1998-99	917.14	2528	3030	353	648	9253	—	88
1999-2000	926.97	2520	3892	397	563	8521	—	—
2000-2001	951.46	2494	4560	503	666	7772	215	—

Apart from payments made during 1998-2001, approximate liability of Rs. 2400 lakhs in pending on account of budget constraints.

(b) The total quantity of units supplied to the consumers during 1998-2001, amount billed on account thereof during the corresponding period are as under:-

Year	Total units sold to various consumers (Million Units)	Total Revenue realized/billed (Rs. In lakhs)
1998-99	715.02	15553
1999-2000	722.62	17597
2000-01	721.00	18656

Caste Discrimination During Gujarat Quake

5815. SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that a joint study by the Delhi based Indian Social Institute (ISI) and an Ahmedabad based NGO, Behaviaral Science Centre (BSC) has confirmed allegations on caste discrimination during the Gujarat quake relief; and

(b) if so, the details of the findings and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The Government of India in the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation has no information about any such joint study.

Development of Inland Water Transport and Tourism in Kerala

5816. SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has submitted any proposal for the development of Inland Water Transport System and tounsm; and

(b) if so, the details of the project and the present status of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Kerala have submitted proposals for the development of Inland Water Transport System and Tourism. The statement-I, II and III containing details of the proposals are attached.

Statement-I

Centrally Sponsored Scheme — Sanctioned Scheme

(Rupees in lakhs)

Sl. No.	State	Name of the Scheme	Sanctioned cost	Central share	Total amount released up to March, 2001	Status (as per the performance report submitted by the State Government)
1.	Kerala	Modernization of 55 jetties for ferry services	136.38	68.19	53.45	Work completed.
2.	Kerala	Modernization of 379 jeties consolidated project proposal	6714.57	307.29	199.00	Works of 315 jetties completed.
3.	Kerala	Modernization and improvement of waterway from Kotti to-Kottapuram	321.21	160.61	15.00	Work in progress.

Statement-II

Details of Proposed Centrally Sponsored Schemes

(Rupees in lakhs)

Sl. No.	State	Name of the Scheme	Estimated Cost	Status
1.	Kerala	Excavation of Badagara Mahe Canal	1692	Proposal received from the State Govt. has examined in the light of the guidelines issued by the Ministry and the State Govt. had been advised to submit a fresh proposal to be prepared in the light of the observations made by the Ministry. No fresh proposal has been received from the State Government.
2.	Kerala	Development of T.S. Canal from Kovalam to Kollam	3640	Revised proposal has been received from State Govt. of Kerala in March 2001. after examination of the proposal, IWAI's observations were sent to the State Government for their clarification. No response has been received from the State Government in this regard.
3.	Kerala	Development of Navigation between Velapatnam River to Mahe River	15000	After examination of the proposal the State Government were requested to furnish the clarification on certain observations made by the Ministry but the State Government failed to furnish the clarification due to which the matter has been closed by the Ministry.
4.	Kerala	Improvement to Beypore-Kallai Canal	1300	Revised proposal was received from the State Government in January 2001 and after examination of the proposal the Ministry have made certain observations on which the clarification from the State Government is awaited.

Statement-III

Status of Backwater Projects Sanctioned by Government of India as on 18.7.2001

	Name of the project/Scheme	Amount Sanctioned by GOI in Rupees	Amount released by GOI in Rupees	Balance due from GOI in Rupees	Physical Progress
	1	2	3	4	5
1991-92					
1.	Boat Train at Kumarakom Tourist Camp	1615000.00	1615000.00	—	Construction in progress.

1	2	3	4	5
1995-96				
1. Waterside Amenity at Kumarakom	2082000.00	1100000.00	982000.00	Construction in progress.
1996-97				
1. Rice Boats	1000000.00	500000.00	500000.00	Completed.
2. Waterside Amenity at Kayamkulam	3574000.00	1500000.00	2074000.00	Project Commissioned.
1997-98				
1. Nehru Centenary Pavilion at Punnamade lake in Alappuzha	3500000.00	1050000.00	2450000.00	Being executed. Land acquisition is in advanced stage.
2. Tourist Complex at Kumarakom	4000000.00	2000000.00	2000000.00	Completed and Commissioned.
3. Waterside Amenity at Alumkadavu, Karunagappally	3000000.00	2400000.00	600000.00	Commissioned.
4. Waterside Amenity at Thanneermukkam	3000000.00	1000000.00	2000000.00	Being executed Land Acquisition is in advanced stage.
5. Purchase of the rice boats (6 nos.)	4800000.00	2400000.00	2400000.00	Being executed.
1998-99				
1. Purchase of House Boats for Malabar	5000000.00	1500000.00	3500000.00	Being executed.
2. Backwater Signages	2000000.00	1600000.00	400000.00	Completed.
3. Water Sports Complex at Ashtamudi	4000000.00	1200000.00	2800000.00	Being executed.
1999-2000				
1. Waterside Amenity Nedumudi	5000000.00	10000.00	4990000.00	Being executed. Land acquisition is in advanced stage.

1	2	3	4	5
2. Water side Amenity Kotharathode	5000000.00	1500000.00	3500000.00	Being executed. Land acquisition is in advanced stage.
3. Waterside Amenity Pallathuruthy	5000000.00	1500000.00	3500000.00	Being executed. Land acquisition is in advanced stage.
4. Waterside Amenity Vattakkayal	5000000.00	1000.00	4999000.00	Being executed. Land acquisition is in advanced stage.
5. Construction of Houseboats for at Malabar (4 Nos.)	3000000.00	3519.00	2996481.00	Being executed.
6. Tourist Complex Thanneermukkom	10000000.00	3000000.00	7000000.00	Being executed.
7. Procurement of Pontoons and inflatable two-seater speed boats	7500000.00	10000.00	7490000.00	Being executed

[Translation]

Permission for Business After Retirement

5817. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any rules permitting the retired railway employees to undertake any Government job after their retirement;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of railway employees starting their own business in the railways within one year of retirement; and

(d) the various steps taken by the Railways not to allow such employees to do any business in the railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Re-employment in Government after superannuation should be clearly in public interest and is considered only in such cases where the other railway employees are not ripe enough to take over the job; or the retiring railway employee to be re-employed is of outstanding merit.

(c) No such data is maintained.

(d) Prior sanction of the Government is required to be obtained if a Group 'A' officer wishes to take up any commercial employment within two years of his retirement. Such sanction can be refused under specified circumstances as provided in Railway Services (Pension) Rules, 199

[English]

National Judical Academy

5818. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to set up a National Judicial Academy to train judicial officers of States and UTs;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of places where the academy is likely to be set up; and

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

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

National Judicial Academy has been decided to be set up at Bhopal inter-alia to train the judicial officers of States and UTs.

There is no proposal to set up an academy anywhere else by the Central Government.

(c) The building of the Academy is under construction. The complex of the Academy is likely to be set up by March, 2002.

High Rates of Hotel Accommodation

5819. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "hospitality costs more in India than abroad" appearing in the 'Business Standard' dated July 27, 2001;

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

(c) whether the Government have taken any steps to ascertain the prevailing rates of hotel accommodation in various foreign countries and India;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether higher rates of hotel accommodation in India has adversely affected the tourism; and

(f) if so, the measures taken to improve the situation to promote tourism in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Hotels in India are not more expensive when compared to other neighbouring countries. Although, the published rates in some Indian 5-State Deluxe Hotels are perceived to be high, particularly in the gateway cities of Delhi and Mumbai, but in actual practice, the average realised rate is much lower than the published rate because of the discount policy of the hotels. In any case, the Government does not control hotel tariffs in India post liberalization in 1991.

(e) Average room rates in major 5-Star Hotels have shown a downward trend in the recent past largely because of increase in supply of rooms and while hotels are able to realise lower room rates, there is no report of hotels lowering their published rates. Room occupancy has fallen in the recent months which is largely due to off season.

(f) The measures adopted to promote India as an International Tourism Destination are through advertising in the print and electronic media, participation in travel exhibitions & fairs overseas, providing information through brochures, through the Internet in the India Tourism Website, production of CD-ROMs etc. The Ministry has launched a tourism Portal for the benefit of all tourists including NRIs and PIO's.

[English]

Pending Corruption Cases

5820. DR. M.P. JAISWAL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether several cases of corruption have been lying pending in the Supreme Court and various High Courts of the country;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government for expeditious disposal of such cases?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Registry of Supreme Court of India has informed that the cases pertaining to the Prevention of Corruption Act are being taken by the Supreme Court of India on priority basis.

The Supreme Court in the case of Arivazhagan Vs. State, on 8.3.200 (reported in 2000 (2) SCALE 263), inter alia, directed as under:

> ".....it is true that the concept of speedy trial must apply to all trials, but in the trials for offences relating to corruption the pace must be accelerated with greater momentum due to variety of reasons....."

Government has also taken various steps for speedy disposal of cases. These include, inter alia, establishment of Special Courts (including Special CBI Courts)/tribunals and appointment of Special Judicial/Metropolitan Magistrates. Some amendments in the Criminal Procedure Code are also proposed.

Danger to Readymade Garment Industry

5821. SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Bina Brand wale readymade wastra Udyogon Ka Bhavishya Khatre Mein" appearing in the Dainik Jagran dated April 20, 2001;

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

(c) the steps likely to be taken by the Government to salvage the industry from such danger?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The newsitem has apprehended that the domestic industry producing unbranded garments may not be able to withstand competition from the cheaper garments being imported in lage quantities after removal of Quantitative Restrictions on imports w.e.f. 1.4.2001.

After the withdrawal of quantitative restrictions, the imports of textile have shown an increase. However, the total imports are not even one per-cent of the annual domestic production of textiles in the country. The imports, thus, are not having any significant adverse impact on domestic industry.

(c) Government is keeping a watch on the imports and would strive to ensure that imports do not cause any serious detriment or injury to the domestic industry. In case any unfair trade practices come to the notice, action, if necessary, under anti-dumping, countervailing measures etc. of World Trade Organisation (WTO) could be taken.

Famine in States and Financial Assistance Provided

5822. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of States where famine occurred during the last year and the estimated loss suffered due to the famine;

(b) the financial assistance and also the quantity of foodgrains provided by the Union Government to each State;

(c) whether all the States have distributed the foodgrains free of cost; and

(d) the value of crops of the farmers destroyed due to famine in Rajasthan during the last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) During 2000-2001, the Government of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan had reported drought situation of varying magnitude. One district in Uttaranchal had reported water scarcity conditions.

(b) State-wise details release of Central share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) during 2000-2001 & 2001-02, assistance released from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) and foodgrains provided free of cost under Food for Work Programme, to drought affected States, is indicated in the statement attached.

(c) Distribution at the ground level is the responsibility of the State Government concerned.

(d) The Government of Rajasthan had estimated the value of crops damaged as Rs. 35.12 crore.

Statement

Famine in States and Financial assistance provided.

S.No.	State	Central share of CRF released (Rs. in crore)	Assistance released from NCCF	Foodgrains provided (lakh MTs)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	226.53	—	3.00
2.	Chhattisgarh	42.23	58.94	5.07
3.	Gujarat	248.15	112.00	1.48

1	2	3	4	5
4.	Himachal Pradesh	66.85	18.98	0.12
5.	Jammu & Kashmir	26.18	23.20	—
6.	Madhya Pradesh	96.30	57.72	2.13
7.	Maharashtra	241.70	—	0.50
8.	Orissa	168.31	49.62	1.50
9.	Rajasthan	318.26	113.97	7.40
10.	Uttaranchal	7.10	—	—

Post Graduation Training in Archaeology

5823. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the achievement made in regard to post graduation training in Archaeology during each of the last three years till date;

(b) the number of trainees who were imparted training in this regard during the said period, State-wise; and

(c) the details of criteria laid down for admission in PG training in Archaeology along with fee and annual expenditure in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Over the last three years, the training imparted for the Post Graduate Diploma course in Archaeology made significant strides in the field of excavation and research. The excavations at Rakhigarhi brought to light important facets of the 'Early' and 'Mature' Harappan periods throwing new light on their settlements and subsistence patterns. The details of research have been given in statement-I.

(b) Kindly see statement-II.

(c) Kindly see statement-III.

Statement-I

1998-2000	1999-2000	2000-2002
— Harappan tools & implements.	— Internal and external trade of the Harappans	— Ethno archaeology of feeding cups
— Dhatu Puravesh extracted from Rakhigarhi	— History of Buddhism with special reference to Manjushri cult in Laddakh	— Ethno archaeology of cut wares
— Structural morphology at Rakhigarhi	— Contribution of Shri R.C. Agrawal in the field of archaeology	— Ethno archaeology of toy carts
— Locational analysis of Harappan sites	— Mature Harappan pottery shapes and painted motifs	— Ethno archaeology of kernos ring
— Bone & Ivory objects of Rakhigarhi	— Contribution of Padamshree Dr. Vishnu Shreedhar Vakankar in Indian Archaeology	— Ethno archaeology of ring wells
— Harappan Grafity	— Contribution of Dr. B.P. Sinha in Indian Archaeologgy and Industry	— Circular temple at Sravasti
— Kanchal Mitty Udyog is Sindu Velly Civilization		— Gold in ancient India
— Harappan bead industry		— Ethno archaeology of marine shell

- Maranmurtian of Rakhigarhi
- Shell objects of Rakhigarhi
- Harappan Kakes and Mushthikaiyen
- Religious practices in Harappan context
- Maranmay Churia extracted from Rakhigarhi
- A critical study of Harappan legacy and its implication
- Evidences of the eight miracles and seven stations of the Buddha's life in Bagan period, Myanmar.
- Studies on influence of Indian Buddhist, art and architecture in ancient Myanmar
- Contribution of James Burgess to Indian archaeology.
- Site catchment analysis of the Harappan
- Contribution of Prof. G.R. Sharma in Indian Archaeology
- Mesolithic culture of Orissa
- A comparative study of Indian Harappan fortification
- Contribution of Prof. Brajvasilal in Indian Archaeology
- Architecture of ancient temples of Uttaranchal
- Lead in ancient India
- Chaitya window (Gavaksha)
- Ethno archaeology of 'barbotine' ware
- Ayakapattá
- Glass in ancient India
- Boats in ancient India

Statement-II

Name of State	1998-2000	1999-2001	2000-2002
Bihar	four	two	—
Chhattisgarh	one	—	—
J & K	—	one	—
Jharkhand	one	—	—
Karnataka	—	one	—
Madhya Pradesh	two	two	three
Maharashtra	two	one	—
Orissa	one	one	three
Rajasthan	—	one	—
Tamil Nadu	—	three	four
Uttaranchal	—	one	—
Uttar Pradesh	one	two	three
West Bengal	one	—	one
Foreign Students from Myanmar	—	two	—
Total	thirteen	seventeen	fourteen

Statement-III

The criteria laid down for admission to the PGDA course are as under:

The selection is made on the basis of applications invited through advertisements. Applicants working in Central/State Governments and Universities have to route their applications through prescribed channels. Candidates short listed are required to appear for a written test followed by a viva on the basis of which a final selection is made. There are 15 seats per session.

The qualification for admission is a Master's Degree in Ancient or Medieval Indian History/Archaeology/ Anthropology from a recognized University or equivalent with a minimum of 55% marks in the aggregate, relaxable by 5% in the case of SC/ST/OBC candidates and candidates working in the Archaeological Organization, Central/State Government and University Department.

The maximum age limit is 27 years, reckoned from the last date for submission of applications. This however is relaxable in case of SC/ST/OBC and in-service candidates as per rules.

No fees are charged. The students are paid a stipend @ Rs. 1500/- per month.

The annual expenditure on training varies from 25 to 30 lakhs.

Financial Assistance for Rural Electrification in Tribal Areas

5824. PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether funds have been released for rural electrification in the tribal areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the amount released during the last one year, State-wise; and

(c) the progress made in the rural electrification?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) The rural electrification in tribal areas is mainly covered under Minimum Needs Programme (MNP). The State-wise details of an amount of Rs. 175 crores released by the Ministry of Finance to the States during the year 2000-2001 is given at statement-I.

(c) State-wise details indicating the progress made in respect of Village Electrification and Pumpsets Energisation at the end of May, 2001 is given at statements-II & III.

Statement-I

Loan Released by Ministry of Finance under Rural Electrification Programme (MNP) During 2000-2001.

(Rs. in Lakh)

S.No.	States	Loan
1	2	3
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	961.00
2.	Assam	2652.00
3.	Bihar	3767.00
4.	Himachal Pradesh	72.00
5.	Jammu & Kashmir	77.00
6.	Karnataka	7.00
7.	Madhya Pradesh	549.00
8.	Manipur	131.00
9.	Meghalaya	1872.00
10.	Mizoram	16.00
11.	Nagaland	38.00
12.	Orissa	1133.00
13.	Rajasthan	507.00
14.	Tripura	14.00
15.	Uttar Pradesh	4547.00
16.	West Bengal	1157.00
	Total	17500.00

Rs. 175.00 Crores.

Statement-II

Villages Electrified upto May, 2001

Sl. No.	States	Total inhabited villages as per 1991 census	Achievements as on 31.3.2001 Numbers	Achievements as on 31.3.2001 %age	Cumulative at the end of May, 2001	Total Achievement to the end of May, 2001
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Andhra Pradesh	26586	26565	100.0	–	26565 (*)
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	3649	2206	60.5	NA	2206 (©)
3.	Assam	24685	19019	77.0	NA	19019 (c)
4.	Bihar	67513	35437	NA	NIL	35437($$) (d)
5.	Jharkhand (++)	–	12488	NA	–	12488
6.	Goa	360	360	100.0	–	360 (@)
7.	Gujarat	18028	17940	100.0	–	17940 (*)
8.	Haryana	6759	6759	100.0	–	6759
9.	Himachal Pradesh	16997	16881	99.3	NIL	16881
10.	J & K	6477	6315	97.5	NA	6315 ($) (a)
11.	Karnataka	27066	26702	98.7	NA	26702 (+) (b)
12.	Kerala	1384	1384	100.00	–	1384
13.	Madhya Pradesh	51806	50286	97.1	NIL	50286
14.	Chhattisgarh	19720	18076	91.7	NIL	18076 (d)
15.	Maharashtra	40412	40412	100.0	–	40412 (@)
16.	Manipur	2181	2001	91.7	NIL	2001
17.	Meghalaya	5484	2518	45.9	NA	2518 (c)
18.	Mizoram	698	691	99	NIL	691
19.	Nagaland	1216	1212	99.7	NIL	1212 (d)
20.	Orissa	46989	35232	75.0	NIL	35232 (d)
21.	Punjab	12428	12428	100	–	12428
22.	Rajasthan	37889	35912	94.8	2	35914
23.	Sikkim	447	405	100	–	405 (#)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	Tamil Nadu	15822	15822	100	-	15822
25.	Tripura	855	813	95.1	NIL	813
26.	Uttar Pradesh	97122	77047	79.3	1	77048
27.	Uttaranchal	15681	12488	79.6	NA	12488 ©
28.	West Bengal	37910	29596	78.1	7	29603 (d)
	Total (States)	596165	506995	86.5	10	507005
	Total (UTs)	1093	1090	100	-	1090 (*)
	Grand Total	587258	508085	86.5	10	508095

Note: Target for the year 2001-2002 not finalized.
(*) Fully electrified Balance not feasible for electrification.
(#) Provisional 42 Nos. forest villages not electrified.
(@) Provisional to be confirmed as per 1991 census.
(+) 329 villages declared non-feasible for electrification.
(++) Separate data not available.
($$) Achievement as per 1981 census.
($) Achievement as per 1971 census. 1991 census not held.
(a) as on 31.3.98
(b) as on 28.2.2001
(c) as on 31.3.2001
(d) as on 30.4.2001

Statement-III

Pumpsets energisation upto May, 2001

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Estimate ultimate potential in terms of electrical pumpsets (*)	Pumpsets energised As on 31.3.2001		Acheivement during 2001-2002 (Prov.)		
			Numbers	%	Cumulative at the end of May 2001	Total Achievement to the end of May 2001	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1981000	1924543	97.2	NA	1924543	(d)
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1200	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Assam	254000	3675	1.4	NA	3675	(d)
4.	Bihar	1352200	274911	20.3	NIL	274911	(e)
5.	Jharkhand (++)	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Goa	7800	6658	85.4	NA	6658	(b)
7.	Gujarat	779800	694163	89.0	1314	695477	(e)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8.	Haryana	470800	420472	89.3	326	420798	-
9.	Himachal Pradesh	14200	6167	43.4	29	6196	-
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	67200	5621	8.4	NA	5621	(a)
11.	Karnataka	1357000	1246799	91.9	NA	1246799	(c)
12.	Kerala	435600	392295	90.1	3601	395896	-
13.	Madhya Pradesh	2773600	1236737	NA	271	1237008	-
14.	Chhattisgarh	-	73984	NA	81	74065	(e)
15.	Maharashtra	2449800	2327716	95.0	6245	2333961	-
16.	Manipur	37600	45	0.1	-	45	-
17.	Meghalaya	14200	65	0.5	-	65	-
18.	Mizoram	-	-	-	-	-	-
19.	Nagaland	10000	176	1.8	-	176	-
20.	Orissa	1214000	74625	6.1	NIL	74625	(e)
21.	Punjab	751000	777854	103.6	2528	780382	($)
22.	Rajasthan	630600	639131	101.4	3433	642564	(#)
23.	Sikkim	5000	-	-	-	-	-
24.	Tamil Nadu	1662600	1723778	103.7	3837	1727615	-
25.	Tripura	14800	2094	14.1	-	2094	-
26.	Uttar Pradesh	2610000	808238	NA	140	808378	-
27.	Uttaranchal	-	17521	NA	NA	17521	(d)
28.	West Bengal	650000	110793	17	167	110960	(e)
	Total (States)	19544000	12768061	65.3	21972	12790033	-
	Total (UTs)	50000	38150	76.3	10	38160	-
	Total All India	19594000	12806211	65.4	21982	12828193	-

Note: Target for the year 2001-2002 not finalised.

(*) Tentative. Ground water potential has been revised as per the minutes of the 19th meeting of the central ground water board held on 31.10.95.

(#) cumulative reconnection/disconnection as on 31.3.2000 are (–) 14041.

($) cumulative reconnection/disconnection as on 31.3.2000 are (+) 15982.

(++) Separate data not available.

(a) as on 31.3.1998

(b) as on 31.12.1999

(c) as on 28.2.2001

(d) as on 31.3.2001

(e) as on 30.4.2001

[English]

Development of Pink City

5825. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to develop the "Pink City" as a "World Heritage City";

(b) if so, the salient features of the "World Heritage City" along with the names of such cities in the world;

(c) whether any other cities in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and other States are being considered for development into a "World Heritage Cities"; and

(d) if so, the details thereof along with their salient features, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) To be eligible for inclusion in the World Heritage List, UNESCO has laid down guidelines. These include evaluation of spatial organization, structure, materials, forms and where possible, functions of a group of buildings etc. So far Government has not taken up evaluation of any Indian city for inclusion in the World Heritage List.

(b) to (d) Question does not arise.

Incentives for Agro-Processing Units

5826. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA:
SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:
SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering measures to provide incentives like Tax holidays for agro-processing units in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any concrete action plan has been prepared in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the extent to which it will help for setting up of agro-processing units in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH): (a) to (e) Rationalisation of tax structure is a continuing process and Government have been taking steps in this regard from time-to-time. In the current financial year Excise Duty on processed fruits and vegetables has been brought down from 16% to 0%.

The Department of Food Processing Industries has initiated action for formulating a National Food Processing Policy and for this purpose Draft Policy has been prepared which envisages, among other things, creation of enabling environment, infrastructure development, linkages at farm level etc. This, it is expected, will give a thrust to the development of food processing sector in the country including in the rural area.

Rail Link between Rajasthan and Sindh

5827. SHRI K.E. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan have agreed to restore the Rajasthan-Sindh rail link;

(b) if so, whether both countries have decided to make an agreement in this regard; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Seminar on Working of Judicial and Legal System

5828. SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:

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

(a) whether a seminar with a theme on working of judicial and legal system in the post-independence era was organized by the Bar Council of India recently;

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

(c) the details of discussion held and the outcome thereof; and

(d) the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (d) A Seminar on "Working of the Judicial System in the Post-Independence Era and Challenges before it" was held at Shimla. The hon'ble Minister of Law, Justice & Company Affairs inaugurated the Seminar and addressed the same. Five topics, namely, Judicial Activism, Judicial Accountability, Quest for an Independent Forum for the Choice of Judges, Perception of Public regarding the Functioning of the Legal System, Environmental and Human Rights, were discussed. With regard to Judicial activism, it was felt that, though it was desirable, it should not encroach upon fields that were the exclusive domains of the Executive and the Legislature. The need for judicial accountability was urged by every speaker. The speakers generally felt that there should be some statutory mechanism for assessing the performance of the judiciary. It was also felt that the provision in the Constitution for impeachment was not an effective remedy or solution. For the choice of the Judges at the High Court and the Supreme Court level, it was stated by the speakers that there should be a National Judicial Commission; desirability of constituting an All-India Judicial Service for subordinate judiciary was also mooted by some. Regarding public perception of the judicial and legal system, members generally felt that judicial system was still respected, though delays were deprecated. So far as the human rights and the environmental issues are concerned, speakers generally felt that there should be awareness about them. The Pollution Control Boards should be vigilant. Where human rights are concerned, police excesses and custodial deaths should be severely dealt with. No specific recommendations were made at the Seminar.

Re-Schedule of Train Timings

5829. SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the difficulties faced by the office goers who travel by Sirsa Express in the morning as the train reaches New Delhi after 9.45 a.m.;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to re-schedule the time of Sirsa Express and DJ Passenger at Rohtak in the morning as Sirsa Express could reach New Delhi between 9.00 to 9.15 a.m. so that the office goers could reach their office in time; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir. Against the scheduled arrival of 09.30 a.m. at New Delhi of Sirsa-Tilakbridge Haryana Express, the train, on some days, is arriving late.

(b) and (c) The rescheduling of Sirsa-Tilakbridge Haryana Express and 2 TR Rohtak-Tilakbridge Passenger (not 2 DJ Jind-Delhi Passenger) is not feasible on operational and other grounds.

[Translation]

Seizure of Adulterated Petroleum Products

5830. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether adulterated petroleum products were seized from several places during the last six months;

(b) if so, the quantum of adulterated petroleum products recovered in each case;

(c) the purposes for which these adulterated petroleum products are used; and

(d) the number of persons found involved in the illegal activity and the laws under which action was taken or proposed to be taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The details of seizure of adulterated petroleum products during the last six months are given in the Statement.

(c) The adulterated petroleum products were being sold to consumers by dealers of the Retail Outlets for pecuniary benefits.

(d) Punitive action against the defaulting dealers indulging in adulteration is taken under the Marketing Discipline Guidelines 2001 and/or in terms of Dealership Agreement.

Statement

The details of seizure of adulterated petroleum products during the last six months are as follows:-

S.No.	Name of the Company	Name of the Location/ Retail Outlets	Quantity of Product
1	2	3	4
1.	IOC	Two Godowns in Haiderpur (Shalimar Bagh) and Shahbad (Bawana) in Delhi	Approx. 75000 ltrs. of Adulterated LDO
2.	IOC	M/s. Anil Filling Station, Jobner, Dist. Jobner (Rajasthan)	HSD - 10000 ltrs. SKO - 3000 ltrs.
3.	IOC	Sadbhawana Dhaba at Rajabpur, District J.P. Nagar (U.P.)	Approx. 40000 ltrs. combined volume of MS & HSD
4.	IOC	M/s. Mishra Petroleum, Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh	Approx. 3000 ltrs. of Industrial Solvent and Approx. 1000 ltrs. of unauthorised mixed HSD
5.	BPCL	M/s. Dhanyhalakshmi, Gundlupet, Mysore, Karnataka	400 ltrs of MS
6.	BPCL	M/s. M.R. Karnad, Udipi, Udipi, Karnataka	1970 ltrs. of MS
7.	BPCL	M/s. Charotikasa Petroleum, Charotikas, Thana, Maharashtra	1 kl of HSD
8.	BPCL	M/s. Kalamboli Service Station, Kalamboli, Thana, Maharashtra	10 kl of HSD
9.	BPCL	M/s. Kala Kankar Automobiles, Kalakankar, Pratapgarh, U.P.	8319 ltrs. of HSD
10.	HPCL	M/s. Ramachandra Oil Supplies, Jadcherla, Andhra Pradesh	Adulterated product recovered = 14500 ltrs.
11.	HPCL	M/s. Jai Mata Dee Highway, Pipra, Bihar	Adulterated product recovered = 4000 ltrs.
12.	HPCL	M/s. Shriram Petroleum, Dediapada, Narmada, Gujarat	Adulterated product recovered = 5000 ltrs.
13.	HPCL	M/s. Snowline Filling Station, Rampur, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh	Adulterated product recovered = 2280 ltrs.
14	HPCL	Kunnuthura Brothers, Tiruvallangur, Kerala	Adulterated product recovered = 600 ltrs.
15.	HPCL	M/s. Shirole Brothers, Pune, Maharashtra	Adulterated product recovered = 6257 ltrs.
16.	HPCL	M/s. Sitaram Service Station, Angul, Orissa	MS - 615 ltrs. HSD - 1332 ltrs.

1	2	3	4
17.	HPCL	M/s. Rehana Cold Storage, Kapurthala, Punjab	Adulterated product recovered = 10780 ltrs.
18.	HPCL	M/s. Saltora Filling Station, Saltora, West Bengal	Adulterated product recovered = 193 ltrs.
19	IBP	M/s. Rishi Petroleum, Kheda, Gujarat	HSD - 18,295 ltrs.

[English]

Inter Island Travel in Andaman & Nicobar

5831. SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Islands of Southern Group of Islands in Andaman and Nicobar are facing lot of difficulties in inter-island services by ship;

(b) whether the Government are proposing to purchase new ships for Andaman and Nicobar Islands to facilitate the passengers of Southern Groups of Islands;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir. However, at times, difficulties are faced by people of southern group of Islands due to non-availability of the inter-island vessels viz., m.v. Chowra and mv Sentinel due to machinery breakdown and Annual Passenger Survey.

(b) and (c) The following vessels are already proposed to be acquired for facilitating better passenger service in southern group of Islands:

Sl.No.	Type of vessel
1.	Two 400 passenger vessels under construction, one each at M/s HDPEL (Kolkata) and M/s Alcock Ashdown (Gujarat)
2.	Four 100 passenger vessel under construction at M/s Hindustan Shipyard Ltd., (Vizag)
3.	Two 75 passenger cum 50 ton cargo vessel under construction at M/s Alcock Ashdown (Gujarat)
4.	One 50 passenger Motor Launch under construction at M/s Inland Marine works, Port Blair.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Visit of Tourists of Taj Mahal

5832. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
SHRI PADAM SEN CHOUDHRY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that domestic tourists visiting "The Taj" are asked to show proof of their being Indian Nationals due to which they have to face a lot of difficulties and a number of tourists are compelled to return without seeing the Taj Mahal;

(b) if so, whether the Government have conducted any inquiry in this regard; and

(c) if so, the outcome of the inquiry and the action taken against the guilty officials?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir. The Government have not received such reports.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise.

Adverse Effect of Consumption of Milk

5833. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the consumption of milk, being supplied at present, is causing adverse effect on the health of people;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the target of one thousand litre milk every year on average from milch cattle has not been achieved despite the efforts being made by the Government;

(d) whether the Government propose to formulate a policy to ensure sufficient quantity of cheap milk; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Consumption of milk supplied through organised agencies such as cooperative milk unions, federations, public and private sector dairies to not have any adverse effect on the health of people.

(c) The average annual yield of milch animal (in milk) has increased from about 858 litres per annum in 1985-86 to 1291 litres per annum in 1998-99.

(d) and (e) The cooperatives' network in the country market good quality milk at reasonable rate.

Railway Terminal at Raigarh

5834. SHRI VISHNUDEO SAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the date on which the foundation stone for construction of terminal at Raigarh in Chhattisgarh was laid;

(b) the progress made so far regarding construction of terminal; and

(c) the funds allocated and released for construction of terminal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) On 14.09.1998.

(b) and (c) A major Coaching Maintenance Depot is already in existence at Bilaspur which is about 100 Kms far from Raigarh. Bearing this in view, construction of a new Coaching Terminal at Raigarh is not felt essential at this juncture. The construction work has since been dropped.

Increase in Power Tariff

5835. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:
DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been constant increase in power tariff in the country during the last two years;

(b) if so, the rate of power tariff during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001;

(c) the reasons of such increase in the power tariff; and

(d) the share of distribution, transmission, generation, administrative-expenditures in the power tariff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) There has been increase in power tariff during the last two years.

(b) The rate of power tariff during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 are as under:-

Year	Domestic	Commercial	Agricultural/ Irrigation	Industrial	Railway Traction	Outside State	Overall Average
1998-99	140.13	322.44	20.62	320.53	405.53	163.64	185.48
1999-2000	157.81	354.85	21.09	344.52	414.72	181.57	198.99
2000-2001	173.40	340.43	28.48	359.04	420.76	193.76	212.02

(c) The power tariff has been enhanced to adjust the increase in the cost of power due to increase in fuel cost, cost of operation and maintenance and other administrative expenses.

(d) As many states have State Electricity Boards discharging the functions of distribution, transmission, generation in an integrated manner, the share of these activities in tariff is not shown separately.

[English]

Mangalore-Chennai Mail Accident

5836. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:
SHRI Y.V. RAO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mangalore-Chennai Mail plunged into river near Kozikhode in June, 2001 on account of collapse of the Railway Bridge where doubling of line was in progress;

(b) whether the strength of the Bridge was not checked before taking up the doubling work;

(c) whether that bridge was among the 262 bridges of 100 years old weak bridge pointed out by Justice Khanna Committee; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not taking safety aspect seriously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) The double line is not being laid on the existing bridge. A new bridge 12 m away from the old bridge is under construction for the double line. There is no link between the accident to Mangalore-Chennai Mail while passing over the old bridge and doubling work.

(c) No. Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Recommendations of CACP

5837. RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the recommendations made by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices in regard to the minimum support price of agricultural commodities during the last two years;

(b) the details of recommendations which have not been accepted by the Government; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) to (c) A statement showing the minimum support prices of agricultural commodities recommended by the Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) and announced by the Government for 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 crops is enclosed. It may be seen from the statement that the Government improved upon the recommendations made by the CACP is respect of some agricultural commodities both in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 and fixed the minimum support prices (MSPs) at higher level than those recommended by the CACP keeping in view the costs and other related aspects for these crops. In all other cases, the MSPs were fixed at the level recommended by the CACP.

Statement

Minimum Support Prices as recommended by CACP and announced by Government (According to Crop year)

(Rs. per quintal)

S. Nos.	Commodity	1999-2000		2000-2001	
		Recommended by CACP	Announced by Govt.	Recommended by CACP	Announced by Govt.
1	2	3	4	5	6
Khairf					
1.	Paddy-Common	465	490	510	510
	Paddy-Grade 'A'	495	520	540	540
2.	Jowar	410	415	445	445

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Bajra	410	415	445	445
4.	Maize	410	415	445	445
5.	Ragi	410	415	445	445
6.	Tur (Arhar)	1100	1105	1200	1200
7.	Moong	1100	1105	1200	1200
8.	Urad	1100	1105	1200	1200
9.	Groundnut-in-shell	1150	1155	1220	1220
10.	Soyabean-Black	750	755	775	775
	Soyabean-Yellow	840	845	865	865
11.	Sunflower Seed	1150	1155	1170	1170
12.	Cotton-F-414/H-777	1550 **	1575 **	1625 **	1625 **
	Cotton-H-4	1750	1775	1825	1825
13.	Tobacco (Rs./kg)-				
	F2 Grade Black Soil	25.00	25.00	26.00	26.00
	L2 Grade Light Soil	27.00	27.00	28.00	28.00
14.	Nigerseed	910	915	1025	1025
15.	Sesamum	1200	1205	1300	1300
16.	Jute	750	750	785	785
17.	++Copra- (milling)	3250	3250	3250	3300
	(Ball)	3500	3500	3500	3550
Rabi					
1.	Wheat	550	580	580	610
2.	Barley	430	430	460	500
3.	Gram	1015	1015	1060	1100
4.	Rapesead/Mustard	1100	1100	1135	1200
5.	Safflower	1100	1100	1125	1200
6.	Masur (lentil)	-	-	1200	1200

++ For calendar years 1999 & 2000.

** For J-34 variety also.

[English]

Harmful Effects of Pesticides

5838. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "with that fruit bite, you would be licking pesticides appearing in the Times of India dated July 10, 2001;

(b) whether the Government have taken any steps to educate the farmers in regard to the use of pesticides in harvesting the fruits and vegetables so as to reduce the harmful effects of pesticides on human beings;

(c) whether the Government propose to launch any programme for creating awareness amongst the people about the use of fruits and vegetables after taking all the precautionary measures; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Following are the steps taken by the Government:—

(i) The Registration Committee constituted under the Insecticides Act, 1968, while granting registration for pesticides, prescribes dosage, waiting period, number and method of application so as to ensure that pesticides residues are within the tolerance limits prescribed under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954.

(ii) To check unsafe farming practices, the Government is promoting eco-friendly approach through Integrated Pest Management (IPM) on various crops.

(iii) An educational and training Programme on IPM for farmers and extension functionaries has been launched for safe and judicious use of chemical pesticides.

(iv) Use of bio-control agents, bio-pesticides including neem based pesticides is being encouraged.

(v) The Food Health Authorities of States/UTs implementing the provisions of Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Act, 1954 and Rules, 1955 have been advised from time to time to keep strict vigil on the level of pesticides residues in food commodities.

(vi) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have undertaken consumer education programme to create awareness amongst the people about the use of fruits and vegetables after taking all the precautionary measures.

Agreement between India and Nepal on Development of Tourism

5839. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Nepal have agreed to set up a working group to identify areas of cooperation in tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any agreement between India and Nepal has been signed in this regard; and

(d) the extent to which it will help the tourism sector in India?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The concrete proposals and details of the Working Group have not been worked out by either country.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Food Processing Industries in Rajasthan

5840. SHRI RAMESHWAR DUDI:
RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any policy to promote setting up of food processing industries in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh during 2001-2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of food processing industries getting Central assistance in these States during the last two-three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH): (a) and (b) Government have taken a number of policy initiatives to promote the growth of Processed Food Sector in the country. Under the Plan Schemes of the Department of Food Processing Industries (DFPI), financial assistance is extended to Non-Governmental Organisations, Cooperatives, Public Sector Undertakings, Private Industries, Human Resource Development and Research and Development Institutions etc. for the development of this sector. The schemes are project oriented and not State or area specific.

(c) Financial assistance under the Plan Schemes of the Department has been extended to 18 food processing projects received from Uttar Pradesh during the last three years, apart from extending assistance for training programmes and setting up of Food Analysis and Research Centre. Assistance for Entrepreneurial Development Programme has been extended on the basis of proposal received from Rajasthan.

Financial Assistance for Development of Fishery

5841. SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of financial assistance provided for the development of fishery, poultry and livestock to the Government of Bihar by National Cooperative Development Corporation during the last three years; and

(b) the district-wise details of schemes/projects being implemented in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) has sanctioned an amount Rs. 3.012 lakhs for development of fishery in Buxer district in Bihar during last three years. However, this amount is yet to be released by NCDC.

[English]

Terminal Service Charges

5842. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Container Corporation of India (CONCOR) had waived off terminal service charges for the facility provided in their inland container depots at various places with regard to importers during the year 1998-99;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the CONCOR had suffered a loss during the said period on account of waiving off and breach of agreement; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A total of Rs. 10.61 crores was waived off in respect of 7876 TEUs handled by CONCOR in 1998-1999. Waivers were granted on the merits of each case.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Construction of Ongole-Markapur Rail Line

5843. DR. RAJESHWARAMMA VUKKALA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposed to lay a Railway line between Ongole and Markapur in Andhra Pradesh to provide direct access from Bellary to the port at Etamukkale for easy movement of iron ore; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Self Sufficiency in Milk and Dairy Products

5844. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made a State-wise study relating to self-sufficiency in milk and dairy products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the date by which self-sufficiency in milk and dairy products in all the States be achieved; and

(d) the details of production and actual consumption of milk and dairy products during 2000-2001, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (d) Government collected data on total production of milk and per capita quantity and value of consumption of milk and dairy products, State-wise. The compound growth rate in milk production was 4.21% per annum during the period 1990-91 and 1999-2000. The compound growth rate in human population during 1999-2000 was 2.04% per annum. Therefore, growth in milk production has out paced growth in population causing net addition to per capita availability of milk and milk products. The information on state wise milk production and consumption of milk and milk products is annexed as statement I and II.

Statement-I

Production of Milk—2000-2001 Statewise

(000 tonnes)

Sl.No.	State/UT	2000-01*
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4904
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	53
3.	Assam	852
4.	Bihar	3878
5.	Goa	45
6.	Gujarat	5313
7.	Haryana	4845
8.	Himachal Pradesh	772
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	1037
10.	Karnataka	5106
11.	Kerala	2771
12.	Madhya Pradesh	5806
13.	Maharashtra	5945
14.	Manipur	69
15.	Meghalaya	67
16.	Mizoram	10
17.	Nagaland	51
18.	Orissa	824
19.	Punjab	7984
20.	Rajasthan	6034
21.	Sikkim	44
22.	Tamil Nadu	4413
23.	Tripura	51
24.	Uttar Pradesh	15735
25.	West Bengal	3888
26.	A&N Islands	24
27.	Chandigarh	44
28.	Daman & Diu	10
29.	D. & N. Haveli	1
30.	Delhi	306
31.	Lakshadweep	1
32.	Pondicherry	36
	All India	80919.00

*Provisional

Statement-II

Monthly Per capitaquantity and value of consumption for milk and dairy products for each State and UT

Sr. No.	State/UT	Rural			Urban		
		Milk		Milk & milk prod	Milk		Milk & milk prod
		Qty. (litre)	Value (Rs.)	Value (Rs.)	Qty. (ltire)	Value (Rs.)	Value (Rs.)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2.87	26.19	27.40	4.40	49.08	53.15

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.50	6.10	16.30	1.89	21.69	39.15
3.	Assam	1.11	13.45	15.05	2.14	30.76	43.07
4.	Bihar	2.41	23.62	25.77	3.40	42.61	47.70
5.	Goa	3.16	44.47	47.65	4.22	62.44	73.48
6.	Gujarat	5.42	66.95	78.60	6.58	88.23	110.88
7.	Haryana	13.88	141.51	164.46	9.03	120.04	147.09
8.	Himachal Pradesh	7.87	84.00	95.29	10.08	119.36	151.21
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	9.53	86.23	93.91	8.02	85.18	111.78
10.	Karnataka	3.45	31.57	33.75	5.07	53.78	61.70
11.	Kerala	2.97	35.91	37.88	3.49	44.34	49.27
12.	Madhya Pradesh	2.71	27.39	31.97	4.33	51.76	63.08
13.	Maharashtra	2.66	28.69	29.93	4.79	66.02	72.61
14.	Manipur	0.32	3.33	5.46	0.45	5.43	13.98
15.	Meghalaya	0.92	8.81	10.00	2.92	30.88	39.42
16.	Mizoram	0.44	5.35	18.79	1.54	22.32	45.06
17.	Nagaland	0.86	11.13	36.58	1.78	23.49	55.97
18.	Orissa	0.64	6.19	7.81	1.97	21.48	29.23
19.	Punjab	11.67	118.60	127.90	9.73	115.68	129.93
20.	Rajasthan	9.62	95.91	109.86	7.72	87.99	125.16
21.	Sikkim	4.27	40.30	45.62	5.97	52.83	61.68
22.	Tamil Nadu	2.39	24.21	25.22	4.77	53.59	57.95
23.	Tripura	1.32	16.75	19.92	3.09	31.86	46.41
24.	Uttar Pradesh	4.52	43.48	46.66	5.27	62.23	72.05
25.	West Bengal	1.31	13.13	14.65	2.63	30.68	40.31
26.	A&N Islands	1.10	13.84	38.60	1.29	22.00	62.57
27.	Chandigarh	9.92	131.52	144.96	10.53	141.24	172.96

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
28.	Daman & Diu	3.13	45.16	55.15	5.56	77.34	98.69
29.	D. & N. Haveli	1.43	19.19	21.53	5.49	83.94	101.48
30.	Delhi	6.34	91.32	133.02	8.73	122.43	154.18
31.	Lakshadweep	0.36	5.63	29.30	0.55	8.51	28.35
32.	Pondicherry	2.65	27.52	29.62	4.64	48.94	52.47
	All India	3.79	38.37	42.56	5.10	62.66	74.17

Source: Consumption of Some Important Commodities in India 1999-2000, NSSO Report No. 461.

Supply of Jute Bags

5845. SHRI TARACHAND BHAGORA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Jute sector has defaulted heavily in supply of Jute bags to the Urea factories;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the action taken against them;

(c) whether the Urea sector has demanded to exempt them fully from compulsory Jute packaging as Jute bags are neither economical nor suitable and preferred by farmers in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. IFFCO and KRIBHCO reported short supply of jute bags during 2000-2001 and this was due to reported strike in the factories of their suppliers.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The views of the urea sector nave been considered by Government. Notification regarding the extent of compulsory packing in jute for the jute year 2001-2002 is proposed to be issued shortly.

Railway Reservation through Internet

5846. DR. MANDA JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways is planning to introduce railway reservation facility through internet in major cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of cities where this facility is likely to be provided initially?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The modalities for Internet based rail booking for reserved accommodation are getting worked out and would be first tested as a pilot project to firm up the modalities. The extension of the facility to various cities would arise only on the basis of the experience gained from the pilot project.

Gauge Conversion of Bijapur-Gadag Rail Line

5847. SHRI R.S. PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the gauge conversion work between Bijapur and Gadag via Bagalkot is pending for more than ten years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that one MOU had been signed between the Government of Karnataka and the then Railway Minister Ms. Mamta Banerjee to take up this gauge conversion work;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which this long pending work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No. Sir.

(b) to (d) A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed with the State Government of Karnataka for formation of a Joint Venture for execution of four projects including gauge conversion of Bijapur-Gadag section.

As per the terms of the MOU, a Company named Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Ltd. (K-RIDE) has been incorporated. Ministry of Railways and the Government of Karnataka will have equity holdings in the company.

Completion of gauge conversion of Bijapur-Gadag section will depend upon the availability of resources.

Central Funds for Acid Soils

5848. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals received from States for amelioration of acid soils and reclamation of saline including coastal saline and sandy areas during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the total amount provided to each of the States for the said projects during the said period;

(c) the details of proposals still pending with the Union Government; and

(d) the reasons for the pendency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): (a) The details of the proposals received from the States are attached as statement.

(b) to (d) The Working Group for IX Plan recommended for implementation of New Schemes on Amelioration of Acid Soils and Reclamation of Saline including Coastal Saline & Sandy Areas. Based on that, proposals were requested from State Govts. But the new schemes could not be launched during the IX Five Year Plan.

Statement

Proposals Received from States

Year	Name of State	Area proposed for Reclamation (ha.)	Cost of project (Rs. in lakh)
Amelioration of Acid Soils			
1997-98	Manipur (Agriculture)	114800	1148
	Manipur (Hort. & S.C.)	10000	100
	Mizoram	20000	468
	Nagaland	50000	500
1998-99	Karnataka	25000	500
Saline including Coastal Saline and Sandy Areas			
1998-99	Karnataka	24000	6000
2000-2001	Gujarat	30661	5980.6
	Orissa	4969	994
	West Bengal	1200 (107.5 km. Flood embankment)	8686

[Translation]

Rajbhasa Adhikari

5849. SHRI DHARM RAJ SINGH PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the post of Rajbhasa Adhikari in the institution "RITES" under his ministry has been lying vacant for a long time due to which official language departments rules are being grossly violated;

(b) whether the posts of Hindi typists and translators have been abolished;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Hindi books of the value of more than two lakh rupees purchased by this institution are gathering dust in the godowns and four Hindi typing machines are reported to have disappeared; and

(e) if so, the action, the Government propose to take against the officers responsible for not implementing the official language department rules and the time by which the Rajbhasa Adhikari would be appointed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Due to constraint of space, when the Hindi Section was shifted in 1994 to its present location, the books had to be properly stored in the basement. It would be possible to keep them in Hindi Section, once RITES own office complex at Gurgaon becomes functional. Hindi Typewriters are being used occasionally as most of the Hindi work is being done on computers. No Hindi typewriter has disappeared.

(e) Does not arise.

Performance of Rice Processing Research Centres

5850. SHRI C.N. SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the performance of Rice Processing Research Centres in the matter of providing facilities, training etc. to rice growers; and

(b) the number of farmers benefited therefrom during the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH): (a) The Paddy Processing Research Centre at Thanjavur (T.N.) and Post Harvest Technology Centre at IIT Kharagpur (WB) are engaged in research and training in paddy processing. These centres have the necessary facilities for imparting training and demonstrating technologies developed by them to the farmers.

(b) The State-wise number of farmers benefited during the last three years is given in the statement attached.

Statement

No. of farmers benefited

Name of the State	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
Andhra Pradesh	25	30	25
Karntaka	15	10	10
Kerala	10	6	12
Pondicherry	-	65	-
Madhya Pradesh	-	15	-
Tamil Nadu	100	150	200
Total	150	276	247

Fishermen In Pakistan Jails

5851. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that 196 fishermen from Gujarat are currently in Pakistani Jail, it has always been an emotive issue in Gujarat's fishing towns, fishermen from these ports towns are often arrested by the Pakistani Navy on charges of straying into Pak waters and made to spend years in Jails, mostly in Karachi;

(b) if so, whether the Chief Minister of Gujarat had written a letter to the Union Government urging to discuss and settle the issue with Mr. Musharraf in the ensuing visit to India; and

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government on the said request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) As per available information, there are 196 Indian fishermen currently detained in Pakistan since March/April this year. As a result of our consistent efforts, Government of Pakistan agreed on 26.6.2001 to release these 196 Indian fishermen.

(b) The Chief Minister of Gujarat wrote a letter to Prime Minister on June 20, 2001 urging him to discuss with President General Musharraf the recurring problem of apprehension of fishermen by each other's security agencies.

(c) Desirous of finding a permanent solution of the problems of Indian and Pakistani fishermen, who from time to time are taken in to custody, Prime Minister on July 4 instructed that the Indian Coast Guards will not in future take Pakistani fishermen, who inadvertently transgress into our waters, in custody and that hence forth they will be turned back after due warning. During discussions in Agra on 15.7.2001 Prime Minister informed Pakistani President that this is the way out of the recurring problem which would go a long way in resolving this matter on a permanent basis.

12.00 hrs

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:—

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, for the year 1999-2000.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library *See* No. LT 4089/2001]

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.

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

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4090/2001]

(5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Rampur Raza Library, Rampur, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Rampur Raza Library, Rampur, for the year 1999-2000.

(6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library *See* No. LT 4091/2001]

(7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation, Kolkata, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation, Kolkata, for the year 1999-2000.

(8) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.

[Placed in Library *See* No. LT 4092/2001]

(9) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working

of the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.

(10) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (9) above.

[Placed in Library *See* No. LT 4093/2001]

(11) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Council of Science Museums, Kolkata, for the year 1999-2000.

(ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the National Council of Science Museums, Kolkata, for the year 1999-2000, together with Audit Report thereon.

(iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Council of Science Museums, Kolkata, for the year 1999-2000.

(12) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (11) above.

[Placed in Library *See* No. LT 4094/2001]

(13) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National School of Drama, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National School of Drama, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.

(14) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (13) above.

[Placed in Library *See* No. LT 4095/2001]

(15) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, for the year 1999-2000.

(16) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (15) above.

[Placed in Library *See* No. LT 4096/2001]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:—

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

(i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Zinc Limited Udaipur, for the year 2000-2001.

(ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Zinc Limited Udaipur, for the year 2000-2001, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4097/2001]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): Sir, I beg lay on the Table a copy of the Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Railway Safety Review Committee, 1998-Part-II.*

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4098/2001]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (PROF. CHAMAN LAL GUPTA): Sir, on behalf on Shri Sharad Yadav, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Statement (Hindi and English versions) (I) correcting the reply given on the 13th August, 2001 to Unstarred Question No. 3394 by Sarvshri Rajaiah Malyala, Ramesh Thakur, A. Venkatesh Naik and Ashok N. Mohol regarding Construction of Cold storage at International Airports, (ii) the reasons for delay in correcting the reply.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4099/2001]

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:—

(1) A copy of the Company Secretaries (Amendment) Regulations, 2001 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. ICSI/710/2/M/26 in

*Part-I of the Report of the Railway Safety Review Committee was laid on the Table on 2-3-2000.

Gazette of India dated the 10th August, 2001, under sub-section (4) of section 39 of the Company Secretaries Act, 1980.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4100/2001]

(2) A copy of the Chartered Accountants (Amendment) Regulations, 2001 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. I/CA(7)/51/2000 in Gazette of India dated the 17th August, 2001, under section 30B of the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4101/2001]

(3) A copy of the Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the Appellate Tribunal for Foreign Exchange (Recruitment, Salary and Allowances and other conditions of Service of Chairperson and Members) Rules, 2000.**

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4102/2001]

(4) A copy of the One Hundred Seventy Fifth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Law Commission of India on the Foreigners (Amendment) Bill, 2000.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4103/2001]

(5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.

(6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4104/2001]

(7) A copy of the Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the Notaries (Third Amendment) Rules, 2000.**

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4105/2001]

**The Appellate Tribunal for Foreign Exchange Rules and Notaries Rules were laid on the Table of the House on 23.8.2001.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Use in Motor Vehicles) Order, 2001 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 569 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 1st August, 2001, under sub-section (6) of section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4106/2001]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between Rural Electrification Corporation Limited and Ministry of Power for the year 2001-2002.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4107/2001]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YASSO NAIK): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:—

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

(i) Review by the Government of the working of the Tamil Nadu Agro Industries Development Corporation Limited, Chennai, for the year 1999-2000.

(ii) Annual Report of the Tamil Nadu Agro Industries Development Corporation Limited, Chennai, for the year 1999-2000, 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 4108/2001]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy of the Notification No. G.S.R. 296 (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 28th February, 1964 appointing the 29th February, 1964, as the date on which the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 to come into force issued under sub-section (2) of Section 1 of the said Act.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4109/2001]

(2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (4) of Section 124 of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963:—

(i) The Cochin Port Employees (Leave) Regulations, 1978 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 217 in Gazette of India dated the 10th February, 1979.

(ii) The Cochin Port Trust Employees (Family Welfare Regulations, 1980 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 769 in Gazette of India dated the 15th August, 1981.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1 and 2) above.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT 4110/2001]

12.02 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS

Study Tour Reports

[English]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table the Study Tour Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Public Undertakings in respect of the following Undertakings:-

(1) Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company Limited.

(2) Hindustan Antibiotics Limited.

(3) New India Assurance Company Limited.

(4) Bharat Earth Movers Limited.

(5) Semiconductor Complex Limited.

12.02 $^{1}/_{2}$ hrs.

COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

Seventeenth and Eighteenth Report

[Translation]

SHRI KARIYA MUNDA (Khunti): Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes including Minutes (Hindi and English versions) of the Sitting of the Committee relating thereto:—

(1) Seventeenth Report on Ministry of Defence regarding Military Participation Ratio of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Defence Services—Policy and perspective.

(2) Eighteenth Report on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the First Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes regarding Reservation in services including reservation in admission and Employment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Central Universities.

12.03 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

Tenth Report

[Translation]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I beg to present the Tenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Petitions.

12.03 1/2 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Fourth Report

[English]

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Canara): Sir, I beg to present the Fourth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women on 'Health and Family Welfare Programmes for Women'.

12.04 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS

Action Taken Statements

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy (Hindi and English versions) of the Statements on Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 10th Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 4th Report (13th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants—2000-2001 of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

12.04 1/2 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Twenty-seventh Report

[Translation]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Sir, I beg to present the Twenty-Seventh Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Information Technology on "Implementation of New Telecom Policy, 1999" relating to Department of Telecommunications (DoT).

12.04 3/4 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY

Fifty-third Report

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): I beg to lay on the Table a copy each (Hindi and English versions) of the 53rd Report on the Standing Committee on Industry on Modernisation, Restructuring and Expansion Programmes of NALCO, Ministry of Mines.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: New, let us take up the 'Zero Hour'. Shri Manoj Sinha.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Chandigarh): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, against the action of the hon. Minister for Disinvestment, Shri Arun Shourie, in taking away a document from this House and handing it over to the CBI, I have given a notice of breach of privilege. I would request you to kindly let me say a few words on that.

Sir, on 23rd August, this month, when the debate on Disinvestment was going on here, our colleague Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi had referred to a document.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me find it out first.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, what the hon. Minister could have done was to rebut it and say that it was incorrect. But he came over and took a photocopy of it from here, passed it on to his officers who further gave it to the CBI. Sir, we are not afraid of any matter being referred anywhere. But there has been a gross breach of privilege of this House inasmuch as a Minister has taken it upon himself to refer to document of this House to the CBI.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Bansal, I checked it up. The Secretariat has received your notice. It is under consideration of the Speaker. Now, it is not proper for you to make further queries.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, I am sorry to say that you are making those very strong comments against me. Sir, kindly see the Rules. I have not deviated from the Rules....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not say that.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, you said that it was not proper on my part. Sir, there is not a word, which I have said, is improper in this matter...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): But it is improper to go in the merit of the case.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: I am referring to the facts as witnessed by the hon. Members in this House...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You did not hear what I said before that. What I said was that your privilege motion has been received here and it is under the consideration of the Speaker.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, thereafter, the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has taken it upon himself to comment on my remarks...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I am aware of the notice. A copy came to me also.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is under the consideration of the Speaker. Now, Shri Manoj Sinha would speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI DHARM RAJ SINGH PATEL (Phulpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, lakhs of industries have been closed down in Delhi as a result of which lakhs of people have become unemployed...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, my earlier notice was also under consideration. Could I be kindly enlightened as to what has happened to that?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Both the privilege motions have been received from you.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, that was done three days back. At that time also, I had made a submission and I was told as I am being told today that it was under consideration. Sir, I would like to know what was happened to that. In fact, tomorrow is the last day of the Session....*(Interruptions)* Sir, that was a very important matter in which the Finance Minister, in my view, has misled the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your privilege notice is under consideration of the Speaker. It will be made known to you.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it was decided here that...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will permit you to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHIR MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Here it was decided that the Hon'ble Minister, the Hon'ble Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and a leader of their party will have discussion with Hon'ble Speaker in his Chamber regarding solving the problems of 25 lakh labourers. We are raising this issue again and again. The Hon'ble Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is requested to tell as to what solution has been found out and what discussion took place in the Chamber of Hon'ble Speaker...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Firstly, one cannot disclose the discussion held with the Hon'ble Speaker in his Chamber in the House...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Nothing happened. He was not called at all.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Secondly, you have requested the Hon'ble Speaker. Whenever he will convene the meeting, I am ready to attend that meeting. However, if he will not convene the meeting then I cannot do anything...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): At least, show some anxiety for these people.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, I am showing equal anxiety. I am ready. Whenever the Hon'ble Speaker calls a meeting, I am ready for that.

[Translation]

SHRI MANOJ SINHA (Gazipur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government and the Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development towards the strike by teachers of Banaras Hindu University. There the teachers are on strike for the last 15 days. The Vice-Chancellor of that university unilaterally without convening the meeting of the Executive Council, cancelled the appointment and promotions which were made by the Selection Committee $1^1/_2$ years ago...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The issue relates to Bihar therefore I will give you the chance to speak.

SHRI MANOJ SINHA: Sir this is a serious issue. The condition of this University, which was established by Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya, has deteriorated. I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development to intervene in this matter without any delay and ensure appointment to those teachers who are staging "Dharna" in front of the residence of Vice-Chancellor of that University. The tenure of Vice-Chancellor of that University is ending today. 20 cases of contempt of Court are pending against the Vice-Chancellor and today his tenure is ending. Through you, I would like to request the Government that in Banaras Hindu University a Reactor should be appointed without any delay. Secondly, I would like to congratulate Dr. Joshi for constituting a committee regarding a Bill relating to Banaras Hindu University pending for the last 27 years. I request that a Bill may be introduced in the House for setting up democratic system in Banaras Hindu University. Through you, I would like to request these two things to the Government.

12.11 hrs.

RE: CLOSURE OF SOME WAGON MANUFACTURING UNITS OF WEST BENGAL DUE TO NON-PLACEMENT OF ORDER BY THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, we have been continuously raising the problems of wagon manufacturing units of West Bengal....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take you seat.

[Translation]

If you keep patience, you will get a chance to speak otherwise I will adjourn the House at 1.00 pm.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: About 80 per cent of the railway wagons are manufactured in the State of West Bengal. For the last five months, the Railway Ministry has not placed any order with the manufacturing units of West Bengal for manufacture of wagons. As a result of this, four wagon manufacturing units are closed now. Thousands and thousands of small units in and around these wagon manufacturing units are also closed. The workers have not received their salary for four months. I have received an information that a worker from a workshop of Howrah Burn Standard has died due to starvation. One month back, there was a meeting held in the chamber of the Railway Minister under the leadership of Shri Somnath Chatterjee in which 15 Members of Parliament belonging to various political parties were there.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What do you want now from the Government?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: In that meeting, the Minister said that the order will be placed within one week after some legal clarifications....*(Interruptions)* He had mentioned it in that meeting. The Minister is here. We want a reply from him on this point.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You ask the Minister or you please resume your seat.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, already five months have elapsed. I want to know from the Minister as to when the order will be placed to save the wagon manufacturing units of West Bengal as well as thousands of small units of West Bengal. I demand that the order should immediately be placed with the wagon manufacturing units of West Bengal....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): When I was about to give reply, I found that you people also wanted to say something. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the question which the Hon'ble Basu Deb Achariaji has raised regarding wagon order about that he is fully aware. In this regard, he also had meeting with us and everyone knows about the reason for delay in placing order with manufacturing units. The reason was that an investigation was going on which relates to use of unspecified steel. During investigation it was found that mild steel was being used instead of cotton steel and a lot of firms were indulging

[Shri Nitish Kumar]

in such practices. During the investigation talks were held.

In that meeting, we had decided and it was also the demand of the Hon'ble Members that orders should continue to be placed along with the investigation which means both the things should continue at the same time. We had accepted this proposal and in this regard legal opinion was being sought regarding obtaining undertaking on the basis of which orders can be released. I had given such instructions also. During this period, we received investigation report and on the basis of that report, we have taken two steps. First and foremost we have finalised the tender and secondly we have constituted a Committee to finalise the penalty and other action likely to be taken like changing the checking procedure etc. The Committee will ensure quality and also impose penalties on the defaulters. The Government will take action on the basis of this Committee's report. So far as the matter pertaining to the releasing of orders is concerned, I will do it at the earliest.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV (Purnea): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, fortunately or unfortunately I hail from Bihar. I don't think that the Union Government is aware that Bihar is also a part of our country. Majority of Muslim population lives in Bihar. The Union Government has provided air travel facility for Haj pilgrims in various State capitals of the country but in Bihar where the population of Muslim is more, there is no such facility from its capital Patna. Besides there is no arrangement of any "Haj Bhavan" in Patna. Unfortunately, Shri Sharad Yadav, the Cabinet Minister of this country himself belongs to Bihar. The Hon'ble Minister represent the constituency which is on the border of Bangladesh and where the majority of population belongs to Muslim community. Hence I urge upon the Union Government that direct air travel facility from Patna may be provided without any delay.

Secondly, I would like to say that on the one hand, the Union Government is giving step-motherly treatment to minority community and on the other hand the State Government of Bihar is giving step-motherly treatment to the people of Bihar. Today entire Bihar is on strike. All truck unions and bus unions are on strike today as the State Government has increased the tax three times on transport. Now that Bill has been sent to the President for approval. After bifurcation of Bihar, Jharkhand has become a separate State. Due to this, the truck owners of Bihar cannot load goods from there. In Bihar, the fee of registration of vehicles is high and now increasing this fee by 14%, the Government has done injustice with the people of Bihar. It is being said by the State Government of Bihar that since Jharkhand has become a separate State therefore, it has no other source of income. This is injustice with 8 crore people of Bihar. It will result in increase in the fares of trucks and buses due to which poor people may not be able to travel in buses. The State Government of Bihar is adopting anti-poor policies. Therefore I request the Union Government to intervene in the matter and request the Hon'ble President so that the Bill relating to 14% increase in taxes is not assented to.

I would like that the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should make reply on these two matters. There is complete strike in Bihar. The children did not attend the schools. The examinations are going on...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Pappu Yadav, please resume your seat now.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: There out of eight crore population three crore are Muslims.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is 'Zero Hour'. I cannot compel the Minister to reply.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is sitting here.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Pappu Yadav, please resume your seat now.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: You please give the ruling. You say something on it.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have said your point - now you please resume your seat.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir I wish to raise a very extremely serious matter...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pappu Yadav ji, the Government cannot be compelled on each and every issue by sitting here.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: It is a matter concerning three crore people...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It may be a matter concerning three crore people but by sitting here the Government cannct be compelled.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: There is no arrangement of buses, so many student could go to school....*(Interruptions)* The hon'ble Minister may not reply but that does not mean that I will stop raising issue of Bihar. I have not been elected by the blessings of any one...*(Interruptions)*

12.21 hrs.

RE: REPORTED APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE IN U.S.A.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Sir, I wish to raise a matter of very serious import for the country as a whole because this is for the first time that a functionary of a political party and of a fundamentalist organisation has been appointed as an Ambassador-at-large in the United States of America to look after the interests of the NRIs....*(Interruptions)* One gentleman by name Shri Agnihotri, who is close to the ruling party, the BJP and the RSS, has been appointed to oversee, supervise or look after the interests of the NRIs in the U.S.A. He will be known as the Ambassador of the Government of India in the USA. What will be his relationship with our Ambassador who is already there? What will be the role of his there? The House is not told about this appointment. I would like to know on what consideration, what basis this appointment has been made. What is the justification for such an appointment? This is the grossest misuse of power in a matter concerning our foreign relations. These types of openly partisan appointments are being made. I think this is a very serious matter. The Government must immediately explain the position. It should not give effect to this appointment. Nobody is now told about this. The House is not told of an extraordinary situation that is being created by this Government. We have also raised it. But the Government is totally oblivious of and totally unconcerned about what is happening inside the Parliament. No notice is being taken of any opinion that is expressed here. What is the justification for this appointment? How was this gentleman selected to represent our country? What are the qualifications of this gentleman? What will be his duties?

So, I call upon the Government to immediately stop giving effect to this partisan and purported appointment. It is totally an unauthorised and improper appointment. The Government should explain the matter to the House immediately why this totally illegal step was taken....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): What is the response of the Government?...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I agree with Somanth Chatterjee and we all know that such a person is being appointed in such an important country at a time when our foreign policy is at the cross road. Whatever argument you may put but the fact is that the country is failing at diplomatic front. However, today I would certainly like to say in the House that a person who does not enjoy the confidence and faith must not be appointed on such an important post and there should be transparency in it. You may appoint persons belonging to Sangh Pariwar. From the teachers of Primary School to diplomats and Governors wherever you wish without taking us into confidence. But as far as the question of entire nation is concerned we should be taken into confidence. The Government should honour our sentiments and must take our opinion. Today nobody is with Bhartiya Janta Party, whether it is the question of Kargil war or any other issue. Such a person who is not fully trusted, is not known and does not have any experience and hold an ideology that is rejected by more than 70 per cent population of the country is appointed in America and if you think that he will represent our country then I feel that he will not be able to present the views and interest of the country. Now I would like to know as to what is your compulsion in this

[Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav]

regard? It should be clarified in the House as to who are compelling you for this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we are against the appointment of such people about whom we know that it is against the interest of the country. The Government should work for the self respect and prestige of the nation and should promote the country in the field of diplomacy and economic development. There is a danger to our internal unity and integrity of the country. Therefore, you should not hurt the sentiments of the people. You should call back that person and should appoint any other such person on whom people of the country have confidence. There is a question mark on his appointment from the very beginning. I feel that it is for the first time that the House had to question the appointment of any person. That is why I want that he should be called back immediately and some other person should be appointed there.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia, U.P.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Somnath Chatterjee has raised the issue of appointment of a person on the post of ambassador in the United States about whom neither the country nor the House know anything. We are also not aware of the situation as to why another ambassador was required to be appointed while we already have an expert and competent ambassador there who had been our foreign secretary few days back. I personally do not know about that person but what has been published in the newspapers about him makes me apprehensive about him. I feel that as have been stated by Somnath ji and Mulayam Singh ji the Government should not take any such step regarding the foreign policy that makes people apprehensive - about the intention of the Government. If the situation was so pressing the Government should have informed not only this House but the entire nation about the skill and expertise of that person who was going to be appointed there. However, it is said that since he was 'Sanchalak' of particular organisation, he was appointed on this post. I do not have any hostility to any organisation, however, such step regarding the foreign policy may prove to be counter productive. I would like to inform Mulayam Singh ji that it is not for the first time that such an appointment has been made. Previously such appointment was made by the other Prime Minister not abroad but in his own office and I had raised that issue in the House and so the then Prime Minister had cancelled that appointment. I feel that it is not appropriate to say any thing more in this regard. I feel that our Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister should take appropriate action in this regard and should inform about the special quality of the person in question and the compelling reasons for his appointment on that post to the House and the nation so that it may clear the doubts and apprehension otherwise the people are getting apprehensive about the intention of the Government.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA (Guna): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to fully associate myself with the opinion of hon'ble Somnath Chatterjee on this issue. Certainly there is a big question mark on this appointment and there is an environment of distrust. Our ideology may differ on domestic issues, however, whenever there is issue of foreign policy we all whether it is ruling party or the oppositions, have made efforts to present the image of unity. But we are finding that the ruling party and the Government is not only making efforts to promote its ideology inside the country but abroad also through the diplomats and embassies as well. It will be very much detrimental to the image of the country. It is not only we who are worried rather non resident Indian settled abroad are also expressing their concern through fax and letters that they are sending us. As an example I would like to present the fax of Shri Surendra Malhotra who is president of Indian National Overseas Congress to the House as it is—

[English]

> "There are 1.7 million Indians living in the United States. We, Indians, are very successful professionally, economically and are active in political processes of the USA from State politics to the level of the White House."
>
> "We, Indians living in the US, always try to project India as a secular country in spite of the communal and fundamentalist forces working against us. It pains me to bring to your kind attention an appointment of a member of the Sangh Parivar and RSS as Ambassador-at-large for NRIs by the Government of India. How a communally biased man can be the representative for the secular maimed *Diaspora* of Indians who hold the majority in the US is puzzling."

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is a very objectionable act and I would certainly like to associate myself and my party with Shri Somnath Chatterjee in this regard. This will render the position of our Ambassador very weak. It will also create confusion in the USA administration as regards our Embassy there. Hence, there is certainly a need to consider over it again and I demand that this appointment should be quashed. We must appoint our ambassador as is done by other countries following a normal procedure....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Mr. Deputy, Speaker, Sir, is there any response from the Government on this matter?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is a very important issue raised by the hon. Members....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Minister cannot selectively respond to matters raised in this House....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, is the Minister not kept in confidence by the Government on this matter?...*(Interruptions)* Let the Minister stand up and say something.

[Translation]

SHRIAMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA (Junagarh): Sir, everybody is free to have his own point of view. How can he speak like it...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Very prominent Members have participated in it. Firstly, I would like to say that I do not have any information about the subject raised during the Zero Hour. If I say something then some people will object. When some prominent leaders rise to speak even you do not have prior information in this regard...*(Interruptions)*. I am saying that if the information is received before ten O'clock then the copy of this effect is sent to me. I would like to know the reaction of the Government...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, we are not expected to send a copy to the Minister. It may be an arrangement between the Secretariat and the hon. Minister.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, he has to listen to me. He cannot interrupt me every time....*(Interruptions)* I did not say that he should send me a copy....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, why is the Minister getting agitated?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, they ask me to respond, but they are not even allowing me to utter two sentences....*(Interruptions)* I was sitting quiet here. They asked me to stand up....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us hear him.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please hear the hon. Minister.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, I was sitting silent and own I am speaking when you have asked me to do so...*(Interruptions)*. Bapuji, we have spent years together. If you try to make appeal to reduce tension and anger while the expression of anger itself writ large on your face then it will lead to a burst of laughter in the whole of Gujarat....*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I was saying that hon. Somnathji should write a letter addressed to me. I did not say so and you are getting angry. Neither did I demand it from you. However, whenever the information is given to Mr. Speaker at ten O'Clock then one of its copy is sent to me. I never said that I must be informed. What objection did you have on it. Whenever the information is sent to me at least I get some time. As I have said that this new custom has now started that the Members rise to give notice to the Speaker during Zero Hour....*(Interruptions)* Now this new method has been involved...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: You come to the point.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Why so hurry, I will come on it after a while...*(Interruptions)*. Then the chain reaction start on it and the matter becomes serious...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: You come to main issue. What are you speaking on?

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Scindiaji, the issue itself has been diverted again and again...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI KIRTI JHA AZAD (Darbhanga): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, those who do not give notice should not be allowed to speak in 'Zero Hour'. ..*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Kirti Jha Azad, please allow the Parliamentary Affairs Minister to reply.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY GOEL (Chandni Chowk): Sir, a week has passed since I gave notice.

[English]

SHRI KIRTI JHA AZAD: Those who do not give a notice should not be given a chance to speak....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: You are interrupting. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, Shri Kirti Jha Azad was an off-spinner. I have never seen him bowling so fast.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, he is trying to hit 'sixers'. He is not bowling....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): He has delivered a googly...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the appointments made by the Government of India have been made under the Rules completely. No mistake has been made in this regard. It is not a crime to be a Member of Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh.

12.36 hrs.

Thereafter Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Shri Madhavrao Scindia and some other hon. Members left the House

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us hear him.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is not an offence to be a Member of Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS). The objection can be valid if the appointment is made in Government job. If the Prime Minister, the hon. Minister of the country and myself can be a Member of RSS, then I do not think that there is any offence in appointing a person, who is the Member of Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh as ambassador which is a political appointment. The Government have not committed any mistake. No public announcement of the name of the person has been made so far but I know the person well who has been indicated to be appointed as ambassador. He has been serving India in America for years and if the Government has taken a decision to appoint him to utilise his services for improving the image of the country and glorified then it is not a mistake to do so. There is no scope for changing the decision. He will certainly do the job which has been arranged to him.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIJAY GOEL (Chandni Chowk): You have staged walk-out and now you want to speak here. You can not do both the things at the same time.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Now I have come back after staging walk-out....*(Interruptions)* Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, During the regime of Janata Party in 1977, on a population of one thousand one common health worker was appointed, which is also known as CHW. His salary was Rs. 50 per month in 1977 and today after 24 years he is still getting the same amount. I do not know what is the meaning of giving Rs. 50 to him. The organisation of Health Workers raised this issue when Shri I.K. Gujral was Prime Minister. On their request an expert committee was appointed on 25th July 1997 which gave its report on 10th December 1998. The organisation of Common Health Workers was asked to withdraw the writ petition filed in Allahabad High Court and then the writ petition was withdrawn. In 1984, when Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee was Member of Rajya Sabha he also raised this issue in the House....*(Interruptions)* Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir it is a very important issue....*(Interruptions)*

They are launching a movement over this issue....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*...(Interruptions)**

*Not recorded.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Who do you want to know from Government? Why are you delivering a speech. It is Zero Hour.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: They are paid only Rs. 50. What is the meaning of paying Rs. 50....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is that you want from the Central Government?

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Do the Government have no money to pay them. It is a serious matter....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What do you want from the Government that should be asked. It is Zero Hour. This is not the time to deliver a speech. The Government of India will not respond every time here.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: My submission is that the recommendations of the expert committee should be implemented....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can ask them about that....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: The Union Government should tell about this. I met the Hon'ble Minister of Health and Hon. Minister of Finance personally but no solution could be found out....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have raised the matter in Zero Hour and the Government have listened to it. Now please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is not the time to deliver a speech. It is Zero Hour.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if the Government is not taking any action then what is the use of this House....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL (Balaghat): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise an important issue. Income Tax, Sales Tax and excise duty are the important means of revenue for the Government, when I was elected to this House for the first time, at that time also I had said that....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is that you want from the Central Government.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Amount of Rs. 65 crore in the form of excise, sales tax and income tax has been taken....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH (Rajgarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is a conspiracy to defame the Chief Minister. It is a State matter. It has already been raised in Legislative Assembly of the State. The Chief Minister of the State has written a letter in this regard to the hon'ble Prime Minister. We are not at all afraid of any inquiry but no one should be allowed in the House to criticize any person. The manner in which he want to get inquiry conducted....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: The Chief Minister has written a letter to the hon'ble Prime Minister, perhaps Lakshmanji has some doubts about this. I did not rise to criticize anybody....*(Interruptions)* Please listen to my point first. The Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh has written a letter to hon'ble Prime Minister about this incident.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your matter is.

[English]

"Enquiry into evasion of income tax, excise and sales tax in Madhya Pradesh"

[Translation]

Name of any person has not been mentioned in it. Please do not quote any individual.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, he rose to say this, therefore I am quoting...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do not quote anybody, come to your subject straight.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: The Chief Minister has written a letter and demanded CBI inquiry into this matter. I was saying that only but Lakshmanji felt that I am trying to politicize the matter. It is a point that....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: I stick to my point that we are not afraid of any inquiry and inquiry by any agency can be conducted into this matter.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please, he is not referring to anyone. Why are you unnecessarily disturbing him?

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: When the Chief Minister has written a letter then the matter must be investigated, however, I would like to remind the Chief Minister and the Congress people that when it comes to writing a letter. ...*(Interruptions)**. If presently there is so much of honesty then as till recently the resignation was demanded why is it not demanded now? Amount of Rs. 65 crore is involved in it....*(Interruptions)** Now it is being discussed to establish their wine group....*(Interruptions)* It should be investigated....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You should not mention the name of any one.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Whosoever it may be but we are not to mention the name of any one. The name will not go on record.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL: This matter should be investigated. The CBI inquiry should be held regarding the alleged plundering by the Ministers, Officers and Liquor Mafia. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL (Betul): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have also given notice on this issue.

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*Not recorded.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can also associate with him.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to associate myself with the matter that has been raised by Shri Patel that CBI inquiry should be held in this matter.

[English]

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR (Dibrugarh): Sir, the Namrup unit of the Hindustan Fertiliser Corporation is the only factory in the North Eastern Region. Some time back it has become sick. Considering the backwardness of the Region, the Central Government has approved the revamping package for the Namrup unit of the Hindustan Fertiliser Corporation in 1997 with a total investment of Rs. 350 crore, which was later revised to Rs. 510 crore. Despite the recommendation of the Expert Committee, the public demand and also the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Petroleum and Chemicals, the Government has taken a very long time to decide about the bifurcation of this unit from the Hindustan Fertiliser Corporation. Lately the Government has taken a decision. I am thankful to the Government that they have taken the bifurcation decision. It is better late than never.

Sir, due to this delay, this factory has suffered for a long time. Now, the Government has to take immediate steps. The wage revision of the employees of this organisation has not been revised from 1.1.1992. They are drawing a very nominal salary and passing their days with great hardship. There is also a ban on recruitment in the factory from 1997. The factory is finding it difficult to mobilise the term loan. The Government has to take immediate steps in all these matters.

In view of all these, I strongly urge upon the Government to advise the consortium of the financial institutions to arrange the term loan of Rs. 250 crore to this factory at the earliest so that the remaining work would be taken up early.

Sir, more funds should be provided to the Namrup unit in order to make it a modern fertiliser factory. This will be a very positive step towards the industrialisation of this most backward region.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar): Sir, I associate with him.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev, you are allowed to associate with him.

Now, Dr. V. Saroja.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH (Mandi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have given served notices, however, not even once I was given chance to speak.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you sit along with me, you will get a chance to speak. If you want to make your mention just now and go out, you will not get a chance.

...(Interruptions)

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is an urgent need that the Reservation Act should be passed by Parliament without any delay....*(Interruptions)* Sir, in Tamil Nadu, with effect from 19.7.1994, the Constitution of India was amended and the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of seats in Educational Institutions and of appointments of posts in the Services under the State) Act, 1993 was included at entry No. 257A in the Ninth Schedule by the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi Jayalalitha.

Sir, apart from this, the States of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tripura and Bihar had also passed this Act. The Act should also incorporate reservation in higher education; reservations in the services of all the Public Sector Undertakings, Banks, etc.; all constitutional safeguards enshrined in the Constitution and all executive instructions, circulars and memoranda on such safeguards; and reservation in recruitment and promotions and all matters connected with reservations, *i.e.* relaxation, exemption, concessions, etc.

For the socio-political and educational empowerment of SC, STs and OBCs, I urge upon the Government to pass the Reservation Act in Parliament without any delay.

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI (Sitamarhi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise a very serious issue. When on the occasion of Kranti Diwas on 9 August, the people of Aurawai village of my Parliamentary Constituency of Bihar had gone to ask for flood relief the police had fired on them. As a result of this four persons were killed and 50 injured in the firing. As per the pre-announced programme I, along with my colleagues was sitting on a peaceful Dharna at the gate of Muzaffarpur Collectorate. Meanwhile the Superintendent of Police, Muzaffarpur came and told me that he would arrest me. When I demanded for arrest warrant, instead of showing me warrant he called a large number of policemen and told them to arrest me and said that he had seen many MPs. He also told the policemen that if I resist they may drag me. Immediately they dragged me and I along with 39 people were kept in lock up. He not only kept me in police lock-up till 11 p.m. but also did not give me water to drink. I was released from the police custody at night. As a result of this, I could not attend the House on 10th of the month. On 21st of the month, I have given notice to the Secretariat regarding the breach of privilege. On 24th of the month, I had raised this issue in the House and after meeting the Speaker I had also given notice. But till today no action has been taken in this regard. The Superintendent of Police misbehaved with me. I have already given the notice of breach of privilege. I want your ruling, I want your protection....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, please see it.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do not show it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do not show it. You are not permitted to show it. You can say. I allow you to associate with it.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YASAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I want to associate myself with it...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Please see these pictures as to how he has been treated....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: One at a time please. How can I allow everybody at a time?

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Raghunath Jha, let him complete please. Please do not show it. You are not permitted to show this kind of things.

SHRI KIRTI JHA AZAD: Sir, I associate with this matter.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, I would like to speak on the seriousness of the issue....*(Interruptions)* It is not an ordinary thing, rather it is a very serious issue. It is a matter related not only to Shri Nawal Kishore Rai rather all the Hon'ble Members of the House....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav, all of you are standing together. One at a time please. I have given floor to him.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is a matter of privilege. I would like to request you to provide me protection. We would like to have your protection as the Hon'ble Members are being ill treated. The matter should be referred to the Privilege Committee. In this case there is open breach of privilege of the Hon'ble Members...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia, U.P.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, just now the Hon'ble Members have...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Simranjit Singh Mann, I will given you the floor after Shri Chandra Shekhar.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the issue that has been raised by the Hon'ble Member is a very serious issue. There can not be anything more unfortunate than the inaction of the House on such incident of misbehaviour with any Member of the House. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am very sorry to say that sometimes the reaction of the Government is so objectionable that it becomes very difficult for a person like me to decide whether to stay in the House or walk out. I do not support the walk out from the House. I did never walk out from the House in my political career. Though I agree with the statement of Hon'ble Pramod Mahajan that the Government have every right to appoint any person on any post irrespective of his/her political ideology. However, I feel that appointment of a ambassador abroad is a serious matter. If he wants that Hinduism should be made am issue to be raised in America also then he may feel felicitated. But I do not know as to how long will he apply such rationale to administrate the country. However, we will not be silent on this issue.

Mr. Speaker and Mr. Deputy Speaker should on their own refer the matter that has been raised by Shri Nawal Kishore Rai to the Privilege Committee. From the newspaper it appears that whatever has happened to him is very unfortunate and I would like to request him that he should refer this issue to Mr. Speaker or Mr. Deputy Speaker. If he has done this and no action has been taken so far in this concern then I would like to request the Hon'ble Member that the Secretariat and he should look into the matter.

SHRI VIJAY GOEL: I also associate myself with him on this issue.

[English]

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK (Pondicherry): Sir, we support what our former Prime Minister has said.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Factual note from the Ministry of Home Affairs was called for in the matter. Reminder issued on 29-08-2001. That is the position. After hearing from the Ministry, proper action will be taken.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: We support this. Drastic action must be taken.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in such matters, if so much delay is there, there should be some reason for that.

The State Government should be asked to send an explanation immediately. In these days of information technology, if there is no response on such sensitive matters for two weeks, there seems to be something lacking in the functioning of the State Government. The State Government should be called to explain this delay....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As per the convention, I have sent the letter. There is so much of delay on their part which is absolutely not good. I agree with you in this matter that they should expedite the action.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing should go on record now.

*...(Interruptions)**

SHRI SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN (Sangrur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the whole House is exercised over the misbehaviour and the brutality of the police, of what Shri Nawal Kishore Rai has just described. It is shameful that the police and the Home Ministry have not sent their replies so far in this matter. We expect and request that the hon. Deputy-Speaker may have this expedited immediately and justice should be done. Otherwise, Parliamentarians would meet the same fate as Shri Rai has met. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have been following certain norms. Whenever such things happen, we get the veracity of the information checked. So, we have followed it in the same manner. There seems to be some undue delay.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It should not have happened. Otherwise, why should there be a reminder? I have already passed my remarks. That would be taken note of.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as per rule 233 of Lok Sabha Practice and Procedure, whenever an hon. Member brings a privilege matter to the notice of the House, the House has to receive a preliminary report on it. What is to be done if it is delayed? In such a situation permission should be sought to refer the matter to the Committee on Privileges so that necessary action could be taken.

*Not recorded.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think, we have to look into this matter.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Sir, tomorrow is the last day of the Session. Considering that, you may kindly discuss with the hon. Speaker and see if anything could be done....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri): In such matters, when an hon. Member comes here and submits before the House, he should be taken at face value. Why is such a procedure required when the hon. Member himself is here?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: When we are following certain procedures, it is not that we disbelieve our hon. Members.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AHAMED: The bureaucracy is always delaying proceedings. They are not showing that much respect, which is required to be shown, to elected Members of Parliament....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Ahamed, certain amount of discipline is also required. Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI (Jodhpur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I represent Jodhpur Lok Sabha Constituency in Western Rajasthan which is close to Pakistan border. This parliamentary constituency hosts many important defence department activities and radars have been placed at a number of locations. Mining work in the area has been going on for last 300 years but due to the location of a radar of defnce department, about 600 mines operating there have been sent notices for closure. It will render three lakh labourers jobless and they will lose their livelihood. Thus, for the sake of a minor radar three lakh persons would be rendered jobless and the old mines which have been functioning for 300 years, would be closed down. From where else the jobless would get their livelihood? Through you, I would like to request the defence department of the Government of India to shift the radar to some other place and prevent the mines from being closed down.

[Shri Jaswant Singh Bishnoi]

13.00 hrs.

SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the august House towards the fact that when the people of Delhi celebrating festivals of Holi and Diwali, the jawans of Delhi Police guard the roads. Keeping in view their difficult and risky duty, they are given 13 months pay in 12 months and D.A. was also being paid for the pay of the additional month, but that D.A. paid for that additional month has been stopped which was being paid regularly for last several years. Delhi Police which is there for our protection and are protecting the people of Delhi without bothering about their lives, the withdrawal of D.A. is causing many problems for them. It is not justifiable. Similarly, the jawans of Delhi Police used to get 15 days casual leave which has now been reduced to 10 days. It is again not justifiable. As they don't have any association or union through which they can raise their voice it is not proper for the Government to do such an act of injustice to them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I, through this House, demand that the Government should provide modern equipments to Delhi police for the protection of people of Delhi, their D.A. should be restored and the number of days of C.L. which has been reduced to 10 from 15 should be restored to 15 days. Hon. Law Minister is present here. I would like him to react to it. If he assures the House on this issue, we as well as the Delhi Police will be grateful to him.

[Translation]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (Tamluk): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise one very important issue concerning the difficulties faced by the acrylic fibre and its yarn industry as per the Indo-Nepal Treaty arrived at in the year 1996. What is happening is that Nepal is importing acrylic fibre from India without any customs duty. Whenever any Indian importers are importing this acrylic fibre, they have to pay customs duty at the rate of 25 per cent. Nepal is importing this from India through Indian ports taking it to their country and they are processing it and again are exporting it back to India under a different nomenclature of acrylic fibre filament at a cheaper rate....*(Interruptions)* In this way Nepal is gaining both ways.

I request the hon. Prime Minister, hon. Minister of External Affairs and hon. Minister of Commerce to look into this review the Indo-Nepal Treaty. I understand that the Treaty is to be reviewed in the month of December this year....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing to go on record. Shri Adhir Chowdhary to speak now.

*...(Interruptions)**

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY (Berhampore, West Bengal): Sir, the number of abductions has been increasing by leaps and bounds in India. It is an area of major concern. The international *Mafia* groups and their Indian subordinates have discovered that abduction and ransom money is the easiest way of making fortune. Very recently those *Mafia* gangs have shifted the area of operation in my State, West Bengal. The sequences of abductions in West Bengal have already raised an alarm and particularly the business community is in jitters. Taking advantage of the poor vigilance on those groups, the syndrome which was non existent till the other day has been spreading and they have converted West Bengal as the green pastures for carrying out abductions and nefarious activities....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please ask as to what do you want the Central Government to do.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Yes, Sir. Unlike Maharashtra, there are no stringent laws existing in West Bengal. Therefore, I would like to urge upon the Central Government that in consultation with the State Government, they should devise a mechanism so that those international *Mafia* can be dealt with sternly.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Sir, Visakhapatnam is an important industrial centre in Andhra Pradesh. A large number of public sector undertakings and Central Government organisations are there. For a very long time it has been felt that there is an urgent need to start the Central Government Health Scheme Branch facility there. Time and again we have been requesting the Central Government to start a CGHS facility there. In view of the large industrial population and also the number of Central Government undertakings in Visakhapatnam, I request the Union Government to take action immediately to start CGHS Branch facility in Visakhapatnam. Thank you....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet at 1.30 p.m.

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*Not recorded.

13.04 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Thirty minutes past Thirteen of the Clock.

13.35 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Thirty-Five Minutes Past Thirteen of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[English]

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar): Sir, seven people have died in my Constituency. I request the hon. Minister to visit the spot in Kokar District. I have given notice also.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Muniyappa, you can raise it tomorrow, not now.

The House shall now take up Item 18.

13.36 hrs.

COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL*

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Companies Act, 1956.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Companies Act, 1956."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I introduce the Bill.

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*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 30.8.2001.

**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

13.37 hrs.

SICK INDUSTRIAL COMPANIES (SPECIAL PROVISIONS) REPEAL BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): Sir, on behalf of Shri Yashwant Sinha, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to repeal the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill a repeal the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985."

Shri Basu Deb Acharia, this is introduction stage. You can talk on technical points only, not on the merits of the Bill.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act was enacted in 1985 after which the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction was constituted. We know that there are deficiencies in the Board. In spite of that, the main purpose of setting up that Board was to revive the sick Central public sector undertakings and sick private sector companies. If that Act is repealed, what would happen to those sick public sector undertakings which have been referred to BIFR and which are being examined by BIFR?

Just now the Minister of Law has introduced a Bill to amend the Companies Act. There is now a proposal to constitute the National Company Law Tribunal. It will be constituted later on. But, after the repeal of the existing Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, what will happen to those industries? The main purpose of repealing the existing Act is to expedite closure of the public sector undertakings. BIFR is examining them and in most of the cases trying to review them. Even the recommendation of this quasi-judicial body are not being implemented by the Government of India. Even the financial institutions are not abiding by these recommendations. I know of a number of cases where the Government of India refused to provide financial assistance, refused to implement the recommendations of BIFR.

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*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 30.8.2001.

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

There are deficiencies, and those deficiencies can be removed. By replacing BIFR with the National Company Law Tribunal, the purpose of setting up BIFR cannot be fulfilled. The Government is finding it difficult to deal with BIFR. The Government wants to close down some of the public sector units. But, BIFR is examining all aspects for their revival and the Government is not able to close down those units.

Even now, there are some cases where BIFR has not given the final order. But in spite of that, the Government has ordered to close down those public sector undertakings.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia, Rule 72 is very clear.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, there is no need to review this. This should continue. A new organisation should not be created to close down the PSUs expeditiously.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Hon. Speaker, Sir....

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, there are two other Members who had given the notice to speak on its opposition. Let them submit their points.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): Sir, BIFR is the only functioning system in our country to protect the sick industries of our country. If this Bill is passed, the existing system of BIFR would be wound up. But there are very many industries which have been referred to BIFR and no decisions have yet come. So, what will happen to the future of those industries? Everybody knows about BIFR. It is a semi-judicious body.

Sir, almost all the sick industries which have been referred to BIFR have been closed down.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Krishnadas, you should be aware of the rules. This is not the consideration stage of the Bill. Here, you are speaking about the merits and demerits of the Bill. That can be done during the time of the consideration stage.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Right, Sir. That is what I wanted to say at the stage of introduction of the Bill.

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): Sir, I rise to oppose the introduction of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Repeal Bill, 2001. How can the Government repeal this without considering other alternatives or mechanisms about revival of the sick public sector undertakings? What will be the fate of the 12 lakh to 15 lakh employees who are employed in the different public sector undertakings?

Sir, just now, the Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2001 was introduced by the hon. Law Minister, Shri Arun Jaitley. He referred about the Tribunal.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Sunil Khan, come to the reasons. What is the reason that you are opposing it?

SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Sir, we are opposing it because this is nothing but the illogical outcome of the Government's own acts to the closure and winding up of the several vital public sector undertakings. This is my submission. How will it be overcome? The vital reason for winding BIFR, in my view, is that the Government wants to close and wind up the public sector undertakings.

So, I oppose the introduction of this Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: Again, you are raising the merits and demerits of the Bill. It is not a technical point.

Now, Shri Lakshman Das - not present.

Shri Rupchand Pal - not present.

Now, the hon. Minister.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I must assure my colleague Shri Basu Deb Acharia and all the hon. Members of the House that there will be no vacuum about the labour after repealing this Bill at the companies level. It will be going on simultaneously. So, there is no vacuum.

As far as BIFR is concerned, everybody knows and he knows very well that a number of companies are not functioning at all....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): Sir, time and again, we have been talking in the House that we must give more teeth to BIFR. But they are talking about winding up BIFR.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anil Basu, you have not given any notice. Those Members who gave notice have already raised their points. Please take your seat now.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANIL BASU: Sir, the hon. Minister is misleading the House....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. This is not the stage to oppose now.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Sir, my learned colleague Shri Arun Jaitley has just now introduced the Companies (Amendment) Bill about which Shri Basu Deb Acharia made a point. The Tribunal provision is there. We are creating funds. It is 0.01 per cent. Initially, we are starting with Rs. 5 per lakh, which means, 0.005 per cent.

The maximum is point one per cent. Naturally, the funds would be created and the workers' interest will be taken care of by that. If you see the objectives, you would find that they are very specific

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: After closing down the units, how would you safeguard the interest of the workers?

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Acharia, you are creating a new precedent in the House.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: You can see that the limit of Rs. 20,000 under Section 230 of the Companies Act, 1956, could be annexed on the recommendation of the Ministry of Labour as and when they feel to do so. As you know, the Eradi Commission was appointed. If we bring the repeal Bill late, you ask why did we bring it late and if we bring it on time, you say that it is unconstitutional.

Sir, I think, there is no vacuum and I feel that the interest of the workers is totally protected.

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I seek to support what my learned colleague, Shri Patil has said. I must say that even though normally at the stage of introduction only limited questions relating to Constitutional *vires* or legislative competence are asked, questions relating to the merit and particularly regarding workers' interest have been asked.

Sir, let me assure Shri Basu Deb Acharia and his colleagues that if you read the first law, its entire object is to do precisely what you are suggesting. Its objective is to correct the deficiencies as far as BIFR is concerned. The deficiencies of the BIFR were following.

After going through this Act, I thought if there is one Party which would support the first Bill for the protection of the labour interest, would be your Party. The deficiency in BIFR was that it was one of the three fora which are dealing with commercial insolvency. The CLB deals with it and the High Court deals with it. The delays are caused. Now, we have consolidated all jurisdictions under one head.

The second deficiency was that after a company became terminally ill, and 100 per cent net worth became negative, it went into BIFR. Now, once 100 per cent net worth is negative, and the liabilities are more than the reserves and the share capital, the revival itself was very difficult. Therefore, that was a defect in the BIFR model.

Now, we have created a situation in which when your performance is sliding and 50 per cent of net worth becomes negative which means still there are assets left and they are more than the liabilities, you go before the Tribunal for corrective action.

The third deficiency was that BIFR was taking years to formulate a scheme and during those years, the workmen were not getting any money. The revivals were also not possible. In the new Bill, we have compartmentalised it into stages of 30 days, 60 days and so on, so that the entire proceedings can be got over in less than a year. The preference is given to revival of the companies. If revival is not possible, then only, as a last resort, your have to wind up.

The other defect with BIFR was regarding workers interest during the pendency of proceedings. You are right when you say that they starve during the period when they are not given salaries. For the first time, we have said that a corporate cess will be levied on the turnover of the entire private sector. We will lay down guidelines for that purpose. The Tribunal will have power to make interim payment to the labour from the centralised fund if the concerned company is not able to pay them. So, some subsistence amount will be given.

Now, all those deficiencies which were seen in the BIFR are sought to be corrected with the first legislation. You can take it that both these legislations will be discussed and approved simultaneously by the House. So, when one goes out, the other Tribunal will come in. All cases covered by the BIFR, naturally, will come into this forum for the reason that criteria in BIFR is 100 per cent net worth negative and here it is 50 per cent. So, if you are 100 per cent negative, you certainly are going to have 50 per cent. So, you will come into the new forum. On the contrary, your Party should have welcome this. How many companies are actually being revived and how much care has been taken for the workers interest in the BIFR? This is the forum which has been created keeping all these deficiencies in mind. It will

[Shri Arun Jaitley]

certainly be considered in the next Session or later on by the House. Whenever we would debate it, you would find that there are important suggestions which are protecting the interest of all segments of the society.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to repeal the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

13.50 hrs.

ELECTRICITY BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Billl to consolidate the laws relating to generation, transmission, distribution, trading and use of electricity and generally for taking measures conducive to development of electricity industry, rationalisation of electricity tariff, ensuring transparent policies regarding subsidies, promotion of efficient and environmentally benign policies, constitution of Central Electricity Authority, Regulatory Commissions and establishment of Appellate Tribunal and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to consolidate the laws relating to generation, transmission, distribution, trading and use of electricity and generally for taking measures conducive to development of electricity industry, rationalisation of electricity tariff, ensuring transparent policies regarding subsidies, promotion of efficient and environmentally benign policies, constitution of Central Electricity Authority, Regulatory Commissions and establishment of Appellate Tribunal and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I oppose the introduction of this Bill.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Shri Acharia, when every time you are opposing the introduction of a Bill, you are getting more chances to speak.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: You come to this side. Then you will also get chances to speak.

Sir, although the Bill has been circulated this morning, we did not get time to go through the Bill as it is a voluminous Bill.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Without going through the Bill, how can you oppose its introduction?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: You also got it only this morning. Sir, you have allowed in under Direction 19 (b) but the reason put forward by the Minister for the delay in circulation is not convincing because this Bill was approved by the Cabinet on 16th August. Why did the Ministry take 13 days time to circulate the Bill?

Moreover, this Bill seems to undermine the concurrent character of electrical power industry enshrined in the Constitution. Electricity is a concurrent subject. This proposed legislation restructures and renders redundant all institutions in the industry without giving the States even the option to continue with the existing institutions. The main purpose is to unbundle the State Electricity Boards, trifurcate generation, transmission and distribution and hand over both transmission and distribution to the private sector. If distribution is handed over to the public sector, what will be our experience in the country? What will be the tariff in the agricultural sector? Sir, agricultural sector is cross-subsidised.

MR. SPEAKER: Again, you are going into the merits of the Bill.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: What is the T&D loss in Andhra Pradesh after the reform? The loss is 45 per cent.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: It has come down to 32 per cent.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: In Orissa, it is 42 per cent. It is the highest in your State after reforms. This violates the Constitution and hence, I oppose the introduction of this Bill.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): Sir, I oppose the Bill at the introduction stage. According to our Constitution, electricity power generation, distribution and tariff fixation are concurrent. It is not only that. If the Bill is passed, the Government's right will be lost is fixing up the tariff and subsidies to the farmers will be lost. In this

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* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 30.8.2001.

situation, I once again oppose the Bill at the introductory stage.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, this Bill has been introduced with short notice. I have to satisfy the hon. Speaker about the reasons for not circulating it on time. I think seven days is the normal required time. It has already been discussed. Now why we took time is because we had to get it vetted from the Law Ministry and the officials of the Law Ministry have worked overnight. And that is why, I could introduce it today. But I can appreciate the feeling of my esteemed friend, Shri Acharia when he said that he had no time to read it. If he would have read the Bill, then he would not have opposed it.

I can understand that. I take the blame for that because he could not get time, so obviously he has to oppose it. Therefore, when you go into the merit of the Bill when it goes to the Standing Committee, if the hon. Speaker refers it to the Standing Committee, I am sure Shri Basu Deb Acharia is also one of the distinguished Members of the Standing Committee, he would come here to support it in the next Session of Parliament. Shri Basu Deb Acharia has said that the subject of the Bill comes under the Concurrent List. It is in the Concurrent List. Under the Constitution it is in the Concurrent List. Therefore, Parliament has got authority to legislate. The very fact that it is in the Concurrent List, gives us the competence to legislate.

Secondly, who passed the laws, like the Electricity Supply Act and the 1948 Act, under which the SEBs were set up? Parliament passed those laws. Therefore, where is the question of interfering in the State Legislature domain? Therefore, we have all the competence. The Parliament has the competence to legislate. We are not interfering with the State Legislatures' domain. This Bill is a step in the right direction. Why? Under this Bill, we are giving freedom for a particular State to choose a model that it likes. For example, if the State Government feels that they would continue with the State Electricity Boards, they may do so. But in the previous regime, it was mandatory for all the States to have Electricity Boards. Now, we are only changing it from being mandatory to an enabling provision, wherein it is possible for the State to set up Electricity Board. For example, if the West Bengal Government wishes to have an Electricity Board, they are free to do so. They are welcome to do it. But West Bengal found it necessary and incumbent to privatise the distribution of power in Kolkata.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: It is there since inception.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: I know. You continued with that.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: From inception, Calcutta Electricity Supply Company was there both for generation and distribution like Bombay.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): From inception everywhere it should have been the same.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: He is absolutely right. Since inception, you have carried on like this. The Left Front has been voted to power for 26th year in succession. They continue to do it for the last 25 years. It is because they found it more convenient to have a private model in West Bengal. Therefore, it has been done.

Another distinguished friend has stated that tariff fixing power will be taken away by this Bill. It is not so. In fact, we have already passed a legislation in the year 1998 under which the power to fix tariff was given to the Regulators. That Bill has already been passed. I am only consolidating that Bill. Now, the Kerala Government is also thinking of having a Regulatory Commission. Most of the States are setting up their own Commissions. That is the best way of fix the tariff.

They have not addressed one issue which I am addressing. It is about protecting workers' interest. By doing this, we will be able to protect the rights and privileges. It is because if the same situation that now prevails in the power sector continues, then the workers will not get, leave apart terminal benefits, even salaries because the State Electricity Boards are losing more than Rs. 30,000 crores in a year....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Yerrannaidu, you have to give a notice. This is introduction of Bills.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: Sir, we have to discuss this issue for one or two days. After passing the Bill, everybody is taking political advantage. There is no uniform policy as far as this sector is concerned. If one State Government goes for electricity reforms, then the Opposition in that State takes advantage of that. But the same party in another State goes for electricity reforms. That is why India is not progressing. With regard to electricity reforms, there should be a uniform policy.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Yerrannaidu, there is a time to discuss all these things.

The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to consolidate the laws relating to generation, transmission, distribution, trading and use of electricity and generally for taking measures conducive to development of electricity industry, rationalisation of electricity tariff, ensuring transparent policies regarding subsidies, promotion of efficient and environmentally benign policies, constitution of Central Electricity Authority, Regulatory Commissions and establishment of Appellate Tribunal and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: I introduce* the Bill.

13.59 hrs.

OBSERVATION BY THE SPEAKER

Reference of Question of Privilege against the Minister of State of Department of Disinvestment to Chairman, Rajya Sabha

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, today I have received a notice of question of privilege from Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal against Shri Arun Shourie, Minister of State of the Department of Disinvestment for having allegedly sought verification of the authenticity of a letter purported to have been written by the Cabinet Secretary which was quoted by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi during discussion on Disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings on 23rd August, 2001. The Member has also stated that the Minister of State of the Department of Disinvestment has since sought investigation by CBI in the matter.

14.00 hrs.

Shri Bansal has contended that since the said letter was quoted by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi in the House, the same formed part of the proceedings of the House and the matter regarding investigation with regard to the authenticity of the same should have been referred to the Speaker, Lok Sabha instead of referring the same for investigation to CBI. Shri Bansal has contended that the Minister has committed a breach of privilege by seeking verification of the said letter and also referring the matter to the CBI for investigation.

It may be recalled that on 27th August, 2001, when Shri Dasmunsi sought to raise this matter in the House, several Members expressing their views in the matter, demanded that this matter may be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

I may like to inform the House that Shri Arun Shourie is a Member of Rajya Sabha.

The Committee of Privileges of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in the Report of their joint sitting in 1954 laid down the procedure to be followed in case where a Member of one House is alleged to have committed a breach of privilege of the other House. In terms of that procedure, when a question of breach of privilege is raised in any House in which a Member of the other House is involved, the Presiding Officer of the House in which question of privilege is raised, has to refer the case to the Presiding Officer of the other House for appropriate action.

Since Shri Arun Shourie is a Member of Rajya Sabha, I am referring this matter to the hon. Chairman, Rajya Sabha for appropriate action in accordance with the above procedure.

14.02 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) Need to supply additional electricity to Maharashtra State to ensure uninterrupted supply to rural areas of the State.

[Translation]

SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI (Ahmednagar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Maharashtra used to be the leading State in power generation. Power crisis is depending there and power cuts have started taking place in a leading agriculture producing State. At present, half of the agriculture produce of Ahmednagar district is on the verge of getting destroyed due to power cuts. Similar situation prevails in all the rural areas of the State. The officials of the power department say that technically load factor is the cause of power cuts. But in major cities

* Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

there is abundance of sophisticated gadgets and in the world of advertisements the shine of neon lamp signboards is increasing day by day. Even after fifty years of independence the agriculture sector is suffering from the problem of 'load factor' causing a fall in agricultural production. If the country is to be made self-reliant in agriculture, solid steps need be taken to provide electricity for operating motors. I request the Government to provide additional electricity to Maharashtra and lay emphasis on supplying power in a planned manner.

(ii) Need to patent rice produced in the basin of Ravi and Beas in Gurdaspur District, Punjab

[English]

SHRI VINOD KHANNA (Gurdaspur): I rise to apprise the Government of my concern on basmati paddy of Punjab. Paddy is an important crop to food security as it constitutes 44 per cent of total foodgrains consumption in the country and occupies 23 per cent of gross sown area. Paddy is a major kharif crop of Punjab because almost 60 per cent farmers depend on it out of which 3 to 4 per cent of farmers necessarily sow basmati paddy. The basmati of Gurdaspur is considered 'top quality' rice in the world. Ravi & Beas, in Gurdaspur, have the world's rare basins where basmati crops are sown. The Government of India should make concerted efforts in protecting this basmati seed. Basmati crop is an organic crop naturally available in India. The aroma of basmati is because of the hard work put in by our generations and we should not lose it to foreign companies. Basmati is the most quality-sensitive crop and it sells at a premium price. International companies are inclined to grab basmati seed of Gurdaspur. I request the Government to protect basmati to Gurdaspur.

(iii) Need to look into the problems being faced by fishing boat owners in Andhra Pradesh

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): About 3000 mechanised fishing boat owners operating in Andhra coasts are facing many problems. Although the Government of India grants a lot of subsidies to the prawn exporters, trawler operators, aqua-culture farmers and hatchery people, yet the fishing boat owners are being paid only Rs. 185 per kilo of prawn against Rs. 285/- being paid to them during the last year or so.

Action should also be taken to ensure that the mechanized boat owners get the reasonable rate for their prawn catch as the Government is getting a lot of foreign exchange or they may also be given subsidies by the Food Processing and Commerce Ministries of the Government of India.

The Visakhapatnam Port Trust Authorities have increased berth charges from Rs. 230 to Rs. 2069 per month per boat. I urge the Government of India to reconsider and reduce the berth charges at an affordable rate for the poor motor boat owners.

I also request the Agriculture Ministry not to sanction new licences and cancel the existing licences of foreign fishing trawlers and supply diesel at subsidized rates to the mechanized fishing boat owners who are all very poor people. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Canara): Sir, mechanised boats on the coast are killing the traditional fishermen, who are not getting even the minimum price. Mechanised boats are supposed to go into the deep sea. Big agitations along the coast are going on to prevent mechanised boats from coming close to the sea ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You can raise this matter tomorrow in the Zero Hour.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: There must be a limit to the effect that mechanised boats can go within a range of certain kilometres for fishing. They are entering into the sea. Fishermen are asking the Government to give them subsidy. The poor old fishermen are dying there.

(iv) Need to ensure early clearance of passport applications at Regional Passport Office, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA (Kapadvanj): Sir, more than 50,000 applications are pending at the Regional Passport Office at Ahmedabad. Besides the delay, there is also no accountability in dealing with the disposal of passport applications.

Also, poor condition is existing at the passport office with no parking accommodation. One can see long queues of passport seekers standing in the open or in inclement weather. To overcome this, more passport offices at Surat and Rajkot should be opened to facilitate passport seekers from early morning at A.M. to late evening. Further, CBI inquiry into the irregularities regarding the issue of passports should also be completed at the earliest.

It is reiterated that keeping in mind the existing difficulties at the passport office, the External Affairs Ministry should take necessary measures to prevent delay

[Shri Shankersinh Vaghela]

in the issue of passports and to ensure that all passport applications are disposed of within a period of 60 days from the date of application.

(v) Need to ensure loan to the needy people under Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana in Dhule Parliamentary Constituency, Maharashtra

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS RUPALA GAVIT (Dhule): Sir, my Parliamentary constituency Dhule is very backward industrially which results in increase in unemployment in the area. Petty businessmen in the area run their business through aid given under Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana of the Government of India. There are many difficulties in the way of providing of loans to businessmen through banks. Therefore, I request the Government to simplify the procedure with a view to provide loans to more youth so that development of such a backward region as Dhule could be expedited.

Therefore, I demand from the Government through you to remove unemployment in my region for its development.

(vi) Need to increase customs duty on import of Soyabean and Palm oils to safeguard the interest of indigenous farmers

SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY (Banaskantha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government of India tried to save the farmers by increasing import duty on a number of foodgrains but import duty was not increased on Soyabean, Rapeseed oil and castor oil. It has resulted in virtual ruin of farmers producing edible oils. In my Parliamentary Constituency Banaskantha, the dominant produce is that of mustard and other oilseeds and the farmers depend on edible oils for their livelihood. I have come to know that production of soyabean and palm oil is done on a large scale through organic processes. Countries like Japan, America and Europe do not like to consume it from health point of view. I request the Government to protect Indian farmers by increasing custom duty on soyabean and palm oil.

(vii) Need to allocate adequate funds for proper maintenance of National Highway No. 215 in Orissa

[English]

SHRI ANANTA NAYAK (Keonjhar): Sir, the people of Orissa are very much agitated due to non-development and maintenance of National Highway No. 215. This road which connects coastal Orissa with the Steel City, Rourkela covers major areas of mineral rich Keonjhar and Sundergarh districts which are endowed with huge quantum of high grade mineral resources like Iron ore, Bauxite, Manganese, Dolomite and Chrome ore. These minerals have great demand in the international market. Besides transporting these minerals by thousands of trucks, hundreds of public transport buses and personal vehicles also ply on this road every day. The flood has caused extensive damage to this road which is causing a great hindrance in passing two vehicles at several places. I request the Union Government to allocate adequate fund to complete the work pertaining to the development of National Highway No. 215.

(viii) Need to include Daman district under category Coastal Regulation Zone (II) and Instruct Administration of Daman & Diu for necessary amendment in the Coastal Zone Management Plan

SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL (Daman and Diu): Sir, the Central Government have declared the Coastal stretches of seas, bays, estuaries, creeks, rivers and backwater which are influenced by the tidal action upto 500 metres from the High Tide Line and the land between the Low Tide Line and HTL as the Coastal Regulation Zone. Accordingly, Union Territory Administration of Daman and Diu have prepared a Coastal Zone Management Plan for Daman. But, if the history of Daman of last many years is studied, it can be revealed that no place in Daman District is influenced by the tidal action. The Daman Municipal Council has started the construction of Community Hall at Nani Daman under MP Local Area Development Scheme as per the demand of the people duly approved by the District Urban Development Agencies. However, the Member Secretary, Daman & Diu Island Coastal Zone Management Authority, Daman has stopped the legal work carried out under MPLAD Scheme. Therefore the complete area of Daman District should be classified under category CRZ (II) and necessary direction should be issued to the local Administration of Daman and Diu, Daman for necessary amendment in the Coastal Zone Management Plan for development of the entire district.

(ix) Need to take steps for setting up of an India-Bhutan Joint River Commission to check recurring floods in West Bengal

SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (Jalpaiguri): Sir, the Dooars of North Bengal is flood prone zone. Since nineteen, rivulets, Jhoras which are coming down from Bhutan hills have become the main reason for flood and these rivers ultimately feeding the major rivers, is losing their carryir

capacity due to siltation. This siltation is due to deforestation, unscientific mining of dolomite and other human activities. Government of India earns about 2,000 crores of rupees as foreign exchange and about Rs. 360 crore as Central Excise duty from the tea industry. State, National Highway which connects Assam and North Eastern States with the rest of India, bridge, culverts, rail line, rail bridge etc. all these are disrupted every year during this flood. This problem could not be tackled without the cooperation of Royal Government of Bhutan as two sovereign countries are concerned with this issue.

I urge upon the Government to open a dialogue with Bhutan to set up an India-Bhutan Joint River Commission for protecting the lives and properties and recurring expenditure in future.

(x) Need to improve telephone services in rural areas of the country particularly in Ferozabad Constituency, U.P.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Ferozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, telephone service in rural areas of the country is really pathetic. As per rules of the department the Government have to provide telephone connections within two years to those who have registered their names. But, waiting list in all the villages have been over two years old and telephone connections have not been provided so far. My Parliamentary Constituency-Ferozabad has been formed by joining two districts namely Agra and Ferozabad. There are 56 villages in both these districts where people have applied for connections long back but they are yet to be provided connections. In this regard, I would like to say that at present MARR is not at all successful in rural areas. It can be made effective by use of Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) technology, but it is beyond the reach of common men since its registration fee is as high as Rs. 10000/-. I, therefore, urge the Government to reduce this fee from Rs. 10000 to Rs. 500 so that a common subscriber can afford it. I request that quality of services in rural areas be improved.

(xi) Need to give special status to the road between Betia-Narkatiaganj and Bhitharwa in Bihar and provide funds for its proper maintenance.

SHRI MANJAY LAL (Samastipur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Bhitharwa Ashram is an important ashram in West Champaran district of Bihar. Father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi had set up this Ashram during "Champaran Kisan Satyagrah". This Ashram has become a famous pilgrim centre now-a-days. Every year thousands of Indian and Foreign devotees of Mahatma Gandhi come to this place. In addition, large number of tourists also visit this place every year. But the condition of the approach road to this Ashram, *i.e.*, from Betia to Narkatiaganj and from Narkatiaganj to Bhitwara is very deplorable. Devotees and tourists visiting this Ashram have to face lots of difficulties en-route. I, therefore, urge the Union Ministry of Surface Transport to accord special status to the approach road to this historical Ashram and provide necessary funds for construction of this road.

(xii) Need to provide adequate funds for setting up of a Medicinal Plant Farm in Rasipuram Parliamentary Constituency in Tamil Nadu

[English]

DR. V. SARJOA (Rasipuram): Sir, my constituency, Rasipuram in Tamil Nadu consists of hillocks. Many medicinal and herbal plants are grown here. The inhabitants of these areas mainly depend upon herbal and medicinal plants for curing their diseases. The major portion of the plants is located at Big Kalvarayan hills in my constituency. For proper and effective utilisation of medicinal plants, there is an urgent need to set up a Medicinal Plant Farm at Kalvarayan hills. This farm will not only help inhabitants of the area but also earn huge revenue for the Government.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to allocate adequate funds and take up the work of setting up of a farm there on priority basis.

(xiii) Need to take stringent measures to check pollution in Mahanadi river in Orissa

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (Cuttack): Sir, the pollution level in Mahanadi continues to rise alarmingly as a result of which it has posed health hazard to the habitats along with river. Industries like Orient Paper Mill, Jindal, India Captive Plant, Orissa Power Generation Corporation, Tata Refractory, IDCOL, Captive Power Plant of Indian Charge chrome, Ballarpur Industries, Paradeep Phosphate are discharging large quantities of contaminated water into the Mahanadi. Similarly, the coal mines of Lajkura, Belpahad, Samaleswari, Lilasi, Lakhanpur, Hirakund, Bundia, Himgiri, Rampur and other mines in Ib valley are the major pollutants.

Following the rise of pollution level in the Mahanadi river, it has secured an ignominious position in the purity list drawn by the Central Pollution Control Board. I would urge upon the Government to take stringent steps immediately to curb pollution of Mahanadi river and prepare a Regional Environment Management Plan (REMP) accordingly.

(xiv) Need to allocate funds for development of Sunderbans area of West Bengal

SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL (Joynagar): Sir, Sunderbans Development Board was created by the State Government in 1973 for the formulation and execution of integrated programme for development of the backward Sunderbans region on the basis of assessment of the resources, endowment and the quality and coverage of the existing infrastructural facilities. Since State funds were not adequate to tackle the basic problems of the Sunderbans region, the possibility of getting external assistance was explored and in collaboration with the World Bank sponsored International Fund for Agricultural Development, a development plan with the object of bringing about substantial improvement in the economic conditions of the people, particularly for the small and marginal farmers, was launched.

To keep up the tempo of development, the Sunderbans Development Plan Phase-I covering a period of five years and involving a capital outlay of Rs. 67.5 crore had been forwarded by the Government of West Bengal to the Government of India for exploring the possibility of having external assistance.

I, therefore, request the Central Government to consider the development of this most backward area by allocating special fund for the purpose.

(xv) Need to lift ban on export of Onions

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE (Malegaon): The total production of onions in our country is around 55 lakh tonnes, out of which 30 lakh tonnes are produced in Maharashtra. The country needs only 40 lakh tonnes of onion for consumption. Therefore, the Government should export 15 lakh tonnes of surplus onion so that we can earn precious foreign exchange. We would be able to establish permanent market and consequently farmers will get remunerative price. In this regard, M.Ps. from Maharashtra and two-three meetings with hon'ble Commerce Minister. This issue was also raised in the Parliament. The Government accorded permission for exporting 5 lakh tonnes of onions whereas permission should have been given for exporting 10 lakh tonnes of onion. Since the Government have liberalised economy, hence, the restriction on export should also be lifted immediately. Since onion has been put on essential commodities list, I urge the Government that it should be provided a support price of Rs. 700 per quintal.

14.23 hrs.

INLAND WATERWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA (AMENDMENT) BILL

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the House will take up item No. 22. Shri Arun Jaitley.

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I beg to move:

> "That the Bill further to amend the Indian Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985, as passed by Rajya Sabha be taken into consideration."

This country has a very large flow of inland transport systems in terms of waterways. There are three waterways that have been declared as national waterways. There are a large number of State waterways. But unfortunately, a very small percentage - about 20 per cent - of our waterways is being actually utilised for transportation purposes.

The inland waterways have some great advantages in terms of being economically cheaper in terms of fuel, being ecologically superior and have also a capacity to reduce the burden on our roads and rail systems. But unfortunately, out of the total cargo that is transported in India, only about one per cent is transported by way of inland waterways system. It is, therefore, a great challenge for the country that we increase the utilisation of the inland waterways system. There are some States, particularly Goa, Kerala and West Bengal, where waterway systems have become developed and are being utilised.

Earlier this year, the Government has announced a policy for encouragement of these inland waterways as a part of the policy of invest in the waterways system. The same exemption, which is available to the national highways in terms of tax systems, was made available. The subsidy that existed was converted into a 30 per cent subsidy for vessel building, which will operate there. Certain customs duty concessions have also been provided. But one area where it is found lacking is that investment is independently not flowing in order to develop these waterways independently.

The object of this amendment is two fold. One is to widen the composition of the Authority itself so that we have various shades of experts who are in this Authority, and the second is a proposal to amend the Act in order

to permit the Authority constituted by this Act to raise money through various forms of borrowings, such as, bonds, debentures and other instruments as the Authority may consider fit.

The object of this is that the Authority should be able to go to the market and raise capital through different methodologies and it is through this capital that it can then seek to put the investment as far as the expansion of waterways is concerned. This is a step which we have taken in order to encourage and expand the utilisation of these water-ways and I commend to this hon. House that this Bill be taken up for consideration and approval by the hon. House.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Sivaganga): Respected Speaker Sir, this Bill is a very innovative Bill and we support it fully because the national waterways is one of the dreams of great patriotic people, especially Mahakavi Bharati. In Tamil Nadu, during 1920 itself, he dreamt for the linkage of entire Ganga-Cauvery stretch and that there will be transport facilities through the waterways itself. That was the dream of that period during the freedom struggle.

But it has started from Allahabad by the National Waterways Allahabad-Haldia Stretch of the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly Rivers Act 1982. This Act was subsequently supported with some more powers, that is, by Inland Waterways Authority of India Act 1985. This Act gives power to the Central Government by notification under Section 2H to make any national waterways being declared and it can also be made as a navigable channel. This is a very important Act, which can create a lot of economic prospects for India. It can not only create economic prospects but it will also give national integrity to our country. When the Ganga and Cauvery are linked, there will not be any division of North India and South India. People will be united and water scarcity in the Deacon area and also in the Southern part of Tamil Nadu will be totally eradicated and there will be water everywhere. There will be better agriculture, better industry and also there will be forest, which is now annihilated. It will come up again and we will have a great nation of Bharat which we have seen centuries before. Therefore, I totally welcome this aspect of the amendment.

But again, I want to draw the attention of the Government that there should be some commitment in the economic reforms. Again, we are making only the bureaucratic control by giving a Chairman, three full-time members and three part-time members to the authority. In the previous Act, there was a provision for only five members, and now it has been increased to six.

At the same time, I would like to say about joint ventures. Who will come when they have got so much of authority in the hands of the Government and the Central Government has got the right to remove the persons; and when disqualification clause also is given there The Central Government can remove any person, any member or Chairman in the authority.

We feel that when we are going in for the economic reforms, we should make it full so that the people can know what types of men are there. Many NRIs are there to invest money for these types of ventures, so that they can get more money and at the same time they can help the nation by making this nation more powerful in economic terms.

Therefore, I request that the hon. Law Minister should have some more thought about it. The National Waterways Act 1982, that is, Allahabad-Haldi stretch of the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River is having only three sections, rest of the sections have already been removed. It is hanging. It can be very well made as a repeal Bill and brought under Section 2H of the Inland Waterways Authority of India Act 1985, by notification.

In the same way, I would like to just stress that the European style of making all water bodies useable be adopted even in the metropolitan cities, just like in Chennai, the Koovam, Buckingam and Adyar canals were used in the British days as a navigable route.

The things which were taken through ships can be taken inside the land through waterways. In the same way, the Cauvery water, which goes into the Bay of Bengal, can be diverted towards Pudukottai and Sivaganga areas. In that way, the water can be used for navigation and also for agriculture.

During the regime of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, the Indira Gandhi canal in Rajasthan had created a wonder in the world. In the same way, there should be many wonders in the world by using this Act.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Bill looks like a very simple one. But if this Inland Waterways Authority of India (Amendment)

[Shri M.V.V.S. Murthi]

Bill is really implemented, the country will have enormous benefits because we have perennial rivers in India. Our country has a lot of rivers, right from Ganga down to Cauvery. There used to be a ferry transport system in the past. Up to 1950s, a lot of material used to be carried from the Kakinada port *via* Yanam, which is near the hon. Speaker's place, to Chennai; the material used to go *via* Godavari and Krishna to Chennai. Over a period, these Waterways have been neglected. The canals were not deepened and some of the areas had dried up. Some canals had dried up in Chennai. Ultimately, the system had been discontinued and abandoned. But this is a right step in the right direction. This is a very recent origin of 1985 Bill. Now, you are creating the Inland Waterways Authority to function effectively.

MR. SPEAKER: It is the Buckingham canal.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Yes, Sir, I had forgotten the name. The Buckingham canal had dried up. So, they were neglected totally. Now, a step has been taken in the right direction to create the Inland Waterways Authority. A lot of canals could be converted in Andhra Pradesh. Only three national waterways have been identified. One is Allahabad to Haldia - 1,620 kilometres. Another one is Dubri to Sadia - 891 kilometres. The third one is Kottapuram to Kollam - 205 kilometres. There should be some other areas also which have to be identified by the Inland Waterways Authority of India so that other States could be benefited. This Inland Waterways Authority should prepare a project report on various projects. Whoever wants to do it through 'Build, Operate and Transfer', it can be done. Once you constitute the Board, three should be some experts, say, three outside experts and three from the Government side, in the Board. If you can identify the projects and advertise them, then definitely people will come. Otherwise, they will remain only on paper. From 1985 till date, it is only on paper. Nothing has been done.

I would request you to kindly take steps in this regard. You are expending/creating new scope now for the Inland Waterways Authority to identify the projects and these projects will ultimately benefit the country.

With these words, I support this Bill.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Canara): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I realise that this Bill has a very limited scope, in the sense that the Board itself is sought to be expanded. I would just add to what has been said by Shri M.V.V.S. Murthi just now.

The national waterways seem to be only the Ganga part of Kerala and part of Goa—you know the rivers round there—whereas there is potential for a river system in every part of the country, and given the present constraints, I think, the cheapest transport of goods could take place through the river system. Unfortunately, our rivers are only looked upon either as causing floods or as being responsible for havoc in our areas, rather than as positive instruments for development and for transportation.

For instance, you have Kerala where part of the national waterways system operates. Then you have Goa. In between, there are some of the most beautiful and useful river systems which have been totally left out which come in North Canara and part of Udupi. If these could be connected, then neither the railways nor the road system really would be able, probably, to meet the type of load which these river systems could take. For long we have talked about connecting the major rivers of the country. Every time this comes up, plans are made and we are told that there is not enough money. I believe that if the river water systems could be connected, it would be the greatest tributes to integrating the economy of the country, and more than that, it would mean massive employment generation.

We are spending so much money, on various schemes like JRY, employment of this and employment of that. If all these schemes could be integrated into one national project like connecting the river system, the same money, which is being spent in bits and pieces in different States, could be pooled for paying for this mighty project.

Indira Gandhi canal seemed impossible but it has actually happened and converted the desert into green lands. Therefore, I would ask the Minister, who is a very progressive and forward looking Minister, to think in terms of a national programme by which the river waters could really be connected and this really would then become, maybe, a kind of a National Waterways Authority.

Today, it is nothing but regional pressures which are dominating. Those who are able to get something, get it. The rest are totally left out. There is neither facility for dredging the existing rivers nor river transport equipment is available in our States. Everything is so centralised that the States are totally neglected.

I want to point out one more thing. I wonder if Members are aware that the headquarters of, for instance, the Light Houses which are supposed to be lighting the coastline for the ships, is in NOIDA. You know it is a joke, if I may say so, to have Light Houses' Headquarters in NOIDA and the National Waterways Authority's Headquarters is again outside Delhi.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: The Shipping Ministry is in Delhi.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: The Shipping Ministry is okay. I am telling you that the Shipping Ministry, therefore, should see to it. When we visited as a Committee, we were told that for testing the soil by the National Waterways Authority, the soil is carried to the testing laboratory in drums by air from the Ganga basin to NOIDA. The laboratories are also situated here. You can imagine how much attention they are paying to the river water development when the officials and the laboratory are in NOIDA and the sample of the earth and the sand has to be carried all the way here to be tested. Can the laboratories, at lest, not be in the river basin? Therefore, I am asking that just setting up Authorities does not mean development of the waterways. You have to decentralise it...*(Interruptions)*

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (Contai): It is not far from NOIDA.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It comes from everywhere to one laboratory here. You have waterways in Kerala also. So, the entire soil-testing laboratory is in NOIDA. We visited this as a Parliamentary Committee and we had pointed this out, but nobody seems to take notice. I would, therefore, finally appeal that a look be taken at the rivers of the entire country.

This is the national waterways, not just of one or two States. As it now stands, it is limited to a few States and the rest of us feel orphaned. I would therefore appeal that a new look be taken at the next scheme to be introduced in the coming year.

[Translation]

*SHRI C. SREENIVASAN (Dindigul): Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank the Chair for giving me an opportunity to speak on this Bill to amend the Inland Waterways Authority Act.

Sir, when this authority is sought to be expanded, representatives from States which had traditional waterways system must be included. For instance Tamil Nadu had always had inland navigation through waterways system which needs to be revived now.

Chennai was linked to several places in Andhra Pradesh through Buckingham Canal system. Likewise Cooum River waterways linked Chennai with several places in Chingleput and South Arcot Districts. Movement of goods from sea coasts to inland destinations were viably carried out.

But now we find both Buckingham Canal and Cooum Canal are silted due to improper maintenance over the years and due to its conversion as an outlet for urban sewerage waste. These traditional waterways need to be desilted and modernised.

Government of Tamil Nadu led by our leader and the present Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi has taken up with the Centre a viable project to desilt and modernise Buckingham waterways system. The initial phase would require about Rs. 68 crores and I urge upon the Union Government to provide the required funds to revive this traditional waterways system that would save fuel and doubly benefit our economy.

During the Twelfth Lok Sabha when our party All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam was part of the alliance led by BHP, as the then Chief Minister, the present Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi put forth the demand to take up Sethu Samudram project. Like offering cornflakes to a hungry elephant, just a crore of rupees were allocated by the Centre that too to conduct a feasibility study and survey.

But the project has not seen the light of the day. Sethu Samudram project could help reducing the navigation distance while moving from the Western Coast to Eastern Coast by about 500 kms. The need to go round the Island nation Sri Lanka could be avoided. But the Centre is meting out a step motherly treatment. Hence I urge upon the Union Government to set apart adequate funds to take up and complete Sethu Samudram project which would add impetus to our inland trade links and movement of cargo on sea waters at our sea border line.

Inland waterway between Trivandrum and Kanyakumari could be augmented if widening, desilting and modernisation of certain existing canals there stretching about 56 kms. Through the Inland Waterways Authority, Centre must take up that project too coordinating with both the States of Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Sea faring and navigating both on the high seas and inland waterways were part of the life of the ancient Tamil civilisation. Hence I urge upon the Union Government to accord priority to include in the expanded Board of this Inland Waterways Authority, the States like Tamil Nadu that had traditional waterways system.

With this I conclude.

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on Inland Waterways Authority (Amendment) Bill. Shrimati Margaret Alva was saying that office of IWAI, which oversees operation of coastal vessels is in NOIDA and as hon'ble Minister has stated, the office of Shipping Ministry is in NOIDA and the Cabinet Minister himself looks after everything and leaves nothing for the Minister of State. It seems that the State Ministers in this Government have no value. I do not know which way the Minister of Law is concerned with the operation of ships. But, I would like to raise a question relating to law. So far, the Union Government was authorised to appoint five full time Members of the authority. After the present amendment the authority will have three full time and three part-time Members. It is stated that there can be not more than three Members, it means the number of Members should not be more than three but it may be less than three.

One is less than three similarly two is less than three and as per the extant provision the authority can function even if there is one Member. As per the present law, number of Members should not be more than three, *i.e.* one is lesser than three, even zero is less than three. It means if there are no members, the authority can still function. What a typical provision has been made by the Minister. Hence, there should be a law providing for three Members and not more than three. But as per the law, Members less than three are enough. There are provisions which provide for zero, one two or three Members. There should be not more than there full time Members. Now, who would be those three part time Members. I do not know about it, but I want that vessels should operate from Haldia to Allahabad. From 1985-86 it took 15 years to start a ferry service between Haldia to Allahabad and from Haldia, the progress has come to a naught at Patna. Hon'ble Minister has claimed that waterway operation is eco-friendly and economical and even during olden days, the people used to ferry from one corner of the world to another one. Now, we have to provide service from one end of the country to another end. People claim that waterways are eco-friendly and economical as well. It has been just stated that slow progress of work was because of constraint of funds. The progress of the work was so slow that it took 15 years from 1986 to make Haldia-Patna stretch navigable and I do not know whether remaining Patna-Allahabad stretch would be completed within 15 years or not. The authority should be empowered to borrow funds from the open market or issue bonds. Our concern is that some how ferry service between Haldia and Allahabad should be started. Earlier, private operators operated vessels from one place to another such as from Mahindro Ghat to Chakeso Ghat, upto Mayinar and from Mahindro Ghat to Pahleja Ghat. Vessels being operated by LTC have been stopped. Ferry service between Haldia to Patna and Patna to Allahabad has great utility and for transportation of goods, it is much in demand. There are three inland waterways, Allahabad-Haldia, Dhubri-Sadia and Champakara and Udyogmandal canals alongwith Kottapuram to Kollam canals. There have been demands for declaring more stretches as national waterways. My submission is that stretch starting from Kosi to the point where it touches Haldia-Patna waterway should be declared a waterway, which would facilitate movement to our neighbouring country Nepal. A feasibility study should be conducted in this regard. Navigation becomes difficult for four months *i.e.* during November, December, January and February when more salutation takes place and at certain places water-level recedes marginally and at some places it increases. During these four months, efforts can be made for desultation. If it materialises, navigation link to Nepal via Haldia-Patna-Allahabad, Haldia to Khagria, via river Kosi can be opened.

If Ganga and Cauvery rivers are linked, traffic movement by waterways from one corner of the country to another can be made possible. We are waiting for the day when this idea will materialise and navigation facility will be made available. It can solve the problem of floods also. It will facilitate movement of passengers and carriage of goods. I urge the hon'ble Minister to take special interest, provide adequate funds and complete the project lying pending for the last 15 years.

I conclude with these words.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now the Hon. Minister will reply.

[Translation]

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have also given notice.

MR. SPEAKER: Notice should have come through you whip. How can you give notice when the debate has already started. You can speak for two minutes, but please don't do so in future.

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful that you have specially given me time to speak.

Sir, it is commendable that Government have introduced Indian Inland Waterways Authority (Amendment) Bill in the House. The Govt. have given its attention to an ignored aspect of transportation. Members, speaking before me have said that its basic reason lies in the fact that the controlling authority is in Delhi and there are very few establishment in the field. There is shortage of ships, lack of infrastructure and most importantly there are a number of lobbies as far as land transport is concerned. We have seen that for land transport, schemes with an outlay of Rs. 60-70 thousand crore have been formulated. Consideration should also have been given to the fact that waterway is a cheap means of transport and India has a long tradition of the use of waterways. It might have resulted in its development, too. Now Government have, even though delayed, drawn its attention towards it. It makes it clear that Government had not provided a fix priority to inland water transport sector. As the Bill states, that three waterways—one, Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hughli river system, two, Brahmaputra river system and three, Western coast canal (Kotapuram to Kollam) have come into existence. Besides these, Government should also attend to other waterways which have been used for long. Through you, I request the Government to enlist the cooperation of Bangladesh and Nepal while formulating the schemes. Its responsibility had first came to the shipping corporation.

The basic interest of the shipping corporation is coastal business. They had been concentrating to that. Therefore, it never bothered about developing inland waterways. Now a new authority is being created and it is hoped that attempts will be made to develop the infrastructure related to it, and to realise the potential of employment and investment and of management skills.

Sir, it has come to my knowledge that earlier authorities didn't have decisional autonomy. It was said that it had no freedom to repair even the malfunctioning ships. They didn't have freedom to buy new ships. All such decisions used to be taken in Delhi. I hope that the new authority that is being set up, will have decisional autonomy and necessary step will be taken to achieve the performance level. Waterways are an important transport resource. Uptil now, they have been neglected. Keeping in view the anticipated load on it in the coming times, we have to bring down production cost in every sector. I hope that it will be done through more use of waterways. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Mr. Speaker, Sir, some very valuable suggestions have been made. I respect each one of the viewpoints which have been expressed.

Shrimati Margaret Alva is right that there is a great need to integrate the river systems in this country. We need to utilise them more than the potential, which we have now explored. This not only was a tremendous effect on the employment potential, but also leads to the development of the regions adjacent to the river ways. There will be jetties, there will be infrastructure created.

As far as the maintenance of waterways is concerned, it is the primary responsibility of the Authority which takes over the waterways which are declared as national waterways.

We are also, through other means, including subsidies because there has not been enough interest shown by the private sector, trying to encourage even the transport vessels and the cargo vessels to operate in these waterways. This is one of the incentives which has been given to them so as to ensure that these waterways can be put to proper utilisation because they are, like land and rail, an alternative method of human as also cargo transportation.

Shrimati Margaret Alva mentioned that the soil testing is done here. It is true that it is done here, but there are also several regional centres in Patna, Guwahati, Allahabad, Kochi, Bangalore, etc., where the soil testing is now being done.

A suggestion which has been made almost throughout is that we should conduct studies and have the feasibility studies of which are the other potential waterways which can be declared as national waterways. I must say that there are States in India which have done very successful experiments. Goa, for instance, has a very successful experiment of the State waterways; Kerala has a very successful experiment of utilising those waterways effectively. These are areas where there are still demands that they want some form of assistance.

Only last week-end, I had requested that Transport Ministers and the Waterways Ministers from various States which have this potential to come to Delhi, and almost 15 States were represented. I had an interaction with them. We understood each other. We have had regional conferences. We had a conference in Delhi, we had a conference in Patna, and we had a conference in Kerala already. We are planning to have another one in North-East so as to bring this item to the forefront as one of the agendas for development of waterways in those regions.

[Shri Arun Jaitley]

We have identified 10 waterways and conducted feasibility studies in regard to them. With regard to the three main waterways, we have already declared them as national waterways, namely, the *Ganga, Bhagirathi, Hoogly system*, the *Brahmaputra* and the West Coast Canal in Kerala. There are seven others with regard to which we have completed the techno-economic feasibility studies. But after we have conducted those studies, the area of difficulty which confronts us is one of resources.

15.00 hrs.

Therefore, as far as the resources are concerned, should it come only from the Budgetary Support? Or, should we also tap the market and make it a commercial venture where there could be some returns and it can operate commercially? This amendment really is intended to overcome the principal hurdle, which is resources. We want to attract resources into this area. Waterways like, the Sunderbans in West Bengal, the Godavari and the Krishna in Andhra Pradesh, the Mahanadi in Orissa, the Narmada in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, The Mondovi and Zuaric rivers in Goa, the Tapi in Gujarat, the Barak river in Assam and DVC in West Bengal are areas where studies have been conducted and we need resources as far as these areas are concerned.

This Bill is intended to create an enabling provision so that we can reach out to the market and raise revenue and this Authority can operate and function keeping the commercial aspects in mind. It is because this is intended to rejuvenate the economy in this area.

Sir, I am extremely grateful to the hon. Members who have spoken on this Bill and have unanimously supported this Bill. I now commend to the House that this Bill be passed.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (Contai): Sir, I wanted to ask three questions to the hon. Minister. First is, have you obtained technical assistance from other countries, like France, Germany and the Netherlands who have been operating inland waterways on rivers like Seine and Danube?

Second is, is not there a tremendous scope for investment of foreign capital in this sector considering that our inland waterways initially depended a lot on foreign capital?

Third is, are you considering to take into account the collaboration of the Bangladesh Government?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, as far as the second suggestion is concerned, we are seriously in the process of considering it. We have contacted some of the international funding agencies. The Chairman of the authority has informed me that he is in touch with them and we are likely to make some significant progress in this regard.

Sir, as far as studying the experiments of various other countries is concerned, we are open to consider them. In fact, some of us have gone and seen how they operate. De. Sengupta gave the example of various other countries. Some of the big international ports are, in fact, integrated with the inland water system and the transportation of cargo after it goes to the port rather than using the land further, the pressure on the land and the roads is being reduced. It is being done in Rotterdam and some countries in Europe. It is now being done through inland water system. This is cheaper as well as quicker. Therefore, the pressure on the roads is reduced. We are keeping all these suggestions in mind including the one that Dr. Sengupta has suggested. As far as Bangladesh is concerned, these rivers are connected particularly to the North-Eastern region and we have a protocol. We will keep all these suggestions in mind.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER: The House would now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 7 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 7 were added to the Bill.

Clauses 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

15.04 hrs.

MARRIAGE LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill and Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, as decided in the Leaders' meeting yesterday, the Bills at serial number 23, 24 and 25 in today's List of Business may be discussed together as the subject matter of all these Bills is co-related.

The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001 is in the name of Shri L.K. Advani who has authorised Shri Arun Jaitley to pilot the Bill on his behalf.

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Divorce Act, 1869, the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936, the Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Divorce Act, 1869, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, would you like me to explain what the three Bills are about?

MR. SPEAKER: You can explain the three Bills together.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, you have already mentioned that the subject matter of the three Bills is inter-related.

The Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001 deals with four different legislations. It is intended to have a limited purpose in each of the four legislations - namely, the Indian Divorce Act, the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, the Special Marriage Act, and the Hindu Marriage Act - for different provisions with regard to payment of maintenance to wife, particularly when the matrimonial proceedings are pending before the court. Experience has been that these matrimonial proceedings carry on for a very long time and, therefore, it takes a very long time before the orders can be passed for payment of maintenance to the wives.

The object of amendment of these four personal laws has been to create certain provisions, which are in the nature of welfare provision, in these laws. The first provision is that in addition to the alimony or maintenance which is paid to the wives, uniformity has been given to all the laws that the legal expenses of proceedings are also to be given. There was a provision in some laws and not in the others.

The second provision is that though there is a provision for grant of interim maintenance, if interim maintenance itself takes years to be paid to the wives, they, in the absence of any other source of livelihood, can be pushed to a stage of destitution. A uniform provision has now been created in all the laws which mentions that in the maintenance proceedings, as far as possible, the court shall endeavour to see that maintenance orders are passed within a period of sixty days from the moving of the application. Within sixty days, the ladies, therefore, must get the orders of maintenance.

The third part of this amendment is again to bring uniformity that even expenses of maintenance and education of all minor children, when maintenance is sought for them, shall also be concluded within a period of sixty days. This is the object of the Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill.

The second Bill, which is the Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 2001 is a very substantial amendment. I must mention that the Indian Divorce Act was legislated in the year 1869 and this was the exact replica of the English Matrimonial Causes Act, 1857. In this Act, there were several provisions which were discriminatory for women. England itself repealed that Act in the year 1923, but it is only after 132 years of its inception that we are considering amendments to this particular law.

There have been several instances in the past where the Law Commission had recommended that certain provisions of this Act be amended. The Law Commission's 15th, 19th, 22nd and 164th reports recommended substantial changes to this Act. Subsequently, different High Courts had quashed at least two provisions of this Act as being discriminatory for women. Section 10 of the Act provided for grounds of divorce, or grounds of dissolution of marriage. I am correcting myself and I am

[Shri Arun Jaitley]

preferring the use of words 'dissolution of marriage' because one of the factors, particularly in a large section of Christians, says that marriages are really not intended to be divorced. So, through the Act, the community had suggested the use of words 'dissolution of marriage'. Even though the word 'divorce' has always existed in the title, we are consciously respecting that sentiment and using the words 'dissolution of marriage'.

The grounds of dissolution of marriage which were available to a wife were entirely different. The grounds available to a husband were many more. For instance, for a husband, adultery itself was a ground against the wife. But as far as the wife was concerned, in addition to adultery, she had to prove something else—adultery with cruelty, adultery with bigamy, adultery plus something else. Therefore, even if the husband was implicit of committing adultery, this was not a ground available to the wife. The courts had held that this provision which gave different grounds to both the husband and wife was discriminatory, smacked of gender bias and, therefore, they considered it necessary that the vacuum created by striking out of Section 10 had to be filled up again.

The second ground, when this Bill was introduced in the December Session of last year, was that unlike in other personal laws, the District Judge is entitled to grant a decree for dissolution of marriage or divorce. In this case, the decree requires to be confirmed by a full Bench of the High Court. So, members of the Christian community not only had to wait for a very long time but had to spend money to go to the High Court. Three judges of the High Court would constitute the full Bench, and it is only after the full Bench confirmed the decree that dissolution of marriage could have been granted.

One of the courts had held that this provision was also very onerous, and therefore, it required to be relooked into.

This Bill was referred to the Standing Committee. Different members of the Christian community, particularly, organisations of Christian women, and organisations of churches, had addressed themselves to the Government. The Government, before introduction of the December, 2000 Bill, also had consulted them. We found that these two areas were the areas of consensus. Therefore, it was introduced with the limited purpose of these two purposes along with consequential changes.

When the Bill went before the Standing Committee, several organisations, particularly, all the Christian communities appeared before the Standing Committee. It has also been the policy of the Government continuously that when personal laws are changed, views of the communities are seriously looked into and respected. Members of the community appeared before the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee had made several suggestions. Barring one, the Government had accepted all those suggestions. The suggestions are: Section 7 of the Act be amended. Section 7 says that 'because it was an Act of 1869, based on the English Act of 1857, that judgements and orders passed by English courts would constitute as a precedent for the purposes of this law.'

Now, the Supreme Court has also taken a view that after 1947, when India became an independent sovereign State, laws of another country could really not be *ipso facto* applied to us. Therefore, this was not a correct provision. So, Section 7 is sought to be repealed.

There was also certain provisions which provided for a discriminatory treatment, particularly, when there are serious grounds for dissolution of marriage, such as, adultery. There was again a discrimination that there could be a case against wife or any person that the wife was living with or the adulterer and the money was caused to paid by him. All these provisions were discriminatory because no corresponding provision for the husband was available. So, the community suggested that these discriminatory provisions be removed.

There was also provisions that the maximum amount of alimony or maintenance that could be given to a wife would be capped to one-fifth of the husband's income. This is not the position with regard to the other personal laws and, therefore, there was a demand that this one-fifth cap should be removed. That has also been sought to be removed.

Finally, there was also a provision that in case the wife has an allegation of adultery against her, she loses her property in favour of the husband or the children. There was no corresponding provision that the husband would lose it. So, the community had suggested to the Standing Committee that this provision also be removed.

So, we have accepted all these suggestions. With all these suggestions, the Bill has already been passed by the Rajya Sabha. I am placing the Bill for consideration of this hon. House. It is a very important piece of legislation. Initially they reluctant to change that law and subsequently, the entire community, particularly on account of women's empowerment and high levels of literacy rates, they all have complete consensus. Even in the Standing Committee, there was a consensus in order to amend the law.

The only suggestion which was made by the community and which we have not accepted is that they wanted the parallel courts, which are to be constituted by the Judges also to be empowered in relation to grant of dissolution of marriages. Now, that has not been acceptable because under our legal and judicial system, it is only the courts constituted under the Constitution and law which have the legal authority, and the courts constituted by the religious organisations are not formally recognised as far as the Indian law is concerned. So, that suggestions did not find favour. The Standing Committee referred it to us and it did not approve it and it has not found favour with the Government either.

Sir, the third legislation is also a very important piece of legislation. It is an amendment to section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure is a criminal law provisions intended to save the destitution or starvation. It relates to non-earning members of a family, it related to wives, it relates to minor children, it relates to aged parents who do not earn and are unable to support themselves. Now, this provision provided an upper limit, a cap on the maximum amount of maintenance which could be granted under this provision against a person whose earning was Rs. 500. This amount of Rs. 500 was fixed in the year 1955, and the cost of living has increased, the income has increased, and the inflation itself has increased. The Law Commission had suggested some years ago that this amount of Rs. 500 be increased and capped at Rs. 5,000. The Government considered that matter and it was felt that when incomes are so variable in the society, rather than having to amend the provision repeatedly, there is no need to have a cap. After all, this is a matter of judicial discretion as to how much amount would be granted taking into consideration the requirement of the wives, the children or the aged parents, as also the life style and the incomes of the husbands.

Therefore, we have suggested a couple of changes to Section 125. The upper cap of Rs. 500 is sought to be removed. Just as we have done it in the context of personal laws, we have created a provision - which did not exist, although there was a judicial opinion that such a power was there - for payment of interim maintenance and have also provided that this interim maintenance, preferably and as far as possible, should be decided within a period of 60 days from the date of the application. These laws are intended not only to strengthen the gender justice but also to provide for people who are, on account of social circumstances, in a position of distress. The most important one is the Indian Divorce Act which is intended to remove the discriminatory parts of the law and replace them with non-discriminatory parts.

I must mention a point which I had forgotten earlier. One important addition which our community had suggested to the Indian Divorce Act was to create a provision for dissolution of marriage by mutual consent. Now, this was not in the original Bill which we had introduced. It was felt by the members of the community and the Standing Committee that even when husband and wife agree to live separately dissolving their marriage, it should not be necessary that one should have to go to the court and make serious allegations against the other spouse. Both of them can, in a civilised manner, give consent to dissolution without stating the reason and the reason being that they are unable to live together. In other laws, the Hindu Marriage Act and the Special Marriage Act, the period when they should be living apart was one year but the community felt that in this case, the period should be experimented as two years. Therefore, that was respected by the Standing Committee and we have accepted that suggestion.

With these observations, I commend to the hon. House that these three important pieces of legislations be taken up for consideration and passed.

ME. SPEAKER: Motions moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Divorce Act, 1869, the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936, the Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, as passed by Rajya Sabha be taken into consideration."

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Divorce Act, 1869, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Canara): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that for the Christian women in this country, the Bill which has today been introduced marks indeed a step forward. Compared to most other communities, the Christian women have had much higher literacy rates and there has been much more of awareness and enlightenment. Yet, if you look at the laws governing marriage and divorce among Christian women, you find that they are still 150 years behind our time. I, today, thank the Law Minister and the Government for having responded to our demands. In fact, these amendments have been given in the reports of the Law Commission since 1950s. There have been a number of judgements by the High Courts and the Supreme Court pointing out that most of these provisions affecting women of the Christian community were so much discriminatory against women.

15.18 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*]

Yet, the sensitivity of the successive Governments in touching personal laws of minority communities went on delaying the process and there was always a question that the community should respond positively and that there should be a move from the community. Therefore, we women, particularly from the Christian community, had to wait since Independence till now, even for those laws which the British Parliament had amended as far as the their own situation was concerned, to get it amended here in India. I must say that it was not very recently that a provision existed that laws passed by British Parliament would be applicable to us in India, to our community and the Government did not think it necessary up till now even to abolish it.

More, than that, I must say that there has been unanimity, as the Minister has said. He has explained all the provisions and there is very little for me to explain beyond that. I must say that unanimity, among all the churches, was brought about and I pay tribute to the Christian women groups and organisations which have been lobbying since 1980s to get these amendments passed. When I was the Minister for Women and Child Development in the Rajiv Gandhi Government, we made this demand and Shri Rajiv Gandhi, having faced the repercussions of the Shah Bano case and judgement, said to me, "Go and get me 10,000 signatures of Christians asking for the change and I will respond."

I said, 'We got 10 lakh signatures from round the country, of men and women supporting the amendments of the Christian laws'. We presented them and said, 'Here we are and we want change'. Of course, it did take time. You know the religious hierarchy moves a little slowly. It took time to convince the Churches of North India, South India and the CBCI. The Church authorities, the women groups and some others had approached the Law Minister for amendments. I am very grateful that the Government has responded to our demands and these changes have come. I must say that marriage and divorce, probably is a very basic issue in the lives of people. Marriage is something which each religious group or each community celebrates in its own way. There are problems in the country. Even today, marriages are not registered. In many cases women are paying the price for having no registration because the husband just says, 'This is not my wife, I do not know who she is and she is claiming to be my wife'.

The second thing which exists today, which needs to be taken note of is the law on bigamy. You are not supposed to marry a second woman under the civil and other laws. But the provision is that the complainant must be the aggrieved party. So, unless the wife complains, the State does not take note of the man who married for the second or third time. Very often, when these women come to us for advice or consultation, we ask 'Why do you not file a criminal complaint?' They say that if they do that they would be thrown out of the house and that they have nowhere to go. They ask, 'Unless the States help us where will we go?'...*(Interruptions)* I am talking of the general law which is true for Hindu women....*(Interruptions)*

I am talking of the general law as it exists today. If you are justifying everybody else doing the same thing, then why are you talking about Muslim Law? I am talking of others who do not have a personal law providing for it, still doing it and getting away with it against the law. That is why I am saying that there is need for protection of women under all the laws.

I am grateful that as far as the Christian women are concerned, these amendments have been brought today. The most important thing is maintenance. The cap has been removed. That means this limit of Rs. 500 no longer exists. And also it is not just one-fifth of the income, but it can be what is considered to be proper. The other important thing is the time limit. Now, the application, as far as possible, should be disposed of within sixty days. The Minister said that it is sixty days from the day of application. It is not so. It is sixty days from the day on which the notice is served on the husband. I must say that there are problems in this because very often serving the notice on the husband becomes the most difficult procedure for a woman.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Conscious of this fact, in a corresponding change that we have suggested to the Code of Civil Procedure, which is before the Standing Committee, we have enlarged those modes of service from only through Registered Post or bailiff to new technology areas like e-mail etc. Of course, a lot of people do not have access to it. We have also provided for service by couriers.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I am grateful to you for that, because in the old system it used to take two years to serve a notice on the husband. I am glad that that has been modernised and changed.

I must also point out that one of the points that we were objecting to all along was the discrimination on the grounds of divorce or dissolution as we call it. It is because, as you said, women have to prove adultery

plus something else, whereas a man can say adultery and get the divorce proceedings going. The entire law was so vague against women that it was impossible for a woman to look for justice.

I, of course, come from a community where we neither recognise divorce nor re-marriage. So, it does not affect us. Marriages among the Catholics are supposed to be a sacrament and the vow says 'until death do us apart'. So, we neither have divorce nor re-marriage. But, for the majority of the Christian groups which recognise divorce and dissolution, this comes as a great step forward as far as women are concerned.

I must mention here that the most discriminatory clause which existed was that when a man filed a case for divorce on the ground of adultery and won the case, then, all the property of the woman, whatever she had, automatically went to the husband. But when a woman filed a case for divorce on grounds of adultery and got divorce, she did not get any property of the husband transferred to her. It was just a one-way traffic sort of thing when the woman lost to the husband. But when the husband was charged with adultery and found guilty, he never gave any of the property of the wife. Such provisions, I believe, are totally against the spirit and directives of the Constitution which has been existing since 1950. But these women have still been subjected to this discrimination because personal laws were not to be touched. The women have to awaken our own men, our Church authorities and institutions, and a demand has to come from within the community saying that we want justice. We demand the community's support and demanded justice. We went round mobilising opinion within the community. I must say today that in spite of some people who may still have reservations, the overwhelming majority has supported the cause and therefore we stand here for the amendments.

They have also introduced the provision for mutual consent. It is a question of divorce or dissolution by mutual consent, as the hon. Minister has said, where we can go and get this done without all the procedures of waiting and fighting each other in the court. Here also, I must say that the question of not having to go to the High Court and wait for six months for a decree to be made permanent, is going to help us very much. But the most important thing is the provision now that even expenses of the proceedings are to be recovered...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Are you supporting the provision of mutual consent?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Yes. If they agree, it is all right. If both of them agree, after a period of living apart for two years, it is all right....*(Interruptions)* I know that there are pitfalls. But there are pitfalls in divorce also. There is the provision of living apart for two years. In fact, when this amendment came earlier, we had opposed it. But I must say that today when the entire community has responded amongst us and asked for it, I do not want to be the only voice against it. Even the women's organisations and groups have supported this saying that they cannot wait for many years where there is cruelty and desertion. There are all sorts of reasons why they are not living with their husbands. Without spending money and too much time, they would like to be able to do this. I realise that there are cases where this can happen abroad and this is being done without their knowledge.

There is just one more point. There was one more piece which we had presented to the Government. This is the Draft Christian Marriage Bill which was, by mutual consent among all the Christian groups, discussed. We wanted a comprehensive Christian Marriage Bill. This was circulated. The Government took into account the amendments proposed by the Christian community as also all the Churches. The amendments were all put in the chart form the circulated. They are before the Government.

Mr. Minister, I realise that you do not want to rush into things. But I am appealing to you to consider this. You have taken very progressive steps to help us. I believe if we have a comprehensive law called the Christian Marriages Act, it would help us. In fact, within the community, it has been discussed in detail and a consensus has emerged. I would appeal to the hon. Minister that may be in the coming months if he could call a meeting of all the Christian groups together and discuss this, send it to the Standing Committee for a final view, we would be very grateful.

Having started the process, we do hope that the Government would go ahead and complete the process of codifying Christian law and making the community at least to say that we, within the Christian community, have no discrimination against the women and that there is justice for all sections.

I congratulate the Government for the initiative taken and I do want to say that the Minister has been most responsive whenever we sat with him to discuss these issues. It is essentially because of him that we have been able really to see the light of day. I support the Bill on behalf of all the women in my community.

SHRI V.P. SINGH BADNORE (Bhilwara): Sir, I rise to support all the three Bills - Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001, Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 2001 and Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001. The sequence is little wrong. We have alimony first and the divorce next. It should be the other way round. We have divorce and then the alimony comes into place. But, I welcome these three Bills.

The important thing about these three Bills is that this is the Year of Empowerment of Women. The timing is also so right that all these three Bills are supporting the empowerment of women and the cause of women. That is why I also want to congratulate the Minister on this. Shrimati Margaret Alva was saying that these have been pending for a very long time. It was only with the initiative of the Minister that we have got to see the Bills thus far. There is another angle to it. The Minister, being an eminent lawyer, has also been trying to get the theory that justice delayed is justice denied and has initiated fast disposal of cases in the fast track courts and the alimony is decided in 60 days. It is a welcome move.

As Shrimati Alva was saying very rightly, there are hundreds of reasons and hundreds of ways that the lawyers can put forth to really delay giving alimony to the wife. A lady is in distress. She is traumatised by what has happened. On the top of that, she does not know as to where to go. She has a residence problem. If she wants to go to her parents, they are not ready to accept here. That is another thing which I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister that in the measures that are going to be made and in the directions that are going to be given, something should be said about the residence also. Alimony is given to her. Money is given to her for the education and maintenance of her children, but what about residence? When the lady is in distress, the brothers turn their faces; her parents turn their backs to her. That is the time she wants to also have some sort of a roof over her head. Something should also be done about that.

There is also a measure which really reinforces our effectiveness and commitment to the Article 15 of the Constitution, which gives special direction to the women and children. That is also, I think, a very important piece of legislation. There are also some other anomalies. For example, maintenance is fixed. But in that, her standard of living should also be taken into account.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: That cap has been removed. Now, there is no limit.

SHRI V.P. SINGH BADNORE: It is under consideration. It should not be like income-tax. There should be other considerations like her standard of living she is enjoying. The car that she drives should also be considered in the directions and measures that are going to be taken.

Then, for example, if the alimony or the maintenance is fixed at Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 10,000, after 10 years this amount would not be worth much. So, this alimony should be based on price index, just as it was done in the case of the salary of Members of Parliament in the Bill which was passed a few days ago. This kind of measure should be followed here also. If the alimony is Rs. 5,000 today, it will become Rs. 6,000 after two or three years and Rs. 10,000 after five years or so.

I think, everybody in this House is in agreement with these three Bills. An hon. Member very rightly said that this is really meant for the women belonging to the Christian community, Hindu religion and Parsi community and wanted to know whether Muslim women also do not want to get something like this. I am not making this into a controversy like Shah Bano case or anything like that. But do they also this not look forward to a progressive step like this? Are they not a part of the society? Are they not a part of the Indian system? Would they not be wanting a progressive step in the right direction? This is what I want to enquire from the Minister.

In the end, I support all these three Bills.

[Translation]

*SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (Jalpaiguri): Thank you Mr. Chairman Sir, for giving me an opportunity. At the outset I would like to say that my party and I welcome both the Bills viz. The Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001, and the Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 2001. I would like to raise some salient points on the Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001. The purpose of the Marriage Act Bill is to enable the wife to present for expenses of the proceedings and alimony pending the suit so that the wife and minor children do not face any difficulty. An attempt has also been made in the said Amendment Bill to expedite the divorce proceedings and as such it has been proposed to dispose of the proceedings as far as possible within sixty days. In my view, the word "as far as possible" is a misnomer in the present socio-economic scenario. Because by this the proceeding will be time consuming and move at snail's pace. Thus the adverse party will take advantage of it. So my suggestion is the word "as far as possible" be deleted from the Chapter III, IV and V.

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*English Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Bangla.

In this context I would like to mention some necessary amendments in the Marriage Law and Maintenance Law of our country. As we know that in order to substantiate a valid marriage in the Hindu Marriage Act, Special Marriage Act and Parsi Marriage Act, the bride and bridegroom must have to attain the age of 18 years and 21 years. In this context my proposal is to amend the age limit of both the bride and bridegroom by enhancing it to 21 and 23 respectively. Firstly because almost sixty percent of the village girls are put in wedlock at the age of 15-16 years by their parents by falsely representing the age as more than 18 years. As a result, the child marriage cannot be restrained. Secondly it has been elicited from recent statistics that 20% to 30% growth of birth can be controlled if the mother is more than 21 years.

In this context I must mention that the Child Marriage Restrained Act, 1927, through which the solemnisation of marriage under the age of 21 years and 18 years has been made punishable with imprisonment of three months or fine. The provisions of this Act are too liberal to show any viable performance in restraining the child marriage. As a result of which we are facing staggering problem of population in our country. So, I feel that penal provision of this Act is required to be made more stringent. So the amendment for the Child Marriage Restrained Act, 1927, is urgently needed.

Mr. Chairman Sir, I crave leave to submit for the amendment or the provisions of section 18 of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act. As per provisions of the said Act only the legally married wives are eligible for maintenance. In our society, a large number of women suffer exploitation because of bigamous marriages. All of us are aware that the law does not allow to provide any maintenance to a woman whose marriage is void under the Hindu Act. Although illegitimate child can inherit the property of his or her illegitimate father as per the provisions of the Hindu Succession Act. The legal protection should be given to such woman who has not been informed of the husband's earlier marriage when she was married to him or the husband obtained her consent by playing fraud on her and deceiving her. If it is felt that a particular enactment causes hardship or inconvenience, it should be redressed by legislation. So my proposal is to amend the provisions of section 18 of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act by giving wider meaning to the word 'wife'.

Before I conclude, on behalf of my party I once again welcome the Bills and thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my views on these Bills.

[English]

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a welcome sign to amend these personal laws. So, I welcome these three Bills, namely Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001, Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 2001 and Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001, brought by the hon. Minister. The merit of all these amendments is that the petitions of alimony, maintenance or for the education of the children would be decided within 60 days, whereas in the past, particularly if the male is influential enough, the case of granting alimony used to go on for years together. Now, it has been cut short to 60 days.

Secondly, there are certain progressive amendments which have been brought for the dissolution of the marriages, but I am afraid whether this provision could be effectively utilised or will be utilised to the detriment of innocent girls. This aspect has to be examined, because ours is a poor country. Poverty and illiteracy are very much there in many parts of our country. We have to examine whether we have progressed enough, but the learned lady Members have supported this measure. So, I cannot oppose it, because it is their prerogative and right.

Sir, there are so many anachronistic laws and procedure in India and one of our learned Members, Dr. Nitish Sengupta has written a book on this. It is worth reading, but there is not much time to quote anything from that book. Our country is united, but there are so many personal laws which are creating problems many times.

Our is a country of not only Hinduism but also of several other faiths. We should not forget that ours is a secular State. One day or the other, this country should also adopt uniform personal laws. Then only, we would be unified. Today, it may not be possible. I may not have much support in this House to say about this matter. But several progressive and developed countries do not have too many personal laws.

Our learned Law Minister is a luminary in these laws.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN (Tirunelveli): He is a luminary and also illuminating....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: He is also illuminating in the House. One day or the other, we should codify all our personal laws and do justice to the voiceless people. Otherwise, many of these laws, including the marriage

[Shri M.V.V.S. Murthi]

laws, are being misused. We see it in several places that the male asks: "There is no evidence of marriage. Where is the evidence of marriage?" The marriages should be registered compulsorily, whatever may be the faith.

There should also be one husband and one wife. That theory should also come into effect.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: It is already there. Otherwise, one could be penalised.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: It is not so in all personal laws....*(Interruptions)* You are also an advocate but you do not have uniform laws.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: No, no; 'bigamy' is already prohibited, that is, one husband and one wife.

SHRI M.V.V.S MURTHI: Bigamy is prohibited for Hindus.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): Under the Muslim Personal Law, there will be four wives....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: I am talking about India. There are only about one or two minutes for me to speak.

I appreciate that, at least, an attempt has been made to bring down the difficulties of the womenfolk, the children, the destitute, and also the starvation deaths by way of these Amendments. I welcome them. But it should be without going to the court. How should it be decided within 60 days? A mere petition should decide it. It should not be dragged on again. How is this to be settled? Maybe in his reply, he would enlighten us about the situation. With these words, I support these three Bills.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PTAIL (Latur): I am not here to make a speech. I just want to put one question to the hon. Minister. I would like to say that the amendments are of salutary nature. We welcome them and support them. But I have a doubt in my mind. On the ground of virulent and incurable form of leprosy and venereal disease in a communicable form, a marriage can be dissolved. Why should it not be on the ground of AIDS? Now, probably, AIDS is more dangerous than these two diseases. I just wanted to understand it from the Minister.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I will reply later on.

[Translation]

SHRI DHAR RAJ SINGH PATEL (Phulpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome the three Bills-Marriage Code (Amendment) Bill, Indian termination of marriage (Amendment) Bill and Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment) Bill introduced by the Government. These Bills introduced by the Government should have been brought a lot earlier. The incidences of divorce (termination of marriage) are increasing in cities and women are a troubled lot. I have seen many cases where are left soon after marriage. The legal proceedings go on for ten of years and they don't remarry. I welcome the Bill and just want to say that a way should be find out to make the provision of giving living allowance within 60 days to an adequate extent. Besides, whether any provision has been made for disposal of cases within a year or two of the divorce proceedings involving women of young age.

[English]

DR. A.D.K. JAYASEELAN (Tiruchendur): Mr. Chairman Sir, I rise to support the three Bills, namely, Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill 2001, Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill 2001 and Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001.

These are reformative Bills and I think, it is a landmark in the process of judicial reforms and women empowerment. As you are aware that this is the 'Year of Women Empowerment', our hon. Law Minister has done justice to them. It is a progressive measure. We know the prevailing conditions in our society. It is really unfortunate that even after 54 years of Independence, the women are treated like animals. They are treated as slaves in many of the houses.

We have the joint family system. There is blessing because of the joint family system, but there are curses also because of that. There is a fight between the mother-in-law or sister-in-law and daughter-in-law and like that. Some people want to become heroes outside and when they cannot become heroes, then they go and beat their wives in the house. They want to become heroes not inside the Parliament but inside the house. So, many women are abandoned in a way, their life is really miserable.

Another thing is that when once they get married, their fathers also keep their hands off their daughters. When the woman goes back to her father saying that her husband beats her up, he would ask her not to come to him. He would ask her to go to him or go to hell. This is the attitude of the people. In some cases it has happened also. So, I think, the hon. Minister has done justice to the women. I think extra consideration may be given to women folk because they are the voiceless people in our society. They go to court for

divorce as it is the last resort because we do not have any other way. If they want to leave, they have to go to court, otherwise they commit suicide. Sometimes, they are declared or made mad by their in-laws and things like that. It has happened, as we have seen newspaper reports.

Another thing is regarding financial assistance to them. We know, we live in poverty, for their maintenance and existence people do not have money.

Where from they will get money for going to the court? So, there is drain on their financial resources also. If that lady goes to his father, he will say, 'I am already in debt. I paid dowry and spent so much of money for the marriage'. So, he is helpless. Though he wants to help his daughter, he cannot do anything because he does not have money. So, this is the situation. To make it easier, actually, the period has been limited to 60 days. It is a welcome measure. I think, the hon. Minister can explore whether it is possible to minimise this period to 30 days. It may be difficult but he can explore it because during this period, they have to experience this trauma and agony. They are having one step on the street and having one step inside the House. They are neither inside nor outside. This is the pitiable and miserable plight of women in our country. They have to depend on others. Most of the women do not have any income. That is the problem. If they have their own income, then they need not bother about other people. So, the Government has come to their rescue through this Bill.

There is no mention about the recovery of amount from the respondent. I think, it may be enacted in the Civil Procedure Code or something like that. It has not been mentioned here. This will be another problem. For that also, they have to once again go to the court and they have to knock the doors of the lawyers. So, there must be a definite provision for that also. In case, they fail to pay that money within 60 days, what punishment will they get? If it exceeds 60 days, what will happen? Will the judges made accountable? Will they give explanation and if so, to whom? So, this is not very clear to me and it may be clear to the legal *pandits*. So, they must be made accountable to somebody. You have mentioned only 60 days here. Suppose if it is not over within 60 days, then who is accountable for that? The judges must give explanation. It must benefit the women in a way. In such cases, I think, the women will enjoy the benefit of this law.

In regard to this Christian law, I do appreciate that our Minister has been consulting many Church leaders. Many of the Church leaders expect still more from the Minister in course of time. My humble request to the Minister is that the Catholic Bishops and the leaders of the National Council of Churches in India need to be consulted. If they are consulted and a consensus in arrived at, then it will solve many of the problems. Otherwise, unnecessarily it will become another politics in our country. So, I really appreciate the Minister for this and I also congratulate him for the excellent work that he has done.

With these words, I support this Bill.

SHRI S. MURUGESAN (Tenkasi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, on behalf of our Party, AIADMK, I am participating in this discussion. I welcome the amendment made in the Sections 125, 127 and 128 of the Criminal Procedure Code and also in the Divorce Act. The Law Minister, being an eminent lawyer, knows the practical position of the people of India.

As far as the Criminal Procedure Code - Sections 125, 127 and 128 - is concerned, the judicial magistrate shall have the power to order of maintenance. Prior to this amendment, the magistrate, in his power, can order not exceeding Rs. 500. In this legilsation, the upper limit varies according to the standard of living prior to their separation and the economic conditions of the couple. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Law Minister to one or two points.

16.00 hrs.

The judicial magistrate shall not exercise his discretion in fixing the upper limit exorbitantly as per his whims and fancies. The Bill should postulate that aspect also. There should be a safeguard against such hazards in disposal of cases. In the same Amendment, there should be check on the judicial magistrates who dispose such cases. The supervisory magistrate should keenly watch this.

Then, the maintenance case should be disposed of early. The time limit is 60 days. Our hon. Law Minister has already said it on the floor of the House that in future the courier service must be used. We also welcome this.

The other point is, usually the Court gives adjournment once in 15 days or once in a month. Practically the proceedings cannot be completed within 60 days. So, I would draw the attention of the Law Minister that in cases under Section 125 of Cr.P.C., the adjournment should not exceed one week. Then alone the case could be completed in 60 days.

I welcome the interim allowance and maintenance provision. This is more important. This provision for interim

[Shri S. Murugesan]

allowance will really give benefit to the sufferings. The interim allowance for conducting the case for maintenance should be collected from the other side before the next hearing. It should be a conditional one. Only on deposit, the other side should be heard.

Then as far as the Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill is concerned, this amendment is not only welcome from the women side but from the men side also because we are also some times affected. That is why, we also welcome this Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill. With these words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI (Khagaria): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I congratulate Hon. Law Minister Shri Arun Jaitley with all my heart for introducing this Bill in the Lok Sabha. He is the first Law Minister in the last fifty four years of our independence who has given his attention towards, the pathetic condition of women. That is why he should be congratulated. Most of the women, of whatever caste, religion or region are dependent on men. On the one hand, Vedas say that "Yatra Naryastu Pujyante, Ramante Tatra Devata" (Gods live where women are treated with respect) while on the other hand women are suppressed and tortured lot and are fighting for their existence. Commenting on the bad condition of women, a poet has said, "Abala Jeevan Hai tumhari Yahi Kahani, Aanchal mein hai doodh Aur Ankhon mein Paani" (Life of a women is nothing but the story of care for others and tears). That is her condition. Even Ramayana says "Kat Vidhi Sirjahin Nari Jag Mahi, Paradhin Sapne Sukh Nahin". Woman has always been dependent on others. Everybody knows that freedom is a priceless and pleasant thing. But it is fate of the women to be dependent on father during childhood, on husband in youth and on son when she is old.

Thus women have to be dependent on men all the time—be they in the form of father, husband or son. Constitution gives her equal rights, but our country is a patriarchal society and the women are living as second class citizen without any rights. They only have duties. Keeping it in view Hon. Minister should be congratulated for bringing this Bill. A lot has been said about Christian women. I don't want to consume the precious time of House on it as a number of Members will be speaking on it. Christian Women are fighting for 10-12 years. They will be pleased now as the Bill provides many rights to them. This is a year of women's rights. Women have really been felicitated with the introduction of this Bill. Hon. Minister has given a unique gift to the women.

Marriage is a holy knot and a sacred relation. World goes on only on the basis of marriage. The purpose of life is fulfilled by entering family bonds from bachelorhood but if there is lack of mutual trust, and frequent clash of egos, such a relationship is better to be broken. The amendment, introduced by the Hon. Minister mentions the word "As far as possible". Why? It will only provide a shield to the man. It will deny the rights which are envisaged in the Bill for the Women.

The word "As far as possible" should be withdrawn...*(Interruptions)* I will take little time and I will conclude if you ask me to do so. When women are harassed and thus leave their houses they do not get shelter anywhere. They do not get respect in this male-dominated society and they have to suffer social boycott and mental agony.

The issue of maintenance allowance is being debated and it should not be left on discretion of the judge. Source of income of husband, black money as well as white money in his possession should be taken into account. Woman live with her husband and considered as better half, therefore the amount of maintenance allowance given to her should not be decided by judge and at least 50 percent income of the husband should be given as maintenance allowance. If 50 percent is not possible then at least 1/3 income of the husband should be given as maintenance allowance. There is a problem with women that they have to look after their small children living with them so maintenance allowance for children should also be given. Arrangements for education expenses of children upto age of 14 years living with their mother should also be made. I have given an application of a woman to the hon'ble Minister of Petroleum in this House. She is a teacher. Her husband abandoned her 10-15 years ago. Even today that woman starts weeping while narrating her story. She did not get justice and compensation. She has two small children. You know very well that how costly is education in Delhi and other cities. Her husband is working in Petroleum Department. I am very sorry to say that I got a negative reply from the hon. Minister.

I, therefore, would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether this Bill has been brought with some political motive.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now. I have a long list of hon'ble Members who want to speak on this issue.

SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is an important issue. Please allow me to speak for two minutes more. I would like to know from the hon'ble

Minister as to whether it is being done to increase vote bank. We all know that what is the position of women in this male-dominated society. I would like to say that woman does not belong to any caste or religion. Her caste and religion changes after marriage according to the caste and religion of her husband and her children also belong to the caste of the husband.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon'ble Minister has brought a good Bill with good intention but I would like to know from him that whether he hopes that justice would be done to women through this Bill. In this context, I would like to mention the Section-125. We have yet not forgotten the Shah Bano case. Amendment was made in Section-125 during the tenure of Congress Government and Shah Bano was drawn afar. Whether the Muslim women can divorce their husbands by saying 'talaq' thrice.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, at present the legal process involved in this matter is very lengthy, boring and very expensive. In this Bill the hon'ble Minister has suggested that husband and wife should remain separate for a period of two years. But I would like to say that women are weaker from financial viewpoint, how and from where, they would be able to manage their living for this period. The Minister should give an assurance that the matter in this regard would be disposed of within 60 days otherwise the Court would be held responsible for it or the husband and wife should live together for one year before the case is decided....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat now and do justice with Members who also want to speak.

SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the end I would like to say that the judge gave a decision of 450 pages on Priyadarshini Mattu murder case, which reveals the helplessness of people. Justice is influenced, lawyers are lured. In the same manner three witnesses of Jesica Lal murder case denied their earlier statement; so justice could not be done in this case. Mr. Chairman, Sir, similarly the Shilpi Gautam murder case has not been decided till now....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, please you sit down. You have made your submission. Other Members are also there who have to speak yet.

SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say that hon'ble Minister of Law himself is a proficient advocate, therefore, he would certainly see that cases relating to rape of women are decided at the earliest. A comprehensive law is required to be enacted for it....*(Interruptions)**

*Not recorded.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now your speech will not be recorded. Mr. K.A. Sangtam.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV (Purnea): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the report of DNA test regarding Shilpi Gautam murder case has been received. This DNA test report is submitted to CBI. What is being done in this regard?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. Your speech will not be recorded in proceedings of the House.

*...(Interruptions)**

[English]

SHRI K.A. SANGTAM (Nagaland): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on this Bill. I would first like to congratulate Shri Arun Jaitley, the hon. Minister for Law and Justice for recognising the sentiments of the Christians by using the word 'dissolution' in place of 'divorce'. The Christian community value this word because according to Christian customs, no divorce is permitted after marriage. Marriage could be dissolved only upon the mutual consent of the partners.

Shrimati Margaret Alva has already spoken elaborately on Christian marriages and all such things. Here I would not like to speak or debate on the Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001. Most of the North-Eastern States predominantly have a Christian population, especially my State of Nagaland has 90 per cent Christian population.

Sir, after a long political upheaval the State of Nagaland came into existence, when the Government of India had signed a 16-point agreement with the Convention of the Naga People's convention. The State of Nagaland was constituted as a political necessity in total recognition of the genuine aspirations of the Naga people. Accordingly, an agreement was signed with the Naga leaders and the Government of India which is called the 16-Point Agreement

Sir, it is clearly mentioned in the 7th point of the 16 points in the Agreement and an Act of Parliament also was enacted, known as the 13th Constitution Amendment Act of 1962. I would like to quote the relevant portion of article 371A.:

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

[Shri K.A. Sangtam]

371A. Special provision with respect to the State of Nagaland.-(1)

Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution-,

(a) no Act of Parliament in respect of--

(i) religious or social practices of the Nagas,

(ii) Naga customary law and procedure,

(iii) administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law,

(iv) ownership and transfer of land and its resources, shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides.

Sir, what I am trying to point out is that by this provision, the Government has given the guarantee to the people of Nagaland that it shall not interfere with the customs, religious and social practices of Nagaland. I would not like to say much on this but I just wanted to stress this point in order that it could be incorporated into the Act and the Government could accordingly give protection to the State of Nagaland. Therefore, whatever other provisions are there, I would not like to argue on those points.

Sir, but the fact is that the holy sacrament of marriage takes place in the church in accordance with the Christian rules. But outside that when a person dies and whatever is the inheritance and whatever the divisions of properties to be distributed, it goes by the customary law and procedures.

Because we have sixteen different Naga tribes in Nagaland and each tribe has got its own peculiar customary law, guarantee was given to us by the Constitution of India under article 371 (a). I would like to reiterate that protection guaranteed by this august House through the Constitution of India should be incorporated particularly for the State of Nagaland.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the issue regarding the situation emerged in the country due to shortage of foodgrains was to be taken up for debate under the Rule 193 at 4'O clock. When it will be taken up....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Raghuvanshji, you are Member of BAC. The discussion under Rule 193 will be taken after the time fixed for these bills will exhaust. Please wait for sometime.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: At what time discussion will start?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Women members are also in your party. Please do justice to them at least.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI ANADI SAHU (Berhampur, Orissa): Thank you. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I also thank Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh for having been very kind enough to sit down.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I stand here to support the three Bills presented to this House. After the eloquent speech of the Law Minister, and an equal elucidation of Madam Margreat Alva, I do not think it is necessary for me to again go into the details of the Bills.

Sir, the Christians say, 'God has united, let no man divide'. The Hindus say, 'Marriages are decided in the Heaven'. But I, as an atheist, would say, 'No marriage is decided in Heaven; and God does not unite people'. In the present day context, there are discordant views in marriages, and divorces are quite natural. Since it is necessary to have laws and codes for different people who have personal laws, a number of laws have to be amended. I being an atheist, I would like to say that personal law should be one through out the country. That will help us in solving many problems that this society has been facing for the last many hundreds of years.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: One law would render all the Ministers helpless....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. I have called Shri Anadi Sahu.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Renuji you have already spoken on this subject. Please do not speak while sitting.

[English]

SHRI ANADI SAHU: Sir, it is my belief that there should be a uniform law to regulate marriages, divorces

and, once divorces are decided, alimony or maintenance will follow. We have seen that the issue of maintenance has been creating problems. For political considerations also maintenance has had some sort of up and down stream course. Take the case of 1986 when a very secular section of the Criminal Procedure Code was given a religious tint, a religious colour, as a result of which the Criminal Procedure Code, which has been prepared long back in 1898 and amended in 1973, which is purely secular in character, became some sort of a tainted law. Now, this amendment to Sections 125, 127, and Section 128 so far as maintenance is concerned, is a good step forward. But the first one about alimony and all those things about all those laws - Parsi laws, Christian laws, Hindu Marriage Code and all those things - in my honest opinion, should have become one. Since we are not able to make a uniform civil code and a uniform marriage law, it is natural for the Government to come up with different amendments to suit the necessity of the day.

It was referred to the Standing Committee. Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh was also a Member of that Standing Committee. I was also there and Shri P.H. Pandian was also there in that Standing Committee. After due deliberations and taking into consideration the representations of different Christian bodies, so far as the Christian Amendment Bill is concerned, it was decided. The catholic in unison and 29 churches gave presentations. There are also a large number of churches in this country. I am happy that the Syrian Christians also helped. The Syrian church is the oldest church in the country. They live in Kerala. I think, they are the first Christians who had come to India. Later on, Romans became Christians.

Sir, I am thankful to the Syrian Christians who agreed to the process of Diverse Laws to see that there is no confusion about it. But so far as the maintenance is concerned, still there are some difficulties.

Mr. Chairman, in clause 2 (2) of the amending provision of CRPC, there is certain ambiguity. I think, the law makers at a later stage may think of amending it. Clause 2 (2) of the CRPC amendment says: "Any such allowance for the maintenance or interim maintenance and expenses for proceeding shall be payable from the date of the order, or if so ordered, from the date of the application for maintenance or interim maintenance."

So, the option has been given to the court. Now, 60 days period has been fixed for the order. But in my honest opinion, it should be from the date of application because it is the destitute woman who has been asking for maintenance money. If it is given from the date of order - that means, after 60 days - what would she be doing if she has borrowed money from the people for surviving, to keep her body and mind together and to survive physically?

This part of the clause, in my honest opinion, should be amended at a later stage to see that it should be from the date of application. That will help the women who are in distress.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI ANDAI SAHU: I think, since the hon. Chairman has asked me to conclude, with these words I support these Bills and conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH (Bikramganj): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. Today the Hon. Minister Shri Arun Jaitleyji has moved a motion to pass the Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001 the Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 2001, and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001 which is a very laudable step.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, today the women comprise half of the country's population. The presentation of these Bills seeking to lessen than sufferings is a very good step. Had this step of reducing the sufferings or wiping the tears of half of the country's population not been taken, it would have remained a major bottleneck in the path of the progress of our country. Hence the Hon. Minister deserves congratulations, the Hon. Minister also deserves congratulations for making a provision providing the interim maintenance allowance through the Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 2001. The Minister has also prescribed a time-limit of 60 days for providing interim maintenance allowance which is a every good step because a divorced women is not treated favourably in the society. I would further submit to reduce this limit from the prescribed 60 days because how can a woman who is kept out of house, can feed herself for 60 days.

As has been stated by Shri Anadi Sahuji, the allowance should be provided from the date of applying for divorce because, in my view, it can provide a lot of relief to the woman. As Shrimati Renu Kumari has said the words as for as possible within 60 days have been incorporated to exempt the males therefore, these words should be deleted. Besides a time-limit of 60 days has also been faced in case of providing interim maintenance of children and the father. However the biggest question is as to whether the judicial proceedings can be completed

[Shrimati Kanti Singh]

in 60 days? At present several cases are pending in Courts. Hon. Minister has imposed this hope through this Bill that the case will be decided within 60 days of issuing the notice whether it is Civil Court or a family Court, the question is, will it be possible?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, you conclude.

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH: *If you keep on doing like this, I will say that you are discriminating.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You cannot say so.

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH: I take back my words but I should be given the opportunity to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair is fair to all.

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH: I submit that I should be given an opportunity to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You do justice with other Members who are going to speak.

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH: I congratulate the Hon. Minister for doing away with the upper ceiling of Rs. 500 because even a rickshaw puller or a fourth class employee can earn Rs. 500 but the fixing of a maintenance allowance of Rs. 500 for a human is not only unjust but barbaric act. I would also like to congratulate you for increasing the items from 5 to 10 in the Bill because these kinds of procedures were already present in Hindu Marriage Act. Now you are going to adopt these procedures for Christian women. The Law Commission had mentioned in its report that Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1962 and the Indian Divorce Act, 1969 do not provide equal rights to Christian ladies. These discrepancies were not only opposed and condemned by the Law Commission but also by the Calcutta, Madras and Mumbai High Courts. Similarly under the section 96 and 20 it was made obligatory to seek the confirmation from a three judge bench of a High Court in case the divorce was given by a Lower Court. As the three judge bench is being talked, I would like to say that it is not possible for the three judges to have time to sit together. This provision has been made under Clause 4 (a) of the Christian Ladies Divorce Act that the divorce can be given if both the parties mutually agree or give their mutual consent to do so.

The Christian women also should be brought at par with Hindu ladies by reducing the time period from two years to one year as provided in Hindu Marriage Act. Beside it has also been mentioned in it that the date will be given after living for two years in separation and the judge can still withhold it for father 18 months. I thank that this process causes a lot of delay, so much so that the persons seeking divorce may grow older waiting for judgement to be delivered and in that case, the divorce will not make any difference. Through you, I would further like to submit before the Hon. Minister that as per the existing provision in the Hindu Marriage Act, a case for divorce is filed from the place of residence of the girl's husband. Second provision is that the case can be filed from a place where the couple is living/staying. If there is no compatibility between the girl and his husband and the girl is put out of her in law's house, the girl goes back to her parents, then the cases can be registered from both the places. For example if the girl belongs to Patna and the bridegroom to Delhi and the family members of groom ask the girl's party to come to Delhi for marriage and the marriage takes place in Delhi, then the cases can be registered from Delhi where the marriage has taken place from any other place where the couple starts to love together afterwards. The cases can be registered from there two places only and the prior permission of the Supreme Court is necessary to register the case from any other place. I would like that on amendment should be made that the girl may register the case from the places to which she belong *i.e.* where her parental house is situated. Presently, due to the lack of this provision, the other side tries to hamper the implementation of proceedings *i.e.* delaying of notices etc. Owing to it the girl or the lady does not come to know that a case has been registered against them. They are enable to follow judicial proceedings or fight the case by travelling such long distance. Hence in such a scenario, an amendment to the effect of giving the ladies the right to register case from the very place to which they belong, should be given. Only then the women who comprise half of the country's propulsion could get relief and the very purpose of bringing this Bill may be fulfilled. Hence this Bill needs to be amended.

With these words, I conclude.

[English]

DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA (Nominated): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise in support of the Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001, the Indian Divorce (Amendment) Bill, 2001, and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001. The Government and the hon. Minister have to be congratulated on pulling off a hat trick. I refer to three progressive laws which make radical amendments in the existing laws related to women. While the hon. Minister is to be lauded and will certainly be blessed by women who have been divorced, it is

unfortunate that he has faltered on the threshold of forbidden territory and decided not to go where angles fear to tread.

I refer to the exclusion of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) and Act, 1986 from the purview of the present Bill and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001. Since Independence, the country has been polarised between majority and minority communities. The Government has unfortunately failed. It decided to dialogue with the clergy and not with the enlightened members of the minority communities. This Muslim Women's Act is one of the most controversial legislation of our day. It was enacted among protests from women groups as well as from the enlightened Muslim intelligentsia. This Act symbolises the loss of secular values and betrayed the communal tendencies of the then Congress Party.

The Act deprived Muslim women of the rights granted under a secular provision of Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code, on the basis of religion alone, and this violated the Constitutional mandate of equality.

Under the Code of Criminal Procedure, Section 125 has been amended to raise the amount of allowance. Its non-application to the Muslim women is unconstitutional and discriminatory. It is only the divorced Muslim women who are outside the purview of the family courts. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please be brief.

DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA: I have started just now. I have prepared for one year to speak on this Bill. Now, you tell me to be brief. I will be brief as far as possible.

Family matters, because of their complex nature, have been relegated to the family courts and were taken out of the Magistrate's court. It was with this aim that the jurisdiction of Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code was specifically given to the family courts. The informal structure of the family court led to a speedy settlement of disputes. Hence the need to bring the jurisdiction for proceedings, under the Muslim Women's Act, back into the family courts. The Family Court Act, under Section 7 (1) (c), (d) and (f) gives the court jurisdiction to decide on issues of property and maintenance. Section 3 of the Muslim Women's Act deals with property of women and maintenance could easily be covered under the provision of the Family Court Act. Further Section 7, clause 2 (a) of the Family Court Act categorically gives the court the jurisdiction exercisable by a Magistrate of the First Class

under Chapter 9 of the Criminal Procedure Code which includes Section 125. This is also an option given to the parties under the Muslim Women's Act. Section 7 (2) (b) also provides for jurisdiction given under these enactments. The Muslim Women's Act, therefore, falls within the ambit of the Family Court Act. The shift in the jurisdiction would not change the substantive part of the legislation. It is only a procedural modification.

The Muslim women are unfortunately being shuttled from one court to the other. This causes immense confusion.

It is 30 years since the Government has looked at maintenance laws and much was expected of this Bill. It was expected that 30 or 35 per cent of the husband's lifetime income would be given as maintenance. In this case, the husband would have to file on affidavit giving details of his annual income. The wife would have to give an assessment of the husband's income and the onus would be on the husband to disprove it. This allowance has not been specified in the Bill.

Under the Supreme Court rulings, an estranged wife can get maintenance from her husband. Also, a divorced Hindu wife can get maintenance from her husband. The proof of marriage according to essential rites is not essential.

This is important. If a woman decides to remarry, refuses to live with her husband or has an extra-marital relationship, she cannot claim maintenance. I would like to know why should maintenance be given to a divorced or separated woman dependent on her morality. Maintenance is not given to a woman for good behaviour but it is given to a woman to keep the body and soul together.

I am a Christian. Probably, I am the only Christian woman inside this House.

Under this Bill, it is left to the magistrate to order such allowance as he considers necessary. We have to first gender-sensitise the Judges, who are, after all Indian men with all the chauvinism of that species, who regard divorce as a moral failing on the part of the woman....*(Interruptions)*

I am coming to the Indian Divorce Act. To paraphrase Shakespeare, marriage binds you together with hoops of steel. In the less romantic language of economics, it creates a 'barrier to exist'. All said and done, marriages are not made in heaven. They are made between two fallible people. Even Christian marriages are not made in

[Dr. (Shrimati) Beatrix D'Souza]

heaven. Christian theologions have made the distinction between real marriages and actual marriages. They have also recommended dissolution or divorce....*(Interruptions)*

I would like to finally touch on the conflict of laws between Catholics - canonical or ecclesiastical and civil. Sir, the 'no exist' situation for a Catholic still exists. Even if a Catholic gets divorced under this Act, the Catholic will still have to go to a Catholic Church to get an annulment....*(Interruptions)* If Catholics do not get an annulment and marry under the Special Divorce Act, they will be living in sin. Therefore, this Act is really not very helpful. But, I am sure, the Catholic Church will give us more speedy annulments.

Finally, Section 10(a) introduces dissolution of marriage by mutual consent, and a separation of two years has been introduced, while in other Marriage Acts, it is only a one-year after separation. The Ministr has already told us about this—two years before and two years after separation. Are only Christian women expected to have so much fortitude to wait for four years to get a divorce?

With these comments and suggestions, I applaud the very comprehensive Bills and support them.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI ABHA MAHATO (Jamshedpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I heartily welcome the Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001 and this Bill deserves applause. Had this Bill been brought earlier, a lot of our sisters could have benefited from it. Alongwith it I would like to pray that no one may have to pass through the horrible phase of divorce because as per the Hindu custom and ritual of marriage, the husband and wife have to take seven rounds around the specially life fire altar for this purpose and each round is symbolic of the bondage of ties between both the husband and wife for the entire life. If not in their successive seven lives, they should find an ambience to liver together throughout the present life. I would say that provision of completing the minimum duration of one year of marriage for seeking divorce should be amended to raise the duration of minimum of two or three years because the husband and wife can not understand each other in one year. In a conventional Hindu marriage it is quite often the case that the girl and the boy to tie up with each other do not get to see each other before marriage leave apart knowing the treats of each other. Hence this duration should be find at least seven or five or two or two and half years, so that the couple may get ample time to understand each other and in spite of this if they fail to develop compatibility then they should be given an opportunity to seek divorce.

Alongwith it, I would also like to say as has been said by Dr. Disuza and Renuji also that the women, whether they are Hindu, Sikh, Muslim or Christian should be put at par as far as the facilities and compensation after getting divorce are concerned. Besides those divorced women who have the children should also be given one third of share of the property of their husbands instead of just giving them a nominal sum of money as maintenance allowance. The reason for it is that the divorced women find it very hard to socially adjust themselves in the society and getting remarried. They have to live their lives bringing up their children. Hence such women should be given the right to own one third property of their husbands.

In the end, I strongly support these three Bills brought by the Government and hope that the Government will keep on bringing such Bills to protect the rights of the women in future also.

[English]

PROF. R.R. PRAMANIK (Mathurapur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to say a few words on the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001 and support it. This Bill has been brought by the Minister because, as it is mentioned in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, the aggrieved party, the applicant for maintenance has to wait for several years. So, the Minister has brought an amendment to introduce 'Interim Maintenance'. In the principal Act, only 'Maintenance' was there, but the Minister has brought this amendment to provide for immediate relief in the form of 'Interim Maintenance'. Earlier, the amount was very meagre. It was only Rs. 500 and now he has waived the upper limit. The Minister has also prescribed a time limit of 60 days to get the 'Interim Maintenance'. Earlier, it used to take years together to get maintenance because it is a very complicated case.

As has been mentioned by hon. Members, the aggrieved party has been taken as wife and the respondent has been taken as husband. Normally, the husband divorces the wife, but the wife can also divorce the husband, if the wife is stronger than the husband. In the book, "Criminal Procedure Code, 1973" written by Shri Basu, it is stated there is a provision for getting Interim Maintenance. Under Section 125, an order for maintenance of wife, children and parents can be passed. In page 390, under the chapter "Power to make Interim Order for Maintenance" it is stated:

> "Having regard to the nature of the jurisdiction under Section 125, it would be competent for the Magistrate

to make an Interim Order for Maintenance, subject to the other conditions referred to, pending final disposal of the application. Before making such an Interim Order, the Magistrate may call for an affidavit on behalf of the applicant stating the grounds in support of the claim for Interim Maintenance. If the allegations in the application or the affidavit are not true, it is always open to the person against whom an Interim Order is made to show that the order is unsustainable and that it should be cancelled or modified."

So, an order can be passed for Interim Maintenance by the First Class Magistrate. But still the Minister has brought this amendment to provide for Interim Maintenance. I have no objection to this, but it is already there under the principal Act.

I am speaking on one Bill only.

The magistrate can make an interim order. But the upper limit is not there. It is on the discretion of the magistrate 1st Class. It is based on his thinking. Now, the law must be worded exactly. It should have no ambiguity. The amount of allowance should be objective and not subjective. It should depend on the income of the respondent. According to the amendment, it will be on the discretion of the magistrate as he thinks fit. One magistrate can think that the interim maintenance should be Rs. 10,000 while another magistrate can think that the amount should be Rs. 100. So how can it be defended in a court? It is according to his thinking. Some Members think that saffronisation of education is good for the society, while some other people think that it is not got for the country. So, it depends on one's thinking. Now, you are leaving it only on the thinking of the magistrate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You come to the subject.

PROF. R.R. PRAMANIK: Now, they are giving a blank cheque to the magistrate. He can put any amount. The power can be abused. It can go against the applicant. It can also go against the respondent. So, I suggest that there should be an upper limit and also a lower limit. It is for interim maintenance and not for maintenance. The upper limit should be Rs. 1,500 per month and the lower limit should be Rs. 1,000 per month. The discretion with the magistrate should be for Rs. 500 only.

In the proviso, it is interim maintenance for wife or children, father or mother. It should be: 'wives, husbands, children and parents' because it may so happen that the applicant is a husband and the respondent is a wife. It has happened in many places. Though he number is very small, yet it may happen. So, there should be a provision in the law. If a husband comes to a court for maintenance, then, according to this law, he cannot claim because the applicant is 'she', that is, 'wife'. So, it should be: 'wives, husbands, children and parents - father or mother'. If father gets maintenance, the mother will not get it. If the mother gets maintenance, the father will not get it. So, it should be parents, that is, both father and mother. Either you write 'father and mother' or you write 'parents'. It is for interim maintenance.

For maintenance, the upper limit or some percentage - say, 10 per cent, 15 per cent or 20 per cent - of his net income should be there. In a home, there may be many applicants. A wife may be an applicant. The children may be applicants. A father may be an applicant. So, the whole amount should be distributed amongst them. The interim maintenance or maintenance is not for one person. There may be many persons claiming the maintenance.

17.00 hrs.

So, it should be clear and there should be no ambiguity.

Mr. Chairman Sir, I would like to say that it is a long drawn process to get the maintenance. The applicant, I say, is wife and the husband is the respondent, so the wife has to prove in the court before the magistrate that she was legally married. The wife has to prove that she has not indulged in any adultery. She has to prove that she is not living with her husband without any sufficient reason, she has to prove that she has not enough income to maintain herself, she has to prove that her husband has not enough money to maintain her. She has to prove that her husband has not refused or neglected her. There are six factors. So, it may become difficult here to get the final order from the magistrate. It may take years to get the final order from the magistrate.

Mr. Chairman Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister that after so many years, if her application is rejected, then what will happen? The hon. Minister is providing a provision in that regard, but what about the money given to the applicant as an interim maintenance? I would like to know whether that would be returned back or where would it go. I want an answer from the hon. Minister.

Lastly, with apologies to my female colleagues, though I am not speaking on behalf of males, in the eye of law, everybody is equal. Man and woman are equal. I have asked the hon. Minister that if the applicant is a

[Prof. R.R. Pramanik]

husband and the respondent is the wife, for that reason, as I have said, 'wife, husband, children and parents' should be included.

With these words, I congratulate the hon. Minister for bringing this amendment and I thank you also for giving me an opportunity to speak on this.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperumbudur): Thank you Sir, for the opportunity given to me.

This is a very useful Bill. Those who raised a voice for women's rights since Independence have not bothered about the deserted ones. Only our hon. Law Minister, under the leadership of our dynamic Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajyapee, has taken a very good step forward.

Sir, in section 125 CrPC, the deserted women or the father or mother can easily approach the court with the minimum expenses. If they want to go to any other court, they have to spend more, but with a 75 paisa stamp court fee and with a Rs. 2.25 stamp court fee, they can approach the court for their maintenance. But in the case of interim maintenance, they have to go to an appellate forum.

Sir, you know about the courts and advocates having delaying tactics and how they prolong the case. The utmost result is that both the petitioner and respondent do not get any judgement from the court. They will be settled out of the court by the advocates of both the parties or by village elders or by *Panchayatdars*. They will make a compromise with a one-time settlement because they cannot go to the court every month to get their maintenance amount. So, they get one-time settlement for maintenance and that is all. This is what is happening.

Even before this amendment, the Magistrate will give an oral order in the court and the Panchayat leader will say, 'you have to pay this much money to the deserted woman'. This is what is happening.

Sir, the hon. Minister has brought this Bill but he has not enlightened us as to how long the interim maintenance will be issued to the deserted woman. He may say that it will be issued till the disposal of the case. When will the case be disposed? It will take two or three years. Till then, the petitioner or the respondent cannot stand before the court. So, I would request the hon. Minister to enlighten this House as to how long the interim maintenance will be given. He has to stipulate the period for completing the case.

I would like to suggest that 60 days' period is not necessary for giving the interim maintenance. When a petitioner files the case before the magistrate, he will peruse all the records and take the case for numbering. After the case is numbered, the summons will be issued to the respondent. When the respondent appears before the court, on the same day itself, the magistrate can pass *ex parte* order regarding the interim maintenance. This is my humble suggestion. When the respondent appears before the non. Magistrate, on the same day itself, *ex parte* order on the interim maintenance can be passed.

There should be some limitation to wind up the case. At least before six months, the should be completed. The Minister has to find out a solution for this. In the case of a person who is working in a private sector or in a public sector or in Government, the maintenance amount will be deducted from his salary and it will be sent to the deserted woman. But in the case of a businessman and daily *coolies,* they are not paying the maintenance amount properly and they are trying to cheat the deserted woman. For this also, the hon. Minister should bring an amendment.

With these words, I support these Bills.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): Mr. Chairman, Sir, in order to avoid repetition and to save time, I do not go into the details of the three-in-one Bill.

17.08 hrs.

(SHRI SHRINIWAS PATIL *in the Chair*)

I would like to congratulate the Standing Committee and also the hon. Minister for taking away Section 7 from the Indian Divorce Act. According to Section 7, we should follow the English judgements. Sir, Christianity came to India as early as AD 56, as was referred to by Shri Anadi Sahu. And even in England, Christianity must have come much later. So, we need not follow the English decisions in any way. Therefore, it is right and it is good that we have taken away that clause which says that the English decisions should be followed.

That is the only thing which I would like to add. The provisions which have been added in all these three Bills are very relevant and very necessary. Therefore, I support these three Bills.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): Sir, I rise to support these three Bills that are being discussed here today.

I will very briefly refer to the Indian Divorce Act. As the hon. Minister has said and as has been elaborated by other Members, especially Shrimati Margaret Alva, these Bills seek to rectify the gender inequality and the procedural lapses that existed in the parent Act. The Minister has said that there has been a wide-ranging consultation with the Church leaders and the community leaders, and there has been a consensus regarding the introduction and passing of this Bill. Sir, I agree with the Minister on this. I would like to make one suggestion. I will mention it very briefly. I am not going into any other Bill because all have been discussed and all are in agreement with them.

But the hon. Minister said, there is only one aspect on which the Government or the hon. Minister disagreed with the Church leaders. But I would again refer to it because that is regarding the decisions of the dissolution or annulment of marriage that is being arrived at by the Church courts. As far as the Church courts are concerned, at least in the case of the Roman Catholic Church, the Church courts go through a very elaborate procedure of calling the witnesses and verifying the records. Then only they arrive at a decision of a dissolution or annulment of marriage. I think it is, in fact, even elaborate and very stringent than the procedure that is being resorted to by our civil courts.

So, the Minister said, if we agree to that request of the Church leaders or the community leaders, all the other communities will come forward with the same request and it will be an infringement on the civil law of this land. I fully agree with the Minister. I am not saying that any other law or any other procedure should have an overriding effect in the case, compared to our civil laws. But the point I am trying to make is this. I would request the hon. Minister to consider this point that the records of the procedure of the Church court's decision can be called by the civil court when parties to a dispute in a marriage case approach the civil court after going through these elaborate procedures under the Church court. The civil court can call for the records of the Church courts and verify them. The civil court can avoid consuming all the time again going through all the procedures of a case. If the court agrees, if it is satisfied with the procedures after perusing all the records, if the court is satisfied that justice has been done, why not the court accept it? Only if the court finds some deficiencies, the court can examine and verify that particular point and then come to a conclusion very speedily.

Sir, that would be in the interest of the litigant also, whoever maybe the party. So, I would again request the hon. Minister to consider this particular point without affecting the civil law or the status of the civil courts of our country. That is all I want to say.

I again congratulate the hon. Minister, all the Members of the Standing Committee and all those who have put in their efforts in arriving at a very happy solution to this very vexing problem that has been, in fact, flogging our sisters in all the communities concerned.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE (Mumbai South Central): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support this Bill on behalf of Shiv Sena however I would like to submit something to the hon. Minister of Law in my own manner. Right now Shri Radhika Ranjan was delivering the speech. I was listening to the speeches delivered by the other hon. Members also. However while listening, I wondered as to whether these Members were sincerely making these utterances or were saying all these things in the heat of the moment. In the eyes of law, everybody is equal. In my opinion all of you will agree to it. These are one thousand laws in the Indian Penal Code for women which should be applied uniformly to everyone irrespective of religion but whether these provision extend any protection to a Muslim woman who is just pushed out of home with her children by giving to her divorce the Muslim personal law applies to the Indian Muslims while such liberty is nowhere to be found in rest of the world. I have visited many Islamic countries like Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, Indonesia, Malaysia etc. The women in these countries can go to court challenging the validity of Talaq and her husband has to seek her permission for getting remarried. However this is not the case in our country and the laws are different for everyone. Shahbano had won the case during the regime of Shri Rajiv Gandhi but the Parliament amended the existing act in gross violation of the Court's judgement.

I want to appeal to everybody. Shrimati Sonia Gandhi is not present here. She is the leader of the Congress. She is also a woman and all the women present here have expressed his view. However there is a need to think over it again. This should not be related to vote politics.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Pramanikiji of the Communist party has said "In the eyes of law, everybody is equal". Shrimati Margaret Alva is sitting here. I would like to say that whether a woman is Hindu, Muslim or Christian, law should be equal for all. I had seen in Mumbai that the women who had agitated against Shahbano, were given protection while those who were in her fovour, were not given any protection or encouragement. I am not plying politics here. I am grateful to you for giving me time to

[Shri Mohan Rawale]

speak. However, I would once again like to appeal to everyone to ensure the equality of provisions to all. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE (Malegaon): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak I would like to cite a small old time story to relate to the Bill. Once there were three brothers and one sister. They always used to quarrel with other. The brothers used to say to their sister that she can not be superior to them because she was a girl. The girl used to remind them of all the handwork she did. Ultimately she decided to turn to the Almighty for giving the ultimate verdict. However soon it came into her mind that even the god is 'Purusha' (male), hence how could he do justice. The hon. Minister is also a man, so how can he give justice to the women. He has made no provision in this Bill to avert the quarrels between the husband and wife or to ensure the long term tie up between them. It seems as if the Bill seeks to create rift and differences to create a split up between the couple. The Bill reflects the professional tendency of the lawyers who do not favour settlements and peace but just the opposite of it.

Mr. Chairman, however, I would like to thank the hon. Minister for repealing two laws of British era. A law enforced in 1923 by the Britishers to continue their rule is still in operation. I want to submit that the hon. Minister should bring an amendment to repeal this law.

[English]

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar): Sir, I will not take more time. In the present context of the procedure and the bottlenecks everywhere, these measures are not sufficient. With this Amendment, we are forcing the judiciary to dispose of the cases within 60 days. It is simply beyond its capacity and even the existing procedural requirements, like recording, documentation, etc. This would also mean that to meet this impossible deadline, the judicial officers might overlook the fine points of law to the detriment of the petitioners. In other words, it is a miscarried justice.

This Amendment attempts to cure a part of the malice affecting our social system of marriage. It is time we attempt to reform the process beyond exploitation by both men and women, instead of attempting a quick-fix solution, like speedy disposal of petitions for alimony and litigation expenses. We should go a little slow in the matter of administrative and judicial reforms, which have an effect on our age-old traditions and customs.

I would also like to mention two or three other points. I will not take more time of the House.

Coming to inter-caste marriages, it is a problem all the time. I would like to inform the hon. Minister, through you, that it is a very typical issue which should be taken care of. The hon. Minister should give a serious thought to it as to how to solve this problem and how to give protection to the inter-caste married couple.

Another important point is about the time limit. I am not particularly objecting to the short time that has been prescribed to give relief to women or men. My only point is that it could be a miscarried judgment, and that is most important. If we go faster, then something may happen. Relief should be given as early as possible to women or men, but the courts should take their own time to give a proper judgement.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the first Bill which has been presented here is the Divorce (Amendment) Act. However, four amendment Bills have been brought together *i.e.* four in one and after it the debate is simultaneously being held on these laws *i.e.* there is one.

Sir, it is mentioned in the Representation of Peoples Act that as far as possible a case must be disposed within six months, however, all the cases as regards the election petition in India have taken six years instead of six months to be disposed off. So much time is taken up despite the existing provision to dispose off the case within six months. A time of approximately 60 days is taken in receiving the notice alone. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister as to why he has brought such a weak law despite receiving the recommendations of Malimath Committee and four-five recommendations of the Law Commission in this regard. Surprisingly, people are still applauding your efforts. Nearly 700 such cases have been lying pending for years in Delhi High Court and still such weak law has been brought. I would like to know that when the Court is unable to dispose off the cases within six months as mentioned in the people's Representation Act, how can there be disposed off within 60 days. Hence I feel there are major discrepancies in all the laws like Marriage Act, Special Marriage Act, Parsi Divorce Act. etc.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, second thing I would like to say is that the Rs. 500 ceiling has been done away with by making amendment is Cr. PC, however my objection is that the Court alone has been given the entire powers in

this regard which is not a right step. Who knows as to what view the Court will adopt who knows as to how for they evaluate the present worth of Rs. 500 or whether or not they will see it with conservative view. Hence some lower and upper limit should be fixed in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, as an Hon. Member from PMK was saying that though you are making a good law but how can the rules be framed in respect of these laws when all these three laws are passed simultaneously. Besides the doubts have also been raised as to whether or not amendment will be made in these laws. I would say that it will be much better if these apprehensions are cleared here. As the Members of all the political parties have supported these Bills, I am also in favour of their passage, however firstly I would like to see the doubts to be cleared before moving further.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, our marriage system has been accepted as the best in the world but now love marriage and 'Gandhrva Vivaha" have also begun to take place in our society. It is a different thing that all this is ending in failure. If these laws are really implemented than all the Ministers of the present Government will have to be punished. Hence the law should be passed after considering over the doubts raised here.

[English]

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, a very large number of Members have spoken on this legislation.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Mr. Minister, please reply to the last speaker first.

[Translation]

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Raghuvansh Babu has spoken on each of the Bill presented by me in the House. Firstly he criticises it on some Count and afterwards supports it. I was thinking that may be he don't want to speak as it is a Bill for Women's Welfare, hence I was trying to make him speak on this Bill by repeatedly waving from here to speak. He has raised two questions in regard to this Bill. His first question which has also been asked by some other Hon. Members also is that the term "as far as possible within 60 days" has been used in the Bill. To what extent it could be implemented. This right is rested in the judiciary and the right to dispose off a case comes in the purview of their jurisdiction but the intent of the law makers becomes evident by the draft of the law itself and the judiciary and other organs follow the suit.

You have expressed this apprehension that a lot of time is spent in receiving the notice itself. Your apprehension is right. We have also made amendments in the Civil Procedure Code Act and also changed the old method of sending the notice. Earlier the Notice used to be sent by the Court or through the post. Now the notices can be sent and received on the E-mail. The Notices can be faxed or can be sent through the Courier Service within a day and the facility is even available in smaller cities. All these services and the modes have been tried to be brought under the ambit of new legislation. which is expected to be presented in the Winter Session of the Parliament. Hence an effort to shorten the period of execution of Notice will be made.

[English]

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): If you serve a notice through a processor of the Court, then nobody knows as to when it would reach the addressee. Then they will say that the oppose party is not available so the process cannot be served.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: That is precisely why I was telling Raghuvansh Babu that we have now, in the amended Civil Procedure Code which has been introduced, brought alternate methodologies of service of notices also, in addition to the existing method of process serving.

Sir, several questions have been raised. I will first answer the hon. Member who spoke in favour of at least considering on a future date, the suggestion whether church courts, or courts constituted by religious organisations, can also be considered. It is a very serious and a very important matter. This was one of the suggestions of various organisations before the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee did not agree to it but referred it to the Government. We considered it at length. We felt that we cannot accept this suggestion because once we start recognising judicial institutions outside the Constitutional mechanism, it will never be confined to one religious denomination. We will have to do it across the board. There will be other demands which will come up. This will not be in consonance with the rule of law as it is accepted in India.

In fact in the 15th report of the Law Commission this question was specifically considered. The Law Commission made an observation which I agree with. It opined, "It is the courts constituted under the law of the country that will have exclusive authority to determine disputes relating to civil rights, and there can be no surrender or abdication of that authority".

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Shri Jaitley, can I just say one thing if you do not mind?

The point still remains that the church courts exist and unless the dissolution is confirmed by them, it is not valid as far as the community is concerned. You cannot either remarry or do anything else until the dissolution is confirmed by the church even though you are divorced in a law court.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (Contai): That applies only for the Catholics, not for others.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Yes. Among the Catholics, you cannot accept anything unless it is accepted by the church courts.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: There are several kinds of customs which may continue to exist. But conferment of jurisdiction by law on a religious court is something that our rule of really does not accept.

There were several questions which have been raised in the course of the debate. Shrimati Alva mentioned that the women members of the community really should be complimented. I completely agree with her. In fact, a study will have to be made as to how we have evolved over the last five decades where from a strong opposition to any form of reform there is a near total consensus that we must now change and give the right of equality. Even in December when this Bill was introduced, there were a few disagreeing voices with us. But when the Christian women's organisations came and met me, they not only agreed to the two suggestions but their grievance on the contrary was that I had not gone far enough. My response to them was that they should speak to their religious leaders and other leaders of the community and get them to agree because, in terms of personal law our policy has been that we involve the community, and the opinion of the community is always respected when we make these changes. I found that literally within weeks and months a near consensus was presented before us. It is this consensus which actually has enabled this law to be improved upon in such a short period of time.

There are several other areas. Shrimati Alva said that there should be a more comprehensive Bill. Sir, to argue in favour of a comprehensive Bill is relatively easier. But, a comprehensive Bill which encompasses everything is normally a little difficult. In relation to our personal laws, laws are really in two categories. One are laws which recognise rituals and customs. It is extremely important that as far as rituals and customs are concerned, the religious feelings and customs of those communities will always have to be respected. Therefore, law should be always reluctant in interfering in those areas. Marriage laws, for instance fall in the category where a large number of customs, procedures, rituals are involved. In fact, in relation to the Christian community, it is one of the only cases where the marriage law is completely different and the divorce law is different. There is the Indian Christian Marriages Act, and there is the Indian Divorce Act. The two laws are entirely different. At one stage there was a discussion whether these two can be amalgamated and a comprehensive law can be developed on this basis. We find that still there was no total consensus on the subject. Unless we are able to build up opinion in the community itself, it will not be possible to amalgamate the two.

Therefore, we have not touched any aspects as far as the Marriage Law is concerned. The Divorce Law is important; for the reason, there are rights which emanates from the Divorce Law. They are: the right of custody relating to property, rights relating to marital status and rights relating to amount of maintenance. These are all rights which emanate from the Divorce Law. As far as the rights are concerned, an effort must be made to make sure that the rights, as far as possible, are in consonance with Constitutional guarantees of equality and human dignity.

Therefore, this law relating to Indian Divorce Act has now been so developed so as to be in consonance with the Constitutional guarantees of equality and human dignity.

Therefore, this law relating to Indian Divorce Act has now been so developed so as to be in consonance with the Constitutional guarantees of equality and dignity.

Sir, several other suggestions have been made. I may mention at this stage that there is one more area particularly in relation to the Christian community where a consensus is developing. Twenty-three Members of Parliament belonging to the community have written to me and some church authorities have also written to me that there is a very cumbersome process which is not applicable to other communities in relation to the law of succession. Whatever procedures in relation to the law of succession have been simplified for other communities, there is still a very onerous and long-winding process as far as the Christian community is concerned. Now, they want that law also to be brought at par.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister, one minute. There is a Message by the Rajya Sabha to be laid.

17.36 hrs.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha:-

"I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Indian Council of World Affairs Bill, 2001, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 23rd August, 2001, has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 29th August, 2001, with the following amendments:-

Clause 7

1. That at page 3, *for* lines 15 to 34, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"7 (1) On and from the day 1st day of September, 2000 and until the appointment of date under sub-section (2), the Council shall consist of the following members, namely:-

(a) The Vice-President of India, who shall be President, ex-officio;

(b) The Prime Minister of India;

(c) The Speaker of the Lok Sabha;

(d) The Leader of the House, Rajya Sabha;

(e) The Leader of the Opposition of Lok Sabha;

(f) The Leader of the Opposition, Rajya Sabha

(2) On and from such date, as may be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the Official Gazette which shall not be later than three months from the date of assent by the President of the Indian Council of World Affairs, 2001, the Council shall consist of the following members, namely:-

(a) The Vice-President of India, who shall be President ex-officio;

(b) Three Vice-Presidents as may be nominated by the Council;

(c) A Director General to be nominated by the Council."

2. That at page 4, *for* lines 5 to 7, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"(i) three members from the Ministry of External Affairs, ex-officio; The Foreign Secretary, The Financial Advisor to the Ministry of External Affairs and Dean (Foreign Service Institute) to be nominated by the Chairperson of the Governing Body"

3. That at page 4 lines 11 to 13, be *deleted*.

4. That at page 4, line 14, "4" *substitute* "(3)".

5. That at page 4, line 16, *for* "5" *substitute* "4".

6. That at page 4, line 29, *for* "(5)" *substitute* "(4)".

7. That at page 4, line 37, *for* "(5)" *substitute* "(4)".

Clause-14

8. That at page 5, *for* line 24 to 25, the following be *substituted* namely:-

"14 (1) There shall be a Governing body of the Council which shall be constituted by the Council."

9. That at page 5, *for* lines 29 to 32, the following be *substituted* namely:-

"14 (3) On and from such date as may be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the official gazette, the Vice-President of India, ex-officio shall be the Chairperson of the Governing body and shall exercise such powers and discharge such functions as may be prescribed by regulations."

Clause 15

10. That at page 5, *for* lines 42 to 43, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"15 (1) There shall be a Chief Executive Officer of the Council who shall be designed as the Director General and shall be appointed by the Council."

Clause 26

11. That at page 7, line 44, the words "with the previous approval of the Central Government" be *deleted*.

12. That at page 8, lines 6 to 7 be *deleted.*

13. That at page 8, line 8, *for* "(c)" *substitute* "(b)".

14. That at page 8, lines 10, *for* "(d)" *substitute* "(c)".

15. That at page 8, line 14, *for* "(e)" *substitute* "(d)".

16. That at page 8, line 16, *for* "(f)" *substitute* "(e)".

17. That at page 8, line 18, *for* "(g)" *substitute* "(f)".

18. That at page 8, line 20, *for* "(h)" *substitute* "(g)".

19. That at page 8, lines 22, *for* the words "Central Government" the words "Governing Body" be *substituted.*

I am, therefore, to return herewith the said Bill in accordance with the provisions of rule 128 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha with the request that the concurrent of the Lok Sabha to the said amendments be communicated to this House."

17.40 hrs.

MARRIAGE LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL

INDIAN DIVORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL AND CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL-*contd.*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, as far as the Succession Law is concerned, for instance, the suggestion has now been made from the community itself. We are examining that suggestion. I see a good case where even the Succession Laws now required to be amended and to be reconsidered by Parliament.

Sir, several important issues have been raised in relation to section 125 of the Cr.P.C. Section 125 of the Cr.P.C., in effect, was intended to be a very effective law but it became ineffective because of the ceiling of Rs. 500. One of the Members suggested that 'please keep an outer limit of Rs. 1500. But Sir, I respectfully disagree with the Member, for the reason, that the ceiling of Rs. 500 was fixed in the year 1955. We have travelled 46 years thereafter. After 46 years, we are still considering in terms of fixing an outer limit. The reason why we have not fixed a cap or an outer limit on this amount of Rs. 500 or whatever is the outer limit is that this has relationship with several factors. The first relationship is: 'What are the reasonable expenses that they have to incur? What are the paying capacity of the husband or the son or the father in the case?"

In this modern world, you may have people with limited income, and you may also have people whose incomes almost touch the sky. Therefore, in those cases where the husband may be earning in lakhs, to say that his wife must only get Rs. 1500 is not justified. Today with Rs. 1500 one may not be even in a position in most of the Indian cities, to get a room on rent. So, Rs. 1500 may not be sufficient actually to make two ends meet as far as the lifestyle of the wife is concerned. That is one of the reason that we have to look at it. We have to look at it without looking at the aberrations of the Western world. The divorce cases in the Western countries have increased. In some countries, it has increased by 50 per cent to 60 per cent. It is not a very happy situation.

But one factor which we have to keep in mind is that once this separation takes place, however cruel it is, the earning hand has to pay heavily for it, and that, in fact, is used as one of the deterrents against the frequent break up of marriages. It is because the break up itself has become a very costly proposition.

PROF. R.R. PRAMANIK: If it is not possible to fix the upper limit, then it should be linked up with the percentage of the net income. Please do not leave it to the discretion of the trying magistrate.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, there is no need to fix an outer amount. There are well respected judicial decision. There are precedents. For instance, the hon. Member says as to what happens to the wife's residence.

Now, the Supreme Court says that the cost of acquiring alternate residence is part of maintenance. Should maintenance be linked only to the salary certificate or income tax return? To this, they said, "No. Look beyond that to the lifestyle." The amount must be such that wife is provided the lifestyle which she would have lived in had she continued to live with her husband. The reason why your argument of percentage will not hold good is this. In one case, he may have to give an amount to

wife alone. In another case, it may be to wife and two children and in the third case, he may have to give to aged parents. How can you, therefore, by rule of thumb, have a percentage which will apply in every case? This will depend upon case to case like what is the quantum of income, what is the requirement, how many people are dependent upon them, etc.

Sir, this is the most effective remedy today. It has become ineffective because wife did not want to go to a forum where the maintenance amount was Rs. 500. They would go to the civil courts where it would take years to get maintenance. Today, by putting a 75 paise stamp, you can go to the nearest Magistrate of your area. You need not even to a district court. You go to the District Magistrate. It is a remedy which costs very little and the Magistrate, as far as possible, within 60 days, will have to determine the amount of maintenance which has to be granted to the wife.

You raised a question on which I was a little surprised. You asked as to why should husbands also not be entitled under this amendment to make those applications. Sir, Section 125, as it has been originally framed is a carry-forward of the original Section 488 of the old Cr.P.C. It says to only provide the remedy to a person who refuses to maintain (a) his wife (b) his legitimate or illegitimate or minor child and (c) his father or mother or child upon the age of majority whom you cannot maintain. So, the remedy is in favour of people, that is, children, aged parents and wives who are unable to maintain themselves. For able-bodied human beings, particularly men who are able to maintain themselves, Section 125 was never a remedy. It was never a remedy available under law as far as men are concerned. I think it would be a retrograde step in this century if we say that now we also decide that Indian men must start getting maintenance under Section 125 against their wives because the remedy which was thought of for all these years was only for parents, wives and children and not otherwise.

PROF. R.R. PRAMANIK: Now, there are cases where the husbands get their maintenance from their wives where the wives are stronger than husbands and where wife's income is more than that of the husband.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, those are cases of personal laws where all such cases are maintainable. Section 125 was a remedy always available against man and man was not entitled any remedy under Section 125. That has always been not possible....*(Interruptions)* A number of Members have raised this question that this was a little liberal view in favour of husbands. Some views were expressed to make the law tighter against them like why are we giving them 60 days, why not make it 30 days and so on. One hon. Member said that on the first day, an *ex parte* order could be passed. How will these orders be executed? Let us also bear in mind that we are governed by society through a rule of law. This provision is a very onerous provision. If the husband does not pay the amount or the father or the son does not pay the amount, the consequences are not merely warranting in terms of payment of money but it is also imprisonment. It is repeated imprisonment every month. Therefore, the consequences of this being penal, let us not go create a provision which defies certain norms of rules of law. The normal procedure would be that the Magistrate would give a reasonable time to the husband to file a reply on affidavit, he would take a *prima facie* view on his lifestyle, income, the requirements of his wife, etc. and then fix an amount. To fix the amount without adequate hearing, without even assessing the possible income may create a situation where people....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperumbudur): Interim relief is as decided by only the District Magistrate. He may give the final judgement after perusing all records and affidavits. Now, I am asking only about the interim relief.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: The consequences of both non-payment of interim amount and final amount are the same. Therefore, there must be some judicial application of mind after which the quantums are fixed.

It is because if quantums are fixed without a proper judicial hearing, then you may actually have a situation which may cause a repression the other way round, that you may give an exaggerated amount which somebody is not able to give. The consequence would be, he cannot pay the amount and he will land up in jail. Therefore, that being the consequence, the hearing and the standards of hearing must be very fair and the judicial application of mind must be full in all the case at this time.

A very important question was asked by Shri Shivraj Patil. He raised this question that in section 10 when we are adding various grounds of divorce, why are we keeping AIDS out of it? This is the question which has been debated not only in this country but elsewhere also. One view has been, and in fact our source had also occasion to consider it, that there must be a disclosure of this fact as and when the marriage takes place. There was a great debate. One observation that was made was that because you have AIDS, you are not entitled to get married. Somebody has made this observation because it is a communicable disease.

[Shri Arun Jaitley]

The second view is that if you carry on this kind of an adverse consequence of somebody contacting that disease, then the entire campaign against fighting the disease and fighting the element of untouchability behind the disease will suffer. There have been these views which have been expressed. But we went by the time-tested process. When the community came before the Standing Committee, the original grounds of divorce which we had indicated....

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL (Latur): I am not suggesting that it should be applicable to the marriages in the Christian community only. If this provision becomes applicable, it should be made applicable to all. AIDS is not having impact just on two lives, but it has impact on the progeny also. That is a very important factor.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, when the representatives of the community appeared before the Standing Committee, the proposal which they gave which amended our original proposal was to bring the grounds available at pat with various common law grounds which are available across the board to other religious denominations. I have prepared a comparison of the grounds available. On some of the grounds, there can be two views. For instance, one of the grounds which is available in almost every Personal Law now is that voluntary conversion of religion. Some people feel that this really should not be a ground. But this is the ground which is available across the board, in the Special Marriage Act, in the Hindu Marriage Act and in this proposal also. It is not compulsory. If you have a different notion of ideas, then you may be willing to ignore the fact that your spouse has converted to other religion. But if you are possessive of your own religion, and therefore do not accept that, then that is the ground available in several religions itself. It is not compulsory for anybody to file a petition the moment a ground is available. It is still optional to a person that he or she may accept that reality and not file a petition. Now, the language is different The present law says:

> "Has for a period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the petition been suffering from venereal disease in a communable form."

The Special Marriage Act language says:

> "has been suffering from venereal disease in a communicable form"

That two years is not there. The Hindu Marriage Act says:

> "has been suffering from venereal disease in a communicable form"

The larger opinion is that this language is very wide enough actually not only to take in its definition, venereal disease as traditionally understood but also a communicable disease of this kind which may be communicable as a venereal disease. I think, the language being more or less similar in most laws, we should leave it for the judicial interpretation whether the ailment which has been mentioned and suggested would come in this category or not because there is one view that it perhaps already has covered.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I would humbly like to submit that this may not cover AIDS. This is applicable only to venereal disease and not to AIDS. I am not suggesting that you should accept it immediately, but please get it examined.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: While we discuss it, as I have indicated, we must keep both the viewpoints as far as bringing AIDS in this specific category is concerned.

The entire campaign to remove AIDS gives an impression that somebody who has the disease is an untouchable and cannot lead an ordinary life.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: It is applicable to leprosy patients also....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Yes, it is. The comparative chart shows that the common law grounds which existed the world over which are time-tested are the ones which have been included in this.

A suggestion has been made. It is a very important suggestion. Particularly, a number of women's organisations and NGOs have been demanding compulsory registration of marriages. Shrimati Alva raised this question. Some other hon. Members also raised this question. We have certainly been applying our minds to this issue. We are still in the process of considering what the consequences would be; how would the enforceability of a provision right up to the rural areas of this kind would actually take place. ...*(Interruptions)*

This is a suggestion which has been made. I am also given to suggest this. The example of Maharashtra has been given where they made registration compulsory. We are also trying to examine what are the consequences of making it compulsory. Are you now going to enforce some penal consequences if it is not made compulsory? What is the extent to which this law has actually been implemented? How much is the breach of this law? Particularly, as far as the rural areas are concerned, the breach is there. The over-legislation in all the cases is not a virtue. There is no point in making a legislation. ...*(Interruptions)*

The hon. Member from Nagaland made a mention that there still may be some personal laws, some customary practices particularly in the tribal areas, which are actually different from the substantive law which we

are now enacting. All these customary laws in those areas are protected by Article 371 (a). Therefore, the new law actually would not in any way affect those areas. The constitutional guarantee given to those areas and to those laws would override any statutory provision which we are enacting today.

A question has been raised with regard to a divorce by mutual consent. The question is: when the Special Marriages Act and the Hindu Marriage Act fixed one-year period of separation before a petition can be filed, why the two-year period be fixed in this law? As I said in my opening remarks, this two-year period has been fixed essentially on the insistence of the Christian community itself. Perhaps I could understand why they insisted on a two-year period rather than a one-year period which is applicable to other laws. The Catholics particularly do not approve of the idea of divorce. According to them, those whom God has united, law and mankind really cannot separate. That is their idea of marriage. Therefore, even in a case where the spouses are living apart, perhaps the intention is to give a little more time for them to reconcile and start living together rather than enabling them to file a petition for dissolution of marriage at the very early stage.

DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA (Nominated): This recommendation has been made by the clergy. They do not get married at all. There is no question of considering their views. They do not get married. How will they know about the problems of married people?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): I do not agree with the hon. Member. It is always better to give some more time. If they reconcile, it is always good. Those who want to go to court can go earlier....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: When we are dealing with personal laws, there are a number of religious sensitivities which are involved. There is an involvement of the community. Therefore, it is always preferable that rather than imposing a legislative dictum upon them, we should go by the views of the community unless there is something which you find inconsistent with your entire rule of law and legal system. There has been a traditional disagreement with the idea of divorce as far as the Catholics are concerned. They do not permit the dissolution immediately on one year of separation. They want to give a little more time for reconciliation. The Standing Committee felt that this is a reasonable suggestion and we must therefore create a distinction from other personal laws *vis-a-vis* this law. I do not think there is anything wrong with the Government also in accepting that suggestion which the community was trying to make.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI (Khagaria): If the duration of ten years is mentioned then who will do the bringing up and from where the money will come?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Two more changes have been made in this law. Firstly in context of two years, the maintenance allowance will be fixed to 60 days and secondly the maintenance allowance will be provided within two years. Earlier its limit was 20 per cent.

The maximum a woman could get was one fifth of her husband's income. Through this amendment the maintenance allowance will be fixed within 60 days and the ceiling of 20 per cent has been removed. Hence the provisions of as to how she will maintain herself in between this duration, has also been made.

[English]

One more question was raised - till which time would interim maintenance be granted? Would the interim maintenance be granted for years till the court decides the main matter? Interim maintenances are always interim in character. When court passes the final order, the interim maintenance will go and the final order would prevail. Alternatively, if during this period, if there is any change of circumstances, either in favour of a wife or a husband, husband can come up before the court and say that wife now has an income of her own and husband can come up before the court and say that my own income had disappeared. The wife can simultaneously come up before the court and say that while you gave only Rs. 1,000 and now I find that my husband's income has gone up five times. These are all interim in character. It would be interim till such time when the final orders are passed or wife has her own resources. These are all areas which will be governed by the judicial discretion. In these areas, there can be no rule of thumb which can be laid down by the Legislature. Therefore, we have considered it proper to leave it as far as the Legislature is concerned.

SHRI V.P. SINGH BADNORE (Bhilwara): Could you differentiate between alimony and maintenance, Mr. Minister? You have not touched as to what were the privilege appeals and reviews to the higher courts.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Alimonies can be both in the permanent or in the temporary nature. They can be one-time quantum, courts can fix it. They could be recurring, courts can fix it. As far as appeals are concerned, since in some of these laws, the consequences are also penal, some judicial reviews against that order would always be

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there. But, it is again for courts to decide. No court is going to say that while it hears the appeal, do not pay anything. The court can say, you pay the amount - 'x' amount or subsistence amount or 75 per cent of the amount. These are all in the nature of orders of money decrees. Particularly, since they deal with human subsistence, we do trust our court to be more reasonable when they pass orders in appeals also. No order in appeal would allow that the children, parents and wife starving and the court says that during the appeal, do not pay anything. Normally, these kinds of appellate orders are not envisageable. Therefore, these are areas which we have left to the judicial review.

With these comments I commend to the hon. Members that this Bill be adopted.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: What about enhanced maintenance over the years like we talk about the salaries of MPs going up once in five years? Would there be a provision for raising the maintenance?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Interim maintenance orders and final maintenance orders are always interim in character. As I said, change of circumstances always empowers the court to make orders with change....*(Interruptions)*

DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA: I argued that the Muslim Women's Act need not be amended to allow the Muslim women cases to be tried in the Family Court. Now, they have been shuttled to the Magistrate's Court.

SHRI V.P. SINGH BADNORE: Are you afraid of the saffronisation of education, etc. and that is why you have left the Muslim women out of this Act?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: These two questions actually deal with the 1986 legislation. In 1986, there was a specific legislation which carved out an exception to Section 125. Therefore, it created a special procedure. That legislation has been challenged and we are awaiting as far as the final view of the Supreme Court is concerned.

As far as the Legislature is concerned, as I mentioned, for amending and altering legislations of this kind, an effort is always made to involve the community and the opinion of the community itself. Therefore, all efforts should be made even within those communities where you feel that personal law requires further changes to create opinion as far as those communities are concerned. In fact, the evolution of the Christian law itself is an example as to how despite resistance some years ago, finally everybody had come around and agreed to this.

DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA: We should have dialogue with different sections of the community. We should have dialogue with the liberal section of the community.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: As far as the Government is concerned, we have to dialogue with every section.

18.00 hrs.

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPA (Kolar): How to protect a couple under the law in the case of inter-caste marriage?...*(Interruptions)* Will there not be more problems?...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. R.R. PRAMANIK: I think, it should be 'father and mother or parents' and not 'father or mother'. If it is 'father or mother', then the father will get the maintenance and the mother will not get it. If the mother gets the maintenance, the father will not get it. So, I suggest that it should be 'father and mother or parents'.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, these are time-tested provisions for decades. When you say 'wife or children', it actually means that you are entitled to give it to both of them. It does not mean that if you give it to one, you cannot give it to the other....*(Interruptions)*

PROF. R.R. PRAMANIK: It is 'wife, children'....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: All these laws govern inter-caste marriages.

THE MARRIAGE LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Divorce Act, 1869, the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936, the Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion ***was adopted.***

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 9 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 9 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE INDIAN DIVORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we come to item No. 24.

The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Divorce Act, 1869, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 32 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 32 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL

MR. CHAIRMAN: We go to Item No. 25. The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 4 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 4 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

18.06 hrs.

SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES OF MINISTERS (AMENDMENT) BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers Act, 1952.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is :-

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers Act, 1952."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO: I introduce** the Bill.

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* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 30.8.2001.

** Introduced with the recommendation of the President

18.07 hrs.

INDIAN COUNCIL OF WORLD AFFAIRS BILL

Amendments made by Rajya Sabha

[English]

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI JAG MOHAN): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the following amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill to declare the Indian Council of World Affairs to be an institution of national importance and to provide for its incorporation and matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration:

Clause 7

1. That at page 3, *for* lines 15 to 34, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"7 (1) On and from the day 1st day of September, 2000 and until the appointment of date under sub-section (2), the Council shall consist of the following members, namely:-

(a) The Vice-President of India, who shall be President, ex-officio;

(b) The Prime Minister of India;

(c) The Speaker of the Lok Sabha;

(d) The Leader of the House, Rajya Sabha;

(e) The Leader of the Opposition of Lok Sabha;

(f) The Leader of the Opposition of Rajya Sabha

(2) On and from such date, as may be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the Official Gazette which shall not be later than three months from the date of assent by the President of the Indian Council of World Affairs Bill, 2001, the Council shall consist of the following members, namely:-

(a) the Vice-President of India, who shall be President ex-officio;

(b) the Vice-President as may be nominated by the Council;

(c) a Director-General to be nominated by the Council."

2. That at page 4, *for* lines 5 to 7, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"(i) three members from the Ministry of External Affairs, ex-officio;

The Foreign Secretary,

The Financial Advisor to the Ministry of External Affairs; and

Dean (Foreign Service Institute)

to be nominated by the Chairperson of the Governing Body"

(a) The Vice-President of India, who shall be President, ex-officio;

(b) The Prime Minister of India;

(c) The Speaker of the Lok Sabha;

(d) The Leader of the House, Rajya Sabha;

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(2) On and from such date, as may be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the Official Gazette which shall not be later than three months from the date of assent by the President of the Indian Council of World Affairs Bill, 2001, the Council shall consist of the following members, namely:-

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(b) three Vice-Presidents as may be nominated by the Council;

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"(i) three members from the Ministry of External Affairs, ex-officio; Freign Secretary, Financial Advisor, and Dean (Foreign Service Institute), to be nominated by the Chairperson of the Governing Body,"

3. That at page 4, lines 11 to 13, be *deleted.*

4. That at page 4, line 14, *for* "4" *substitute* "(3)".

5. That at page 4, line 16, *for* "5" *substitute* "4".

6 That at page 4, line 29, *for* "(5)" *substitute* "(4)".

7 That at page 4, line 37, *for* "(5)" *substitute* "(4)".

Clause-14

8. That at page 5, *for* line 24 to 25, the following be *substituted* namely:-

"14 (1) There shall be a Governing body of the Council which shall be constituted by the Council."

9. That at page 5, *for* lines 29 to 32, the following be *substituted* namely:-

"14 (3) On and from such date as may be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the official gazette, the Vice-President of India, ex-officio shall be the Chairperson of the Governing body and shall exercise such powers and discharge such functions as may be prescribed by regulations."

Clause 15

10. That at page 5, *for* lines 42 to 43, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"15 (1) There shall be a Chief Executive Officer of the Council who shall be designed as the Director General and shall be appointed by the Council."

Clause 26

11. That at page 7, line 44, the words "with the previous approval of the Central Government" be *deleted.*

12. That at page 8, lines 6 to 7 be *deleted.*

13. That at page 8, lines 8, *for* "(c)" *substitute* "(b)".

14. That at page 8, lines 10, *for* "(d)" *substitute* "(c)".

15. That at page 8, lines 14, *for* "(e)" *substitute* "(d)".

16. That at page 8, lines 16, *for* "(f)" *substitute* "(e)".

17. That at page 8, lines 18, *for* "(g)" *substitute* "(f)".

18. That at page 8, lines 20, *for* "(h)" *substitute* "(g)".

19. That at page 8, lines 22, *for* the words "Central Government" the words "Governing Body" be *substituted.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the following amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill to declare the Indian Council of World Affairs to be an institution of national importance and to provide for its incorporation and matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration:

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(c) The Speaker of the Lok Sabha;

(d) The Leader of the House, Rajya Sabha;

(e) The Leader of the Opposition of Lok Sabha;

(f) The Leader of the Opposition of Rajya Sabha.

(2) On and from such date, as may be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the Official Gazette which shall not be later than three months from the date of assent by the President of the Indian Council of World Affairs Bill, 2001, the Council shall consist of the following members, namely:-

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19. That at page 8, lines 22, *for* the words **"Central Government"** the words **"Governing Body"** be *substituted*.

The motion was adopted.

Clause by Clause Consideration of the Amendments made by the Rajya Sabha

Clause 7

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

1. That at page 3, *for* lines 15 to 34, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

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(e) The Leader of the Opposition of Lok Sabha;

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(a) the Vice-President of India, who shall be President, ex-officio;

(b) the Vice-President as may be nominated by the Council;

(c) a Director-General to be nominated by the Council."

2. That at page 4, *for* lines 5 to 7, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"(i) three members from the Ministry of External Affairs, ex-officio;

The Foreign Secretary,

The Financial Advisor; and

Dean (Foreign Service Institute)

to be nominated by the Chairperson of the Governing Body"

(a) The Vice-President of India, who shall be President, ex-officio;

(b) The Prime Minister of India;

(c) The Speaker of the Lok Sabha;

(d) The Leader of the House, Rajya Sabha;

(e) The Leader of the Opposition of Lok Sabha;

(f) The Leader of the Opposition, Rajya Sabha;

(2) On and from such date, as may be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the Official Gazette which shall not be later than three months from the date of assent by the President of the Indian Council of World Affairs Bill, 2001, the Council shall consist of the following members, namely:-

(a) the Vice-President of India, who shall be the President, ex-officio;

(b) three Vice-Presidents as may be nominated by the Council;

(c) a Director-General to be nominated by the Council;

2. That at page 4, *for* lines 5 to 7, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"(i) three members from the Ministry of External Affairs, ex-officio; Foreign Secretary, Financial Advisor, and Dean (Foreign Service Institute), to be nominated by the Chairperson of the Governing Body,"

3. That at page 4, lines 11 to 13, be *deleted*.

4. That at page 4, line 14, *for* "4" *substitute* "(3)".

5 That at page 4, line 16, *for* "5" *substitute* "4".

6. That at page 4, line 29, *for* "(5)" *substitute* "(4)".

7. That at page 4, line 37, *for* "(5)" *substitute* "(4)".

The motion was adopted.

Clause-14

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"8. That at page 5, *for* line 24 to 25, the following be *substituted* namely:-

"14 (1) There shall be a Governing body of the Council which shall be constituted by the Council."

9. That at page 5, *for* lines 29 to 32, the following be *substituted* namely:-

"14 (3) On and from such date as may be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the official gazette, the Vice-President of India, ex-officio shall be the Chairperson of the Governing body and shall exercise such powers and discharge such functions as may be prescribed by regulations."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 15

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

10. That at page 5, *for* lines 42 to 43, the following be *substituted*, namely:-

"15 (1) There shall be a Chief Executive Officer of the Council who shall be designed as the Director General and shall be appointed by the Council."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 26

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

11. That at page 7, line 44, the words "with the previous approval of the Central Government" be *deleted.*

12. That at page 8, lines 6 to 7 be *deleted.*

13. That at page 8, line 8, *for* "(c)" *substitute* "(b)".

14. That at page 8, line 10, *for* "(d)" *substitute* "(c)".

15. That at page 8, line 14, *for* "(e)" *substitute* "(d)".

16. That at page 8, line 16, *for* "(f)" *substitute* "(e)".

17. That at page 8, line 18, *for* "(g)" *substitute* "(f)".

18. That at page 8, line 20, *for* "(h)" *substitute* "(g)".

19. That at page 8, line 22, *for* the words "Central Government" the words "Governing Body" be *substitute.*

The motion was adopted.

SHRI JAG MOHAN: I beg to move:

"That the amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to."

The motion was adopted.

18.10 hrs.

SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES OF MINISTERS (AMENDMENT) BILL

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers Act, 1952, be taken into consideration."

Sir, it is a simple Bill, only amending Sections 5 and 6 of the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers Act of 1952. There are clauses 2 and 3. Clause 2 provides for the Sumptuary Allowance. They are already prescribed in the Act of 1985. They have to be doubled, because very small amounts are being provided there.

Secondly, regarding the flight tickets, for the existing six return journeys, they have to be enhanced to 48 single journeys in a year. These are the two small changes. So, I request that this Bill may be passed without any discussion or without referring them to the Standing Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers Act, 1952 be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

18.11 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Acute problems being faced by poor People due to non-availability of foodgrains

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up the Discussion under Rule 193 - Shri Bikram Keshari Deo.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the outset, I would like to thank the Speaker and the Business Advisory Committee for allowing this discussion under Rule 193. It is regarding a very important issue, not of today but also of the past, and also of the future. Let us hope that it is not there in the future. It is regarding poverty alleviation and non-availability of foodgrains in various parts of the country.

Sir, it has been observed that in the last 50 years, a lot of achievements have been made but till today, there are pockets of poverty; downtrodden people are there; backwardness is there; and shortage of food is also there. So, these problem pockets have to be attacked so that we can eradicate poverty altogether.

I would like to stress here that when our country became Independence 54 years back, the biggest problem which we were facing then was poverty. It was the area to be tackled seriously. Significant achievements and economic performances have been made. The foodgrains production has grown three-fold. We are the largest producer of milk in the world. The development of human skills has been remarkable. Great progress has been made in atomic energy, space programmes and space research. We have been able to launch communication satellites and erect nuclear plants. But, at the same time, the minutes side is that two-thirds of the population are below the poverty line. Sir, this can be categorised into three categories.

The first category includes at least 300 million people who are living in absolute poverty and for whom, managing a whole square meal is a major problem. Then, the second category includes another 300 million people with a low income, who could manage with their basic emoluments a square meal a day but they cannot avail of the basic facilities and amenities, which are required in a democratic set up. Sir, these 600 million people are the people, whose poverty has to be alleviated.

But I am sorry to state that since the last 54 years, this has not been done sincerely. You will find pockets of poverty everywhere in the country. Take the case of Satna and Chitragud areas in M.P. and Nandur area in Maharashtra where there were some allegations that 2000 people had died because of the failure of the PDS system there. Then in the Baswara, Dungarpur and Udaipur areas of Rajasthan, there were allegations that starvation deaths had taken place. Who are the Governments there? There is the Congress Government ruled by the Congress Party there. I would say it has been a general habit. When the Congress Party was ruling in Orissa, that time also starvation deaths had taken place in Kalahandi and other regions.

I am happy that this discussion is taking place basically when the Leader of the Opposition got up and mentioned about starvation deaths. Probably, there was this news from *The Times of India*. In the front page of it, has come out as "Mango kernels, wild fruits are starvation deaths." Incidentally, this constituency, where the people are suspecting starvation deaths, belongs to the ex-Chief Minister of Orissa. He had won a by-election there. But still today there is no infrastructure to take the PDS and things are in a very bad shape there. In fact, it is a distressed area. So, keeping all this in view, we have to see the general perspective as to how our country can come out of this morass which is giving us a bad name. It cannot come out in three years. We have just come to power three years back.

We are very proud that from the Red Fort in 1998, the Prime Minister had announced a programme, known as, 'KBK programme' to tackle poverty in the drought-prone problematic areas in the State of Orissa. It is known as 'KBK'.

You will see there have been different views regarding poverty. Regarding the people who are living below the poverty line, Shri V.N. Dandekar and Shri Nilappan, as early as in 1970, have said that 30-35 per cent of the people are living below the poverty line. Some said it was 85 per cent. Then, the Experts Group's calculation on poverty in 1987-88 was as high as 39 per cent. Then, the Planning Commission in 1993-94 when Shri Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister, had put the percentage at

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

19. That means, during his time, all the people had come above the poverty line. It is quite strange because the maximum number of scams took place during that time.

When the Prime Minister had gone to Orissa, he announced this KBK programme for Rs. 4,000 crore. a long-term action plan was announced. But it never took off and the first allocation they had given was only Rs. 1 crore. That also went for soil testing. You announced a package of Rs. 4,500 crore to be spent in seven years to mitigate poverty in these areas. Then the news came from the Planning Commission. During the United Front's Government in 1996-1998, the Planning Commission said that 36 per cent of the people were under the poverty line. The International Council of Research in International Economic Relations said that poverty is stagnant at 39 per cent. So, there are a lot of views as to how many people are living below the poverty line. But here I would like to stress that the concentration of below poverty line people is in the backward regions of various States throughout the country. Our aim should be to tackle their problems and solve them. Regarding poverty line, it has now been established that 300 million people are below the poverty line as per the calorie intake of 2,400 calories in rural areas and 2,100 calories in urban areas.

18.20 hrs.

(SHRI P.H. PANDIAN *in the Chair*)

Keeping this in view, it has been seen that in these backward pockets, people are really hard of getting food to our Government wants to give them food. Our hon. Minister is here. In this august House, he has said that there is enough stock of foodgrains in the country but the States are not lifting them. The States are not taking and giving foodgrains to the people.

There is the *Antyodaya Yojana* and there is the Food-for-Work Programme but the off take of foodgrains is not there. It has been seen that since the last few years, the PDS has not been revamped properly. This has to be done properly. Otherwise, a lot of people will suffer from shortage of food.

There is another piece of statistics that I would like to quote here. After 50 years of Independence, two out of every five malnourished children in the world are Indians. What a shame! We are one of the 12 growing industrial nations in the world but till today two out of every five malnourished children in the world are Indians. At 40 per cent, India has the largest number of malnourished children in the world. In the last fifty years, who was running the Government for the majority of the time? Who was ruling this country till the Eleventh Lok Sabha? It is a matter of shame! Today, we are saying that we are going ahead. We are trying to go ahead. We are trying to break that cold ice, which had completely stopped growth in the last 50 years. We want to get a change. The NDA Government wants to get a change and the people of India have given a mandate for that. With this mandate, we plan to achieve some results by the end of this term. It has also been seen that most of the rural people do not get a balanced diet. They do not get a balanced diet in India and suffer from endemic malnutrition. There has been a severe neglect in the healthcare sector, which directly leads to a proper healthy citizen, in the rural areas of the country. That has also not been looked into. Eighty-five per cent of pregnant mothers in the country are anaemic till today. We have already entered that 21st century. All these problems are staring us in the face; all these problems are staring in the face of the largest democracy of the world. It is a challenge; we have to wipe them out.

Though life expectancy has gone up from 32 years in 1952 to 61 in 1995, even today, as per the Human Development Report, India ranks below Myanmar and Vietnam. We have not been able to compete with the East Asian tigers, whether it is in the industrial sector in GDP growth rate. We have not been able to compete with Japan. I think, I am deviating from the point on poverty, but it is also related to the complete growth of the economy. If I speak about China, I think, our Communist friends would be happy. In China, they have completely changed the policy. They have gone in for liberalisation.

They are calling in multinationals, and the foreign direct investment in China is one of the highest in the world. After they took an about-turn, their economy is also surging high. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): Could you follow that?

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: We will follow the good points, if required, but we cannot follow all the points.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, with your permission, I would like to bring one thing to the Notice of the hon. Member that no comparison should be drawn with China why do you forget that China has been inviting the investors on its own terms and conditions. China is not allowing foreign

investment without consulting its traders and entrepreneurs while our Government has thrown open doors to the foreign investors.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: The Chinese have opened the borders.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Mr. Chairman, I am neither opposing the hon. Member not criticizing him. I would like to bring to his notice that whatever investment has been taking place in China, has been allowed after holding consultations with the traders and entrepreneurs. This thing should be in your knowledge and you should understand that your Government have given a free hand to the foreign investors.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: We are also inviting foreign direct investment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not invite interventions.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Okay, Sir. It has been seen...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): There is no Chinese company. All are American Companies....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN alias PAPPU YADAV (Purnea): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it will be better if we confine our discussion to India leaving apart China.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Swain, you cannot talk like that.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: In the health sector, we are spending only two per cent of our GDP. As per World Health Organisation's stipulation, six per cent should be spent from the Budget on health care. Our spending is abysmal. We are spending only two per cent. This has been the general practice for the last 50 years. We hope, in future, our expenditure on health care will go up. Therefore, emphasis should be given to a healthy and strong society.

Then, I would like to quote something from the Distress Index. The number of people without basic sanitation facilities, a necessity for good health, is 640 million. In the last 50 years, we could not create sanitation facilities for the people. We have launched fresh programmes so that more people could get sanitation facilities.

As I said earlier, nearly 80 per cent of India's pregnant women in the age group of 15 to 49 suffer from anaemia, while one-third, who are under 16, are forced into child labour.

We are independent for over 50 years now and we are in the Twenty-first Century. Why did our predecessors, the previous Governments, not think about it? They never thought about it. They gave slogans, like "Garibi Hatao" and "Roti, Kapda aur Makaan", but nothing was achieved.

Talking of shelter, in mega-cities, like Mumbai, 47 per cent of the people live in slum areas. Thirty-four million families to not even have a place to live. Assuming an average of five persons per family, nearly 170 million people in India are without a roof over their heads. So, in these adverse conditions, it is a legacy which we inherited from the previous Governments, it will take some time for us to settle down....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: May I appeal to the Members not to speak like that?

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: I am quoting from the Union Budget for 2000-2001....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Without the permission of the Chair, you cannot sit and speak like that.

[Translation]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: You go through the union budget 2001-2002. The performance of our Government in the last three years is mentioned in it.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Bikram Keshari Deo, please address the Chair and do not look at them.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, now I would come to the KBK areas in respect of which the issue of starvation deaths, in spite of availability of plenty of food, were raised by the Leader of the Opposition. It has been said by the hon. Minister for Consumer Affairs in this

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

House that there has been on no off-take in these areas. The Public Distribution System is required to be improved. It has been alleged that there have been starvation deaths in Kashipur.

Sir, I have a letter here from the Collector of that area. The report of the Collector says that the deaths in the area were not because of starvation, it was on account of consuming poisonous food. ...*(Interruptions)* some roots and all. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): Why did they take poisonous food?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You speak when your turn comes.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: I am giving the report....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: It is misleading....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is his view. You cannot impose your views on him.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member is entitled to have his say.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): Who poisoned the food? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You cannot block his way.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Nobody poisoned the food....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (Cuttack): He is reading out a letter of the Collector of Raigara about food poisoning and not poisoning of food....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: How did it happen....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: How can you just get up like that. Please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Sir, he is misleading the House....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, I am not misleading the House....*(Interruptions)* We will not allow starvation deaths in Orissa under the present BJP Government...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, you know the present amended rules.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, there had been a writ petition filed in the Supreme Court in 1985 Congress Governments were then in power both at the Centre as well as in the State of Orissa. There was an enquiry conducted. The High Court also admitted a PIL no. OGC 3157/86 and OGC no. 525, 1989. A district judge was appointed to look into the starvation deaths in Kalahandi, that is the constituency I represent. The enquiry findings revealed that starvation deaths had taken place there. The Congress Governments were then in power both at the Centre as well as in the State of Orissa. The Indian Peoples' Front also filed a Writ petition. We had given a PIL in the Supreme Court. An enquiry was initiated and it was confirmed that there were starvation deaths. All these evidence are there.

Sir, our Prime Minister announced from the ramparts of the Red Fort that this Government will eradicate poverty form Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput. This was never mentioned by any previous Prime Minister. He had shown his concern for the poor people of this country, for the down-trodden and backward regions of the country. So, there is the political will to achieve it. This political will was lacking during the previous Governments. Here our Government has the political will to achieve it. I am saying that deaths took place....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Our Government has decided to initiate and implement the Long-Term Action Plan. The Central Government asked the State to prepare the Long-Term Action Plan, not like the action plan initiated by the Government of Shri Narasimha Rao, based on his political speech in Kalahandi, which never took off. Our Government has decided to implement this revised Long-Term Action Plan in this area in order to get the people above the poverty line. Seventy-five per cent of the people here are living below the poverty line.

I would like to give some statistics of Raigada District which I have got with me here. These are the indicators of backwardness of KBK Districts, of Kasipur in Raigada District where the starvation deaths have allegedly taken place.

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*Not recorded.

In this area, 72.03 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. Rainfall here is very heavy, but this year there have been no proper crops, as a result of which there is no work, After the Long-Term Action Plan is approved, the work will start there. The crop of rice is very low, and the crop of wheat in the entire District of Raigada is only 26 quintals. These are the indicators of backwardness in those areas. So, to get the people above the poverty line, steps should be taken.

In the period before the Long-Term Action Plan was sanctioned, our Government has taken steps. They sanctioned about Rs. 174 crore for this year. I thank the Minister of Tribal Affairs and his Ministry. They have sanctioned tribal hostels for these areas. You will see that the dropout rate of children from the schools in these tribal areas is nearly 80 per cent. They do not cross the primary level. They drop out of the school at the second or the third grade. So, to arrest this trend, tribal hostels have been built. In Bolangir 25 hostels, in Kalahandi 25 hostels, in Koraput nearly 105 hostels, in Malkangiri 53 hostels, in Noapara 36 hostels, in Raigada 92 hostels, and in Sompur 8 hostels have been built.

I also thank the Minister of Water Resources who has given a special package for this area. Poverty in this area is drought-related. Because of the drought there is migration. People are leaving their homes and hearths. Because of the drought the economic standard is not growing in spite of the fact that there are a lot of rivers there. The AIBP programme is being implemented with full spirit in the KBK areas where 90 per cent of the allocation comes from the Central Government and ten per cent from the State Government. In these circumstances, we hope to come out of the abyss of poverty and the allegations of starvation deaths being made by Members on the other side. They should see for themselves as to what they did for these areas over the last fifty years.

There are backward pockets in Chhattisgarh also. Hon. Member of Parliament from Chhattisgarh is sitting right in front of us. He knows that Chhattisgarh is one of the most backward regions of the country. Nothing has been done in the past to improve the situation. Though endowed with vast natural resources, though endowed with forests, since all these years people have been selling their children there. Shri Mulayam Singh spoke about the sale of children there. He is right.

Children are being sold in those areas.

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: What will you reply that for what for you have said.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: We are trying to reply.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Not in Orissa but it is in the entire country. Not only U.P. but Bihar has also been refered to.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: But why the poverty is prevailing. Whose legacy it is....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: You are saying a good thing but how long will you survive by criticising Congress.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: We are not criticising of you call it criticism then. I am sorry.

[English]

Sir, in Uttar Pradesh, 80 per cent of the women folk do not cross even second grade in schools in the rural areas. Uttar Pradesh is one of the most backward areas. Nothing has improved in those areas.

[Translation]

You people don't be in illusion, our government have resolved to remove of poverty.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Mr. Chairman, Sir, you are giving me very less time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have already taken enough time.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, I have not taken enough time.

Anyway, I hope that the Government will sanction long term revised action plans and see that the poor people in the far-flung areas, backward areas of the country are looked after properly.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PTAIL (Latur): Sir, I am trying to speak in Hindi today. I hope that you will understand what I speak and won't make fun of me.

Sir, this is a very serious subject and is related to hunger and malnutrition. Hunger and malnutrition are not related to either Bhartiya Janata Party or Communist Party or Congress Party. Hunger is related to the need of the body. We have to ponder over the problem of hunger and malnutrition and starvation deaths by rising above party politics. Until it happens, people will continue to criticise us and the Government will try to defend itself like a good lawyer. This problem is not going to be solved like this. This problem can only be solved if we people think by rising above the party lines.

Yesterday, a debate took place here. Congress Party Leader Shrimati Sonia Gandhi expressed her views along with many other hon. Members like Mulayam Singhji, Somnathji, Shri Mahajanji replied to their queries. I did not notice any political tint in his speech. He was trying to dwell on this issue by rising over the party politics. He was trying to convey that we have foodgrains as well as hunger and the people are dying of hunger.

He was trying to suggest as how to tackle this problem. Nobody mentioned about Orissa. While speaking, he kept in mind that the problem of starvation is everywhere including Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Kashmir and North-East and I found it very assuring that the hon. Shri Promod Mahajan ji replied like a responsible Minister and yesterday it was decided that the issue is really serious. Shri Promod Mahajan replied that though the hon. Minister is responsible and senior, he could not be present in the House as he might not have received information in this regard. He also could said that has I been aware in advance, I would have tried to communicate it to the hon. Minister to make his available in the House and speak on the policy of the Government in this regard. Hence it did not happen as other Members were likely to speak on this subject. This discussion is going on today. We have been discussing not to blame others but to solve this problem. I will speak only on what we can try to do. I feel that it is the right way to speak and hold discussions and if it is not held in this spirit, it will not prove to be of any use. When we are present here, it means that the subject is really serious. When the nature of debate is political then more Members are present in the House and the pandemonium is created and nothing comes out of the discussion. I would like to make a very humble suggestion that the real issue is so vast that it cannot be confined as to what has happened in Orissa, Kashmir, Rajasthan or in Maharashtra. However, the unfortunate thing is that the starving people don't have any voice. Besides, these are very few takers for them although all kinds of orators are present in the country including those who speak eloquently in the House. Some people try to help the cause of these people by writing articles or publishing news in the newspapers or giving coverage on T.V. and we should try to respect the sentiments of such persons. The real number of starving persons is actually much more than what we have been exposed to and this thing should be understood by us. If we don't understand this simple fact then we will commit a mistake. The voice of the hungry is a very weak and he never speaks. It is a very serious matter. The people have elected us to solve their sufferings. All of us are responsible people including those in the Government or who had been part of pervious Government and we the backbenchers who hail from villages have also witnessed poverty and hunger and the sufferings of those who are starving. It is seen by us as well as by you but the sad thing is that this thing is not discussed that frequently.

Right now, one of our colleagues was speaking as to how much poverty is prevalent in our country. He was also telling as how the anaemic children have been taking birth owing to the lack of proper diet to their mothers. The mothers are in even worse conditions. The children having no means of livelihood to feed themselves and not getting any assistance from the Government are in a pathetic condition. It is very necessary for us to understand this problem.

The hon. Minister, sitting on treasury benches, has, cutting across party lines, said that some of the families including the parents and children do not get anything to eat. We have accepted this in the House that some of our sisters are forced to indulge in prostitution due to non-availability of food to them. A chill down our sprue is sent when we listen these things. This is a question of our Government and the Members of Parliament. In my view it is question related to everybody but above all it is of the system adopted and evolved by us.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: No one has any responsibility.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: It is your responsibility today which was ours yesterday. If you are to be blamed for it today, we also share the blame for yesterday. It is the fault of the system and I feel that we will have to think over this system.

We are fortunate that there is no shortage of foodgrains in our country today. Once, we used to import foodgrains, you should not mind what I am going to say.

It was decided during the regime of Shrimati Indira Gandhiji that we will make our country self-sufficient in foodgrains. I remember quite clearly that in those days I used to sit on the backbenches and the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Vasantrao Naik said in the House that his State is having a dearth of foodgrains and I promise that this shortfall will be made up within three years. If it is not done then you are free to herald any punishment to me. He spoke this with much conviction. I know that Shrimati Indira Gandhi framed target of three years to resolve this problem. Reacting to it some of her colleagues, officers, Ministers said that we do not have a magical wand hence it is not possible to achieve the target in three years. Having listened to their pleas, she said that if you don't feel like achieving the target within three years then you are free to opt out and I will find those people who are confident to achieve it within three years. The work was taken on with great conviction and though the work could not be completed in three years and it was achieved within four to five years. The opposition leaders in Maharashtra at that time had reminded Naik Saheb about his pledge. Though the work could not be completed in three years but it was certainly an achievement to complete it within four to five years. This was certainly an achievement of Shrimati Indira Gandhi and also of her colleagues and officers. It was even a much bigger achievement for our farmers and labourers, which cannot be forgotten. Our friends cast aspersions by saying that nothing has been done in past 50 years of Congress regime. They ask as to what we were doing. I would like to tell that though our population has increased from 30 crores to 100 crore over the years, we don't have to import foodgrains to fee them and it is not a mean achievement. Producing foodgrains is not an easy job and a farmer knows as to how much labour and hardwork is involved in it. Today we are self-sufficient in the production of foodgrains and we should not forget this or term it a small achievement. What has not been done in 50 years except that we could not build godowns in 50 years and also failed to develop such an efficient PDS system that would deliver foodgrains to every needy. If some lacuna or unaccomplished task remains there whether we should not improve upon it now?

Sir, it is my humble submission that the hon. Minister will not take it wrong. If I have mentioned about some of our shortcomings then it will certainly be helpful for the hon. Minister because he can make efforts to improve and give directions accordingly to the officers and his colleagues so as to avert repetition of the mistakes. If I comment on something then it is neither intended against the hon. Minister nor against the Government but it is directed to reveal the faults and deficiencies in the system. I feel that the steps are necessary to be taken in view of the prevailing situation. Today, the foodgrains have been kept in open and it is getting rotten and is not reaching to the needy. Whether we cannot improve this situation I don't think that we Indians are so weak that we cannot make improvements in the present scenario. I am not ready to accept that a country which can attain self-sufficiency in production of foodgrains cannot evolve an effective system to make available this foodgrains to the needy persons. I think that thing can be easily accomplished if we are determined to do so and strike a better coordination among the Union Government and State Government and various other organs like Zila Parishad, Taluka Samiti, Gram Panchayat, Public Sector Units and private units, etc. However, it is only possible if we foster this determination within us and vision. I am not ready to accept that we cannot do it. When we can win war and produce within one or two months what is required during war then why we cannot provide foodgrains to the needy person. If we cannot do it then certainly it is our mistake and it is all because we do not want to come out of this mess. We did not press you enough to accomplish some worthwhile in this regard. Your mistake is this that you did not take the State Government into confidence and did not take steps to do away with your mistakes.

19.00 hrs.

I am not pointing out the deficiencies of the hon. Minister but it is the Government and the entire Parliament which will have to accept this responsibility. The non-availability of foodgrains to people despite the huge surplus is not a personal flaw the conditions can always be sought. I would like to say very humbly that what I am going to suggest is nothing novel or new. May be you have already given a thought to it and included it in your policies. I would like to suggest that you will have to be along the public, private and public enterprises and the State Governments with you besides leading them from the front and create better coordination between the Centre and the States.

I would like to know as to whether this subject has been discussed in the NDC or not. If so, what is the seriousness with which it has been discussed and if not, what are the reasons for not holding any discussion? Whether the Government intend to take up this issue in the forthcoming meeting of NDC. If the NDC meeting is soon going to take place under the chairmanship of hon. Prime Minister, then why not make our assessment of the problem we are facing. Whether the Prime Minister cannot invite the suggestions of all the participating leaders to resolve this problem. Whether the Prime Minister cannot call a meeting of the Chief Minister of all

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

the States to discuss the issue, whether the Government cannot discuss this issue with the organisation like FICCI and whether a network of cooperatives cannot be set up. Whether the officers at Taluka, district and State level cannot be called and informed about the seriousness of the subject and also that no work is taking place on this front.

They should be led in that direction, persuaded and even forced. If that is done, we can achieve the goal. They are required to be given a firm direction, resolution, approach and belongingness.

We should weep, our heart should bleed if one of our sister is sold due to hunger, if a brother dies or if a child is weak. It requires a humane approach and that is in you. Only you are trapped in the system and should come out of that.

Which States should be provided foodgrains. On this, our colleague Shri Deb ji said that I have named the Government of Orissa. I am not doing that.

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: I have mentioned all the States, not just Orissa.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Please identify regions of the country. Concentrate on the identified regions of Orissa, Maharashtra, U.P. and Karntaka and immediately rush foodgrains. Call the taluk officials, collectors of those areas. If it is not possible, then let the State Government direct them to do it expeditiously. They can be contacted through computers, telephones and through the same means they can be shown records, supervised, directed and controlled. Why it is not done? Bihar and other States were affected by floods. Do you not understand that people have to suffer hardships in case of floods? They do not get foodgrains to eat. They have to leave their homes for it. Why can't we transport food to the flood prone areas before the flood actually strikes. Who do we wait for floods? We know that Bihar is ravaged by the flood waters of Ganga, Yamuna and Brahmaputra. Why can't we plan and determine beforehand that foodgrains will have to be sent through such and such means viz through train, ship or by road. Why everything is not planned beforehand? Famine occurred at a number of places, but it cannot be said with certainty that famine would occur at a certain place. It struck at one place at one time and at another place at another time. Why do we not arrange the supply of foodgrains at such places? You implement plan projects in which lakhs of workers are employed. They build capital for the country by their sweat and blood. They expose their bodies to sun and the rain. Why can we not provide them foodgrains at low rates? Why can we not do so in case of various plan projects? We are implementing employment schemes. Why do we not arrange to provide foodgrains for the people working in them? We have Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. Why are we not providing to people working in these projects? We say that our children are anaemic. Why are we not arranging food for the children who got to schools? If the grains are rotting, why it is not given to the children free? What is wrong in that? We have a large number of patients. Why have we not arranged food in the hospitals for them? The unemployed also need foodgrains. Why are we not arranging foodgrains for them? If arrangement is made, keeping in view all this, the situation could improve. What do we need today? A policy, probably the Government have formulated a policy. If so, it needs to be implemented. If that is not being implemented properly, we have to see that it is implemented properly. If there are some errors in the policy, those needs to be removed. If the policies of Union and the State Governments are different, they need to be coordinated. Whenever such issues are raised, we invariably get two-three kind of replies, which we hear in silence. One reply is that what have you done in fifty years. All right, we committed some mistakes during the last 50 years, but now that you are ruling, you will mend things or now? We produced grains during last 50 years. Now whether you would arrange for the access of the people to those grains in a year or not? If you can formulate schemes for providing foodgrains to 100 crore people, then you can also make arrangements to provide the produced foodgrains to the people who are to consume it. If you can't do it, who will do it? PDS is not functioning properly. The earlier Government is also guilty but will you rectify the situation or not? If not, for how long you will not do so? Second reply is that we have foodgrains and we are ready to provide it but no one is ready to take it. If the State Government is not off-taking that, what we can do? Is it correct to give such a reply? The Governments in the State and at the Union are not mutually exclusive.

The Governments can not have different views on hunger. The Government is for the country. The Union Government is not a separate entity. It is a coordinating agency. The Union has no territory, no citizens. Everything belongs to the States and the Union has to provide leadership. The Centre has to coordinate. It has to formulate plans. The Centre has to delineate the future course of actions, the direction we have to move to. If Centre is not doing that, it is its own mistake. You are

the leader, you have to coordinate. You just can't sit idle by saying that we are revived foodgrains but nobody is taking that. The hon. Minister could tell the Chief Minister that their State was not taking the foodgrains and they should arrange to take those foodgrains. Both should share the responsibility. You can do that or not. If you say so nobody will take an exception to that. Your officials can tell their officials about that. You can feed all these details into the computer. You can talk on telephone. We have cell phones now a days. You can talk about this while driving your car. If that has not been done, it is wrong. It can be done. If that has not been done, we will request for it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to say that these are not new things, but old ones. You would also have considered that, implemented that. If the implementation is erroneous, see to it that the errors are eliminated. The mistakes should be rectified. I want to read out some Articles of the Constitution here that will clarify about the responsibility of each and everybody. The claim of the Union Government is wrong. When I go to the States, I find people who say that the Centre did not provide assistance even when they were affected by floods. We sought assistance of one thousand or two thousand crore rupees during famine, but the Union Government did not provide even that. The State Governments would say that they are helpless because the Union Government is not providing funds. We have foodgrains and we give the excuse that they are not being off-loaded by the State Governments. Both the Union and the State Government do nothing and the people would starve to death while our godowns are full of foodgrains. Who is responsible for it? Is it the people who are dying of hunger? This responsibility is of the Centre, States, yours and mine. Because we have so far not taken up the issue before you so intensely. We just indulged in politics and failed to consider such important questions.

We are also at fault if we do not discuss plans, the hunger, the unemployment, the foreign policy and just indulge in mud-lining. We are ready to own responsibility for that. But it will be wrong if the Union Government says that they are helpless because it is ready to provide foodgrains but nobody is coming forward.

In all humility, I want to submit that do not consider yourself so helpless. You can issue directions, you can persuade them. Even after issuing directions and foodgrains, there is no improvement and starvation deaths continue to occur then it will be a partial breach of constitution, if not complete breach of constitution. It may entail dismissal of the Government. You would not go to that extent, and that is how it should be. We are not asking you to do so. But the Centre is not so helpless. If it is weak it is because of its thought, its actions and its leadership. I want to conclude by reading out this article. What does the Article 39 viz. directive principles of state policy says? The state policy is valid mostly for the Centre, but it is also valid for States and other institutions. Article 39 under Directive Principles states.

[English]

"The State shall, in particular direct its policy towards securing-

(a) that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood."

[Translation]

We will have to provide that. It further says-

[English]

"That children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment."

[Translation]

If the children are sold, women are misguided, then to some extent it is our responsibility also. What does Article 43 state.

[English]

"Living wage, etc., for workers."

"The State shall endeavour to secure, by suitable legislation or economic organisation or in any other way, to all workers, agricultural, industrial or otherwise, work, a living wage, conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities and, in particular, the State shall endeavour to promote cottage industries."

[Translation]

Foodgrains are there but people are unable to purchase. Why, because we are talking of downsizing, saving money, earning profit even if it results in some people dying or starving....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO (Jagatsinghpur): I would like to ask you whether all the articles of Directive Principles of State are relevant or not.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Yes.

SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: If so, what have we done?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Please do not divert. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: When you get your chance, you ask.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Why? I am quoting the relevant articles. I am not quoting irrelevant articles. I cannot discuss the entire Constitution. I am saying that these are the articles, which put the obligation on the Government to take certain steps to make certain policies and then to implement those policies. I am not discussing the entire Chapter on Directive Principles or the entire Constitution or all other wrong things. Then article 47 says:

> "The State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties...."

...*(Interruptions)* I am reading the relevant articles. Other things are irrelevant....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is speaking. Do not interrupt. Do not obstruct.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Why are you feeling so agitated? I am not saying anything which is not acceptable. I am saying that these are the articles, directions given by the basic law of the country to the Government of India and also to the State Governments. These obligations have to be fulfilled in co-operation and co-ordination between the Government of India, that State Governments and other organisations at other levels like the *Zilla Parishad, Taluka Samitis* and *Panchayats*. Now, please for God's sake, do not attach importance to the loss and profit principle. Loss of life cannot be compensated by any amount of money.

[Translation]

And I believe that market forces are not going to accomplish the work. Market forces are important for increasing trade but the rural areas abound in poverty and hunger. It is more in Himachal which is a hilly area. You had been a Chief Minister and you are aware of the situation there. We both are aware how many times you have had to endure tears of blood by seeing their condition. I have seen it form close quarters. It is not only the issue of profit and loss. It is not just the issue of saving money from the amount earmarked for providing assistance and grains, it is the matter of life and death. of hunger and of humanity. Shri Mulayam Singh ji, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi ji and Somnath ji said, some people may tolerate it but other may wonder why do they have to suffer if the foodgrains are available? We all share this thought.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we don't want to die of hunger, we want to die of bullets. If such a thought crosses the mind of a person sitting here, the mind of an erstwhile Chief Minister. The mind of a responsible persons, is it unreasonable to think that such an idea might have crossed the minds of certain people within our country. It may be that in such a scenario the goods would not only fall in the hands of the deserving but may also fall in the hands of plunderer and into wrong hands. If such a though crosses my mind while sitting here, why it is so? Why we are not able to stop that, why are we afraid to do so? Do we want to continue to be preoccupied with pragmatism and practicalism? Why we go on accepting the principles which are not relevant for the country? Why do we not accept the principles which are relevant for the 70 percent population of the country? Why we talk only about those principles which are relevant for just 10% of the population?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, our fault lies in the fact that we have ceased to think about 70 percent population. We have not done that completely, yet. I can not accuse you of that, but it is true that it is gradually losing importance. We are now believing that earning money and profit is more important. Humanity and the lives of the people are unimportant.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is thought that if one person is removed from Government job, so much money is saved, but nobody thinks about the fate that would befall him, or his family. I think so. This is the issue before the Government and our view points. We will have to change this sort of thinking.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we want to abreast with the leading countries of the world. We want to adopt their ideals but we have to accept that the ideals and theories relevant for us cannot be imported. We may accept their ideals to some degree, but for our use we have to evolve our own principles. Our foremost duty is of standing

besides and aiding the hungry, the diseased, the old, the poor, the women and the people of weaker section. If the Government commits any error in that, it will not be forgiven. If we have committed mistakes, we have suffered for that. You will also pay similar price. Therefore, please think on it. It is not the question of your or my interest. The thing is that justice should be done—come whatever may. If that is not done, the people or the institution that are responsible for it, will face the music. Only those would benefit who would fight for the cause of the downtrodden and for their justice. Therefore, I request you to work for the betterment of weaker sections of the society. That is my request to you.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Mr. Chairman, Sir, 'bursting godowns and starving deaths' is, of course, a said commentary on the state of affairs but it is saddest when this happens in a post-Pokhran, 21st century India.

Sixty-one million tonnes of foodgrains are at the Central Pool and the buffer norm is 24 million tonnes or a little more than that. For the last three months, covering different parts of the country—not only in Orissa, not only in Chhattisgarh, not only in Gujarat, not only in Maharashtra, Rajasthan or Himachal Pradesh—in almost all the drought-prone areas, there have been cases of starvation deaths.

What is wrong? Is something wrong with the system, which is basically anti-poor? Is it because of the wrong policies, particularly the policies with regard to the food management? Is it because of wrong policy with overemphasis on export, removal of quantitative restrictions as a result of which the peasantry is suffering? Is it because of wrong agricultural policy as a result of which food production is declining? Last year, there was a decline in food production to the extent of 12 million tonnes. It is not a small quantity.

There are many other areas where wrongs have been committed. For example, the Government is waxing eloquence that there is a decline of ten per cent in poverty level, although no economist who studied this problem of poverty agreed with it. Even the national accounts data is not conforming to that. In the Planning Commission, a debate is raging. There is a strong opinion that after the economic reforms, poverty has accelerated not only in the rural areas, but also in the urban areas.

I will give you three or four examples. I was a child when the great Bengal famine took place. At that time, fifty lakh people died in United Bengal, and a person like Pandit Nehru said, "Why are the people not looking at the godowns?" There was colonial rule, there was hardly any democracy, and the hoarders had the freedom to hoard as much as possible.

Today, we are in the Twenty-first Century, there is an elected Government which claims to be different from the Congress which had done all these things during the last 50 years as a result of which poor people suffered. The same tribal population, women and children are at the receiving end today, be it in Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan or Gujarat. People who had not been victims of starvation earlier have now been added, be it in Kerala, in the industrial areas because of the policy of closure of units, even profitable units, in the informal sector, in the unorganised sector, in the village and small industries. The recent deaths in Kerala are an example of the wrong policies of liberalisation as being applied to the small and village industries.

The loss of jobs is not a new thing, particularly in the rural areas during the periods of drought, floods, cyclones and earthquakes. We know that special measures have to be taken. Orissa had an unprecedented super-cyclone, followed by flood and drought. There are some districts, like Kalahandi, where people are dying because of starvation. Kalahandi deaths have been discussed in the United Nations also. I remember, one Judge has gone there to see for himself as to what was happening there. Though we had many differences with late Shri Rajiv Gadhi, he had decided to see for himself as to what was the problem of Kalahandi. A lot of research work has been done on Kalahandi. There was a time when Kalahandi was a granary for the surrounding areas. Now, it is a place which is chronically affected by drought and people are dying. After the super-cyclone, more than one million people had fled their villages. Out of them, 80 per cent are from Kalahandi, Bolangir and other places.

The same people are starving right now. The Government says, 'why are they starving? We have already declared 'food for work' for them' but the they are not taking it'. There is no off-take. Why is it so? Is it for nothing? Are the State Governments so callous and the Central Government alone is very bountiful, generous and sensitive? No. It is not that. It is because of a great error, a misjudgement and because of the wrong policies initiated by the Government in regard to the PDS. The Government has taken away the APL and is targeting only BPL. On the one hand there has been a rise in the prices of the foodgrains and on the other hand there has been a squeezing of the PDS by dismantling it. Who will decide the point up to which a person would be

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

categorised as a BPL or an APL? The units are closing down: the small industries, are not having their jobs as they had earlier, the village industries are suffering, the weavers are not having job. The weavers in Andhra Pradesh, the gold smiths in Tamil Nadu, the construction workers in Kerala are all suffering. It is not the case alone with tribals, women and others. They have all along been a victim of starvation, sometimes a little less and sometimes a little more. But this has been a regular feature, particularly after the natural calamities. The situation has further deteriorated on account of the wrong policies of the Government, bad food management and bad philosophy adopted by this Government. The Government did not know the way out of the situation.

Sir, Dr. Swaminathan is a legendary leader in the field of food management and food production. His name has been considered for many international awards. He has presented a map on food insecurity in India. It was released by no less a person than the hon. Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. What had Dr. Swaminathan said? He has said that food management in India is distorted. It is over-centralised. The procurement is centralised. The storage is centralised and in a vast country like India, it should just be the opposite. It should start from the household level. A woman should be at the centre of food management. From there it should to the *Gram Sabha* level, the granary bank, and then it should go to the State level and then finally it should go to the central level. But it is just the opposite here.

Sir, next is the question of Community Granary Bank movement. Dr. Swaminathan says, 'the time is opportune to launch an imaginative community grain bank in which 200 tonnes of wheat or rice, locally acceptable, and staple food such as *Ragi, Jawar, Bajra, Maize* also could be added, to start with, in remote areas. It takes a lot of time to carry the food from the Central Storage Plant to the desert areas of Rajasthan, the hilly areas of Himachal Pradesh—it will go by wagons and then unloaded at a point and then from one point it would be taken by truck and a lot of time would be consumed—actually it denies access to food to the poor people who are in need of it. It is not a new suggestion, it has been pending with the Government for a long time now, that 25,000 grain banks should be set up within a few months. He had said, 'within a few months'. He said this in the month of April.

The situation is becoming graver and graver day by day. Media reports about starvation death started appearing. Any Government worth its name should have responded to this call by such an eminent person who has been doing the greatest service to Indian agriculture. He asked the Government for only five million tonnes of foodgrains with which granary banks in 25 Gram Sabhas could be set up first which could be followed by another 25 Gram Sabhas later. Why did the Government not respond? Why did the Government not come forward to get away from the present over-centralised system to the reality-centred system?

The Government proposed a decnetralised system to discuss for which it had called the Chief Ministers' meeting on the 21st of May. The Chief Ministers did not agree to the decentralised system proposed by the Government. Where are the States going to get money from for the procurement? If the Government wants to bring in the decentralised system it has proposed, let the States be given five years' transition time so that they can adjust to the new set up. Give them the required money. Ask the banks and other financial institutions to provide money to the States. No, the idea of the Government is to corporatise this, to absolve itself of this responsibility, and to make people suffer and then accuse the State Governments for their sufferings.

Implementation of food-for-work programme is one way to save the people from starvation. I am speaking from our own experience. Let the Minister not take it otherwise. My colleagues are here. In 1978, when the worst ever floods in the history of the State hit West Bengal, everyone had written off West Bengal. People started saying that in 1943 during the days of United Bengal, Bengal could be saved even after a loss of 50 lakh human lives, but it was not possible for Bengal to survive after what happened to it in 1973. Morarji Desai was the Prime Minister then. We approached him. We had many differences with him. Yet, the people of Bengal remember him even today for what he had done for Bengal. He gave Rs. 500 crore for food-for-work programme. He promised that he would give whatever amount was needed to rescue West Bengal. We had differences with Morarji Desai. Still, it is written in history that he forgot the political differences and came forward to help Bengal, and Bengal was saved.

Bengal suffered one of the worst floods in the year 2000. The loss suffered was to the tune of Rs. 6,000 crore, taking into account the crop loss and all those things. We repeatedly appealed to this Government for giving us food-for-work programme and other measures. This is not the occasion to say this - but I cannot forget the sufferings of the people of Bengal - but the Central Government did not help the State. It gave only Rs. 103 crore. Repeated appeals were made by the MLAs and Members of Parliament, irrespective of their political affiliations, but the Government of India did not give anything to the State. Stil, can anyone say that there

had been a single case of starvation death in West Bengal, in spite of the seriousness of the situation?

It became possible in West Bengal because we have to Panchayati System where people at the grassroots level control the Gram Sabha, the canards spread by some people apart. We remember that it was Rajiv Gandhi - we had a lot of differences with him - who held the Panchayati Conference at Salt Lake, Calcutta. He was bold enough to say, "I cannot but praise the Panchayati system of Bengal. I want to take it as the model." It is on record.

Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar prepared the draft. He knows it.

Sir, where we are to be criticised, they may criticise us. We do not say that we are committing all sorts of right things. We may also commit wrongs. So, where we have done wrongs, we should be criticised. It will help us. But when we are doing the right thing, why should they not appreciate and say that it is good and this should continue?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: May I ask you a small question?

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: No, I am not yielding.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Kharabela Swain, he is not yielding. Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri Rupchand Pal.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Swain, please take your seat. I have not granted you the permission to speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record except what Shri Rupchand Pal says.

*...(Interruptions)**

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, even in Kerala, starvation deaths have taken place near its capital, Thiruvananthapuram. It is to be noted that even in State of Kerala where the public distribution system is really well managed, such deaths are occurring. Kerala perhaps has one of the best PDS systems in the country. Kerala is much more advanced in terms of socio-economic development. It is more advanced in terms of literacy and empowerment of women. Kerala is not like the BIMARU States.

Sir, even in the town areas of Kerala, people are dying of starvation. Just during August, this month itself, 21 tribal people have died of starvation in Wynad and Attappady areas of Kerala.

Something is happening which is related to a reckless and directionless liberalisation policy. People are losing their jobs. According to a rough calculation, more than 12 lakh people in different public sector undertakings have lost their jobs followed by the loss of jobs in the allied areas. More than 2 crore people have lost their jobs during the last two years. Production in the rural areas is going down. There has been a decline in the foodgrain production by six per cent during the last one year.

Sir, what is more frightening is that the population growth rate in India is 1.8 per cent while the foodgrain production rate is just 1.5 per cent. What does it signify? It signifies that there is going to be a situation of chronic famine in India.

We are in the 21st Century. After the Pokhran-II, they were claiming that India shall have 9 per cent growth, India shall be the Superpower, India shall be IT Superpower and all those things.

Population growth has far surpassed. It is a distortion which has taken place during the last two years. Because of Green Revolution and many other measures in agriculture, we had improved substantially in our agricultural production. But what is happening? It is declining. In one year, the net availability, from your own figures, is 12 million tonnes. As regards rice, in 1995, the annual per capita availability was 80.3 kilogram. Today, it is 74 kilogram. For wheat, in 1995, 63 kilograms was available annually and now, it is 57 kilogram. In 1995, 23.7 kilogram of other cereals were available annually and in 2000, it was 21.9 kilograms. The total net availability of foodgrains in 1995 was 180.80 kilograms and now, the figure is 167.2 kilograms. Is poverty declining? The national level figures say that it is increasing but the net availability or the per capita food is declining. Food production is declining. The distortion in the management, wrong policy and wrong liberalisation policy are causing more unemployment. And the net result of all these is what is happening today. You have to have a relook at not only the system but at all the policies as well.

*Not recorded.

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

The PDS is one component of handling poverty. Simultaneously, there is Employment Assurance Scheme. You are neglecting the Employment Assurance Scheme. Employment, poverty and starvation are inter-related. Wherever there is starvation death, you will find that there is no access to food and that is because there is mismanagement and unemployment. What is happening?

Now, is food for work so easy to implement? If you say that you are giving so much of foodgrains and by paying cash, you should get it, then who will transport from one place to another? Who will bear the cost? People are standing in the queue whether it is Orissa or Maharashtra or the tribal areas of Gujarat. I am not mentioning particular States but I could. Only ten per cent of the people get jobs. Hungry people standing in the queue from before sunrise up to 12 noon, hear the reply that there is no job and that they can go back. What should they do? Day after day, they are standing in the queue because of wrong policy. It is because the Government has no coherent thinking, no co-ordination and no leadership. Only wrong policy is there. As a result of all these, the present grave situation has arisen.

I would urge upon the Government to take urgent measures to make available at least 5 million tonnes of foodgrains free of cost immediately for the grains banks and ask the State Governments to distribute it at the ground level, at the lowest level like the *gram sabha* level. It is your job to feed the people immediately without any further delay.

On 1st September, we are to have the meeting of the NDC. You may have a full-fledged discussion not only with the concerned States but also with all other Chief Ministers and find a way out of this situation. There can be a way out. I once again repeat that a real and thorough decentralised system, as suggested by Shri M.S. Swaminathan, can save the country in a big way.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Mr. Chairman, today we are again discussing the acute problems being faced by the poor both in the rural and urban areas in various parts of the country due to non-availability of food grains. For hunger, there is no discrimination between the States. There are hunger and starvation deaths in almost all the States except of few.

The problem is acute in Orissa. There are starvation deaths in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttaranchal and Kerala. Some States are ruled by BJP and some States are ruled by Congress and regional parties. That means there is no discrimination for hunger and starvation. It is mainly due to the wrong policies that have been adopted from time immemorial, one hon. Member said for the last fifty years, that we have come to this situation. We are not learning from our past experience as to how to correct the system and as to how to go about it.

We say very proudly that our granaries are full and our farmers grow in plenty. Then, why are starvation deaths occurring? This is happening in far off places as well as in the urban places. There should be some reason. Some of the *pandits* have mentioned about it. A number of schemes, like food for work, EAS, JRY, million well programme and recently *annapurna* scheme, have been introduced. Out of our anxiety, we are introducing more and more schemes, but ultimately poverty remains. What could be the reason? What is happening is that where there is really hunger and starvation, the foodgrains are not reaching there.

As Shri Rupchand Pal said, the Public Distribution System has been over centralised. The granaries are somewhere else and the people who are hungry live somewhere else. There is a wide gap. In many of the villages, I have seen that it is not easy to operate the Fair Price Shops.

19.55 hrs.

(SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*)

Why are they not encouraged to operate the PDS? It is the main concern in some of the places in some States. Maybe, it is because of the harassment by the official machinery, or, whatever profit margin that is being given is insufficient because no trader does business for charity. He does it as a business for himself. But most of the shops are being operated by private persons. They are not operated by the super bazaars or the cooperative stores. The cooperative system is existing all over the country. Mr. Minister, you may think of the distribution through PDS where it is not effective to hand over to the cooperative societies. It could be done at least with the motive of helping the people. There, the profit motive will not arise.

Some of these schemes have been over-publicised. The Annapurna Scheme has been announced in the Budget of 2000 to provide food security to senior citizens who are above the age of 65 years. By this scheme, 10 kilogram of foodgrains is given to them per month. This is a scheme in short. But how many people or senior citizens over and above the age of 65 years are getting this? In Andhra Pradesh, I have seen this personally.

You have given a limited quantity. It is not for the total people who are above 65 years old. What they did was that they distributed among themselves in every village through the ration system. So, others are coming and asking what is done for them. There is no answer. If you want to operate the Annapurna Scheme to really benefit the poor people, the fragile people and those who cannot work, those old people, you should do something more. I am only pointing out the mistakes in the system. These mistakes are to be rectified. You have to get the census about the old-age people who are above 65 years, those who are not having any earning capacity, those who are not having any earning member in their family. Then, it is to be distributed. If it is done, then, some of these hunger deaths can be avoided. This is one of the things which I wanted to bring to your notice. We are not covering all the people.

We give, old-age pension also. This is all given because of hunger and starvation. We give Rs. 75 per month as old-age pension. How many States are regularly distributing this money? You are sending money. But the States do not distribute it. They distribute it in bulk once in two or three months. What is the capacity of such people? Can they wait for three months? Why should one go in for an old-age pension of Rs. 75? If a worker loses his wages for one day, he is not able to buy foodgrains. It happens in some of the remote areas where the Scheduled Caste people are there. This is more prevalent in the areas where the Scheduled Caste people live. Why? They are ignorant, innocent and away from the mainstream. If something happens on that day, there is starvation. So, this amount of Rs. 75 given as old-age pension is also not reaching them regularly. Some of the States are distributing it as and when money is available. Maybe, the Minister may be sending it regularly or not. That is also to be checked up. We must have a long-term grains policy. The stocks should be rotating. We boast that we are having more than 60 million tonnes of foodgrains in various godowns.

20.00 hrs.

We have very huge stocks. I am doubtful, out of which, as to how much stock is made use of. How much stock is really rotten and how much stock is really good? Can we not give it at a concessional rate instead of getting it rotten?

The former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh had implemented a scheme under which rice was sold at two rupees a kilo. Even now, the Government can emulate the same so that the burden on stocks can be reduced. Today, we are paying an interest of Rs. 15 crore per day. This interest burden on the stocks is going up. We should calculate the total cost, interest, losses, etc. and try to dispose of the old stocks. The price of the foodgrains, that is being distributed, is becoming costly. Instead of that, you should think of some other mechanism of distribution instead of distribution through centralised system.

Stocks have to be channelised and distributed at various places. It would help us in the maintenance, control and quality of the stocks. These things have to be looked into. I would like to quote from the reports of various Committees. In this regard, the recommendations of the report of the Abhijeet Sen Committee regarding public distribution system may be useful. According to the report, procurement cost, storage cost and interest cost should not be more than ten per cent of the total cost of the product. Today, it is much more than 15 or 17 per cent. This is one of the areas where we should bring down the cost. The failure of the public distribution system is one of the main reasons for starvation. It is not that India is not having enough foodgrains. We are having surplus foodgrains. Many States are pressurising the Central Government to lift the foodgrains. For example, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and even Bihar are pressurising the Central Government to lift the foodgrains. Where does the fault lie? Fault lies in the fact that foodgrains are not reaching the poor people from the distribution centres.

I would like to make another suggestion. There is malnutrition. Children are the future of our country. Majority of those school going children who come from the poor families do not have nutritious food. The reality of the poor family is that father earns and the whole family has to eat from his income. They go to school without taking food and come back from school without taking food. The Government should make the mid-day meal scheme compulsory. Let the poor children eat. This mid-day meal scheme is one of the answers to avoid malnutrition among the children of the poorer families.

There is a long history about the failure of our system over the past several years. Now, the information technology is at our command. Yesterday, we also discussed the telecommunication system. The information is available at every nook and corner of the country. On receipt of information, we should be able to supply the stocks wherever these are required. Only then, the public distribution system would work.

Now, there is red tape. I am quoting an example. The other States have also asked for foodgrains. The Government of Andhra Pradesh asked for six lakh tonnes

[Shri M.V.V.S. Murthi]

of rice. But we were not able to send it. Even though so much stock is available here, we have been able to send only three lakh tonnes of rice. Even that quantity has not reached the grassroots level because of red tapism.

There had been floods in States like West Bengal last year and also in 1978. Why has Shri Morarji Desai been remembered today? It is because of the good work that he has done irrespective of party affiliation. When there is really starvation, hunger, drought or cyclone, you have to make out a case to see that food should reach the affected place within 24 hours. Then, the system would work. Then only, hunger would be eliminated and there would not be any starvation death.

Now, I come to the 13th Report of the Standing Committee regarding Demands for Grants for 2001-2002. They have said that removal of quantitative restrictions also acted as disincentive on the farmers because so much stock is coming into the Indian continent. The farmers are not getting the remunerative prices for whatever they are producing. In the long run, it would affect you. In the long run, instead of giving incentives, you are creating disincentives. The farmers would slowly shy away from growing such crops. They would go for other crops. That is a dangerous tendency. I would like you take note of this aspect. You should never say that the foodgrains are in surplus in our country. India is a poor country with a population of about 100 crore. But we are producing only about 200 million tonnes. If you take an average, we are not having sufficient food in this country. Many of our people are not eating. If they are eating, they are eating partially. Please consider this aspect and encourage the farmers to produce more foodgrains. If they produce more, then it would automatically be remunerative for them. The component of the fixed cost per acre for cultivation is the same.

The farmers of Punjab never complain about unremunerative prices. They might ask for more. But in several parts of the country, they say that the farmers are becoming weaker and weaker. You should double the production by way of modern techniques. You should learn it from Israel. You talk about drought. In a drought, they will have minimal rainfall. But they play miracles. They produce good food and that of high value. They are doing it through drip irrigation, sprinkler irrigation and through various other methods of irrigation. They double the production of crops. By adopting that system, you can also enthuse the farmers to produce more so that it would be remunerative for them. More food means that there would be more distribution. Ultimately, you would be able to put a fullstop to hunger and starvation. In the next three or four years, you must come out with a comprehensive plan for proper distribution channels so that nobody will die in this country.

It is because we have to hang our head in shame that in a country like this, in this modern age of information and technology, we are having starvation deaths in all parts of the country, right from Kerala to Jammu & Kashmir. This thing has to be avoided.

With these words, I take leave of you. Thank you very much for the opportunity given to me.

[Translation]

SHRI C.N. SINGH (Machhlishahar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for the opportunity you gave me for speaking on behalf of Samajwadi Party on such on important issue. Samajwadi Party fights for the cause of the poor, farmers, dalits, exploited and the backward and always talks of their welfare. We have always raised our voice for them—be it in Parliament, or in the State Legislatures or on roads. We have always fought for them. Whenever this party has got an opportunity, we have done so much for the poors of Uttar Pradesh that is unprecedented. When our leader Shri Mulayam Singh ji became the Chief Minister, he observed the problems faced by the poors and the farmers. He observed that if the farmer takes loan and fails to repay it due to sudden floods, drought, air death in the family, he is put behind bars for 14 days where he is tortured and treated like an animal. Therefore it was for the first and last time that Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav waived off the loans taken by the farmers in Uttar Pradesh. He also saw that as long as farmers do not get adequate assistance, they want be able to increase their production. The farmer will be prosperous only if he increases his production and that will ensure the prosperity of the country.

For the first time in Uttar Pradesh, sufficient water was released to the canals and the production increased so much that farmers became prosperous. For the first and the last time electricity was provided to the villages for 18 hours in the reign of Samajwadi Party. Our Mothers and Sisters suffered due to non-availability of toilets. The construction of toilets began during the rule of Samajwadi Party. The target of our leader was to connect all the villages with the amenities such as roads, Primary Schools and other requirements for the development of villages within five years. The goal of our leader was to provide one bulb light free for every home in the village, to provide house for the people living in huts. Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav implemented the scheme of providing pension to the aged farmers. Farmer's pension scheme was implemented in Uttar Pradesh. Each of the poor widows

was given widow pension and assistance was also given to the handicapped.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have a lot to say but time is short. Many good things were done in that period. Farmers were prosperous. It was bad luck of Uttar Pradesh that the deceit of the people on that side and the B.S.P. caused the fall of the Government and now Uttar Pradesh is also in poor condition.

During the discussion, they expressed regret but the greatest regret is that even Supreme Court has to point out that today godowns are filled with grains, there is no shortage of wheat or rice and still people are starving to death. Our mothers and sisters have to suffer on many accounts. Labourers are in the trap of the powerful people. They have to sell their sisters and daughters, the starving people have to sell their children due to the fear that they won't be able to feed their children. They think that by selling their child they would get food to eat even though the child will have to work hard as a bonded labourer. Things have come to such a pass. I hold both the Union Government and the State Government responsible for it. It is a sin and unfortunate for the country that even after fifty years of independence farmers are dying of starvation. They are compelled to commit suicide, compelled to sell their children. They are compelled to mortgage the modesty of their sisters and daughters. It is a matter of great shame-both for the Union as well as the State Government. Supreme Court has to point out that wheat is abundant and the Government are not able to distribute it. People are indulging in loot and exploitation. I want to state the reasons behind the evolution of such a situation. The present Union Government are trapped in the pressure and policies of the World Bank to such an extent that they are left with no reasoning power. Government have no ideology, no policy of their own. The Government are anti-farmer and anti-poor. They are not concerned about the poor they are only concerned to fulfil their own ends. I am a farmer and have cultivable lands. How can we produce cheap grains if we are to get expensive water, expensive diesel and expensive fertilizer? This Government increased the price of diesel. Farmers are facing problems. In two years, the price of diesel increased by three times. In two years, the price of fertilizer has increased, subsidy on fertilizer has been withdrawn and the farmers have not been given any relief. Farmers produce rice, paddy but if drought occurs, his entire crop goes waste. Floods also ruin the crops. He does not earn even a paisa. He is not able to recover even his production cost. Even if he is able to produce, he sells his grain at the rate of Rs. 3 per Kg. or Rs. 300 per quintal. And about the selling price? In Uttar Pradesh, the selling price was Rs. 2 per Kg. Government said that they would buy at the rate of Rs. 4 per Kg. I can challenge that Union didn't buy even a bag on that price. The middlemen and the agents belonging to their party, were in nexus with corrupt officials and they bought all the grains. This year, the storage of wheat was also done in a similar manner. Farmers in Uttar Pradesh used to wait for 15 days with their trucks and in the end were compelled to sell it at Rs. 3 per Kg. As per the figures of the Government, wheat is being bought at Rs. 6.50 per Kg. and farmers are actually selling it at Rs. 3 per Kg.

Sir, this Government used to say that they will encourage indigenous commodities, but they have come in the clutches of foreigners. The Government of Vajpayee ji was compelled to follow the instructions of World Bank. They have no intellect left now. They are not sensitive towards the poor. Subsidy on fertilizer and foodgrains was withdrawn. It caused increase in prices and also a huge gap between selling and buying price. New schemes were launched with a view to provide free grains to the poor. I can challenge that poors are not getting free grains.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government are acting like deaf and dumb even when so many news items are being published in the newspapers. On 26th December, 2000, it was published in Rashtriya Sahara - 'Khadiyannon Ke Kshamta se adhik Bhandaran Ke Bavjood bhi Orissa mein log bhukhe mare, tatha Chhattisgarh mein do joon Ki roti Ke lieye bachon Ko becha gaya Keyon Ki maa bachon Ko Khanna nahin de pa rahi thi.' 143 districts of the country faced drought. People are starving to death everywhere in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Haryana etc. People are thirsting for water. An article in Business standard dated 20th December mentions starvation victims in Rajasthan. I have cutting of a number of newspapers which I want to place before you.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to say that wheat is not rottening in godowns. Corruption is prevailing in. Its officials are selling wheat but Government are unable to see that and say that wheat is rottening. If the wheat is rottening, the hon. Minister of Food should tell us what action, till date, has been taken against the guilty corrupt officials in this regard? All the figures are before you. Jansatta has published that F.C.I. officers are committing irregularities to the tune of crores.

The present Government are in the grip of the market and my submission is that it is butchering and plundering

[Shri C.N. Singh]

the poor people of the country. The Government are not concerned with the welfare of the people, rather it is busy in reducing the fiscal deficit and for that want to abolish subsidy. I feel that once the subsidy is abolished, the people will be helpless. When the condition of Orissa was discussed Swain Sahib got annoyed. We do not want to discuss only Orissa nor our leader had said like that. The situation is similar everywhere. The news has appeared in the bold letter in the Pioneer.

"SOLD FOR HUNGER"

[English]

Her father was on the verge of death, for mother hungry. So, three-year old Hema was put under the hammer and sold for Rs. 5,000 to a moneylender. With the money, her father survived and her mother bought a fistful of grains to live another day. So? Do you blame the parents or pity them? Do you arrest the moneylender or make it mandatory on him to bring up the girl in the best way possible? And what about the girl herself—so far and yet so near to total destruction of self, the family and the social fabric."

[Translation]

Sir, Shri Ashutosh Mishra had written this. It is very unfortunate thing. My submission is that Bhartiya Janata Party is in power in the Centre as well as in Orissa. When the same party is in power in Centre as well as in the State, then why the people in Orissa are dying of hunger? When the Congress Party allege the BHP, it says that it is not their fault. It is the fault of the Congress Party while Congress people say that it is not their fault. Thus both the political parties are alleging and calling thieves each other. It cannot do any good to the nation. We cannot do any good to the nation by way of alleging each other. Are not the Ministers in position to think about this? Everything is being imported from abroad and it is destroying our economy.

Sir, foodgrains are being imported from abroad while we have sufficient storage of foodgrains in our country. I would like to tell that in 1998, 10 lakh tonnes of wheat was imported. In 1999-2000, 15 lakh tonnes of wheat was imported from abroad. About 6 lakh tonnes of wheat was rotten at sea port only. I would like to tell that Rs. 1800 are spent on the maintenance of one tonnes of wheat. Four crore seven thousand and five hundred rupees are being spent on the maintenance of the foodgrains in the country. This is the wastage of money. This is not their money. It is not the money of NDA Government. It is the money of the poor people of the country.

20.22 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our leader has rightly said that if the people of our country continues to suffer from hunger then one day we will have to launch a mass movement and the hungry people will resort to looting of foodgrains. Selling of foodgrains through hoarders and middlemen is not tolerable for us. They are causing loss of billions of rupees. There is gross irregularities and corruption in FCI. The Government are not paying attention to it. The subsidies are being given to provide benefit to rich people and to the favouite ones. Presently, the FCI is causing loss of Rs. 300 crore per day to the nation. In 1998-99 a subsidy of Rs. 8854 crore was provided to FCI. Similarly, a subsidy of Rs. 2350 crore more was given to FCI later on. The entire money is being wasted on account of this. I hold the Government fully responsible for all this wastefull expenditure and I feel that the Central Government should be shameful for this as the poor people are dying of hunger while the foodgrains are being wasted in godowns.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Government are telling that the godowns are full of foodgrains but the State Government are not lifting and properly distributing it.

On the other hand we find the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh saying that the Central Government are not giving us foodgrains. The Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh sits on 'dharna' on the issue that the Central Government are not giving foodgrains while the Central Minister is telling that the godowns are full of foodgrains. I do not know whether the Central Government are giving foodgrains to the State Government or not. However, the Chief Minister of almost all the States are complaining the same thing. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra is forcefully giving statements in newspapers that the Central Government are not releasing foodgrains to the State. Fine, it may be possible that there is Congress Government in these States but in Orissa their party is in power. Then why people there, are dying of hunger. I would like to ask as to why people are dying of hunger in those States where your party is in power?

Sir, as far the State Government in Uttar Pradesh is concerned, there is a single Minister spends three lakh rupees per month on tea only. You may yourself guess the expenditure incurred on dinner. It is really a matter of concern that what will be the condition of the State while one Minister of the State spends three lakh rupees per month on tea only. There are 100 Ministers in the State Government and thus altogether they spend three

crore rupees per month on tea only. Even Kumbhkaran would have ashamed to see this type of extravagance. There is rampant corruption in Uttar Pradesh. If the farmers of any State are really troubled, it is none other than Uttar Pradesh. These farmers are being ruined. The power supply in the entire State is very critical. Farmers are being exploited there. The situation of power supply in the State is a complete failure. The Chief Minister and the State Ministers were engaged as middlemen in the procurement of electrical equipments. This practice continued for four years. When there were differences in the distribution of commission there was a quarrel and the entire things was exposed.

Sir, the farmers are getting ruined there. Now the new policy has been formulated to import Milk From Denmark and Norway. Ours is also a milk producing country. We have also cows and buffaloes. If the milk is imported from abroad, what will happen to our milk production.

It is the same thing that we are importing rice and wheat from abroad and our wheat and rice are rotting in the godowns. We are not worried that our poor people are dying of hunger. Your sentiments have died. You intend to increase the price of fertilisers and wheat and you are making things out of the reach of the farmers by way of abolishing the subsidy. Your distribution system is faulty. The Government are incapable to check corruption rampant in administrative system of the country rather it has become the part of it. The Government have become totally corrupt. Two per cent of the people of the country are plundering and 98 per cent people of the country are suffering. Whether they are officials or poor, businessmen, farmers or labourers. The people living in villages and towns are facing hunger and the present Government are not doing anything. Sometimes Shri Shanta Kumarji says that what should be done with the wheat stock. Sometimes statement comes from FCI that wheat rotten and they are going to dump it in the sea. My submission is that they will fill their pockets under the pretext of dumping it into the sea. I would not like to single out one Minister and hold him responsible, rather the entire Government of Shri Atalji is not an Indian Government but has become a foreign Government which is being guided by foreign countries. The Government will follow the instruction of America as it has become devoid of its own ideology and understanding. The present Government have become completely unprincipled. It incites only discord and rifts. It has no concern for poor people and farmers. They will incite riot in the name of Rama and try to divide the country. The present Government have done nothing except inciting riots.

This Government have done nothing for the poor, they have not formulated any scheme for the farmers. There is no scheme in the budget, they do not have any scheme in their mind. They are thinking of enslaving the India for their own benefit, they want to enslave the India. Whenever they had power, they had taken the advantage of the name of Lord Ram. Even today, they are ruling the country in the name of Lord Ram. They had fights over it. They had not promised to root out poverty, or to do something for the country.

Our constitution framers have done some mistakes. Our Constitution has been framed very nicely, we do respect our Constitution but there is one shortcoming in the Constitution. It had been mentioned in the Constitution that every citizen has a right to earn his livelihood, and they every citizen has fundamental right to get education, it would have been good. Today Bharatiya Janata party is saffornising the education. In Uttar Pradesh, our education policy has proved to be a total failure. Earlier the Government was paying attention toward the education, now it is not doing so. Today, people can't get their children admitted to the school, if they are not having money Our hon'ble leader Shri Mulayam Singh ji had made education free up to the XIIth standard, but now the Bharatiya Janata Party Government is in power. They do not want the poor to become educated. They feel if the poor are educated, they would become equal to us. They have again imposed fee on the education up to XIIth class, so that the poor may not become educated. My submission is that the Parliament, State Governments and Vidhan Mandals should also pay consideration towards it, that education should be free, the right to get job should be there the poor should also have the fundamental right to live. Today, the Bhartiya Janata Party is depriving the people of their fundamental rights these people do not have right to live, they are dying by consuming poison. It hurts me that condition of the poor is not fine.

The medicines are not available in hospitals, people are dying. Those people who die by consuming poison are better. but those who are not consuming poison, want to live, but are unable to survive. There is a great difference. Even after 54 years of independence the rich are becoming richer and poor are becoming poorer. There is drinking water problem in the villages, the people are not getting clean water. There is also food problem in the villages. People are living in the slums, but the Government are not paying any attention towards them. Beautiful airports are being built, mansions are being built, discussions are being held with the foreigners, the policies of the foreigners are being adopted, the goods manufactured in other countries are being imported here,

[Shri C.N. Singh]

even milk, ghee and butter is being imported. Our country will be received. Today, this Government have to pay consideration in this regard. There will be revolution in the country. If the people of country starve, the Samajwadi Party will not remain quiet.

I would like to announce that the Samajwadi Party will struggle. I will not speak much, I want to present some documents before you, which relate to the news published in different newspapers. News regarding corruption in FCI have been published. The Prithviganj airport is near my house. The wheat has been stored at this airport. I would like to say that 50 per cent of the wheat is missing from it. I guarantee you that the benefit of the Government's schemes, will not reach the farmers and poor, rather the rich and anti-social elements are taking benefit of it. In this system the benefit of these schemes will not reach the poor. The Bharatiya Janata Party Government may be satisfied that it is reaching the poor, but in reality it is happening on papers only. At present, the benefit of no scheme is reaching the poor. There was a scheme for the procurement of wheat, but the wheat of the poor farmer was not procured, but the wheat was purchased from the agents of the BJP. The agents purchased wheat at the rate of Rs. 3-4 per Kg and immediately sold it at the rate of Rs. 6.50 per Kg. The names of every person involved in it, come into light, and were published in the newspaper, but the Government did not pay any attention towards it. The Government announces that they have purchased so much of wheat, crores of tonnes of wheat has been purchased, in reality, so far nobody has purchased so much wheat, but who has suffered in this process? The Government has suffered and the poor have suffered, whose wheat is purchased at lower rates. Therefore, I want to say that Government should make changes in their policy. I want that the Government which are adopting the foreigner's policy should either say, we are not Indian, we are loyal to America. That day will also come and we have to see that day. I and the people of my Samajwadi Party will not remain silent. Lok Morcha has already been set up, the new power has emerged, we will have to tread on the path of movements and struggle, we will protest against their foreign policies. I want to say and would like to request the people sitting on other side, the people who are the part of the Democratic Front, to immediately withdraw support from the Government, if the Government do not stop this, otherwise they will enslave our country. Our country had been enslaved for 200 years, after coming of East India company to India. Today, hundreds of foreign companies are coming to India, they have given permission for trade to them. India is not so developed, that it would be able to compete with European countries and America, we can not even compete with China and Japan. We should follow our indigenous policy. Samajwadi party emphasise on self-reliance, the poor should be uplifted, we should uplift backward and Dalit people, the weaker sections of the society should be uplifted, the women should be uplifted. My party's policy has been to open an intermediate girls' school in each block. This Government have done nothing for the education and the poor, therefore, starvation is on rise in the country. This is shameful for the Government that the people of country are dying due to starvation while plenty of grains are in the godowns. The foodgrains are lying in the godowns, but not reaching the poor, I would like to say this to you.

I would like to quote all the news, please give all these clippings to the hon'ble Minister. These contain full details where the Girls were sold and were forced into prostitution for food. It is very unfortunate and people holding high ranks in the Government are busy in making money for themselves. They are concerned only about their own welfare. They are not at all worried about the poor. According to this clipping of the newspaper, the foodgrains are lying in the godowns and nobody is taking care of it.

Now I would like to conclude making my last submission. The Supreme Court felt the need to interfere in this matter, after many news were published in the regard. It is not appropriate for the Government and Parliament. It is for such matters to be raised that people have elected us. The Supreme Court is telling that Godowns are full and people are dying due to starvation. It is shameful for the Government that Supreme Court is saying such thing. If the Government can't provide means of livelihood to the people, they should not be left to die due to starvation. I demand resignation from the Government, if people are left to starvation.

The consideration is needed to be paid to the fact, how people are dying due to starvation in the country and how prostitution is prevailing due to starvation. Today, the condition of farmers is so pathetic that they are not having clothes to cover their body. Now, winters are approaching. They protect themselves from cold by burning the fire. I would like to ask the Government, what they have done in last three years? Alongwith it I demand resignation of the Government. If the Supreme Court has remarked that godowns are full of foodgrains, and they are not being provided to the poor, the Government should immediately resign.

I urge allies in the Government to withdraw support and come towards our fold since the Government is sold in the hands of America and other foreigners. They would act as per the dictates of World Bank.

With these words, I again appeal that these questions should be answered and the allied should not come under pressure but look at the poors.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I hail from a non-Hindi speaking State. Just now, my senior colleague, Shri Shivraj Patil delivered his speech in Hindi. He is Chairman of Standing Committee on Finance. His speech in Hindi has prompted me and I, too, would speak in Hindi.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Shivraj Patilji, Rupchand Palji and just now Shri C.N. Singh delivered impressive speech. All of them expressed a common concern that though our godowns are full of foodgrains yet people are not getting anything to eat. I neither blame the Government nor the opposition parties. My question is different. Many Members including Shivraj Patil and C.N. Singh wanted to know which way the poor people can be helped? They meant that the surplus stock of rice and wheat should be made accessible to the poor people. All right, it can be distributed this year or say next year also. But how long it can continue, not perpetually. We will have to alleviate poverty. By giving something to the poor every year is as good as forcing them to stay poor for ever. Shri C.N. Singh was stressing that subsidy is being reduced every year and the Government are not procuring foodgrains. Sir, if the Government buy the products of farmers, be it rice, wheat or anything else, it would buy on Minimum Support Price and MSP is more than the price prevailing in the open market. The Government would buy at higher prices, sell at cheaper rates and would distribute freely to the public. Last year, the Government doled out Rs. 9200 crore in subsidy, still they say there are no funds for agriculture sector. There is shortage of funds for development of infrastructure such as roads, cold storage. If large amount is spent on subsidy, then how the funds will be mobilised for other purposes. If rice, kerosene is subsidised then wherefrom funds will be available for developmental activities. It is my question and it is not the only way out.

There are to-three reasons for poverty. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the staff has been on duty since 9 O'clock in the morning, so kindly let the meals at least be arranged....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there anyone from the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs?...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Ravi Verma, you have already informed me. Please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: I would like to know whether the Central Government do not supply rice to the States where people are reported to have died of hunger. FCI's godowns contain foodgrains in plenty and these godowns are not in Delhi alone, these are scattered throughout India, godowns are in several States, then why people are not getting rice? Why the States are not lifting their quota? The Central Government have no such machinery which can ensure supply of grains from man to man. It is to be done by the State Governments. Therefore, it is wrong to say that since Central Government are not supplying rice the people are not getting it. Rice is stocked with every State Government Shri Rupchand Pal was telling that procurement process should be decentralised. Swaminathanji also said that in place of decentralisation storage of foodgrains is being centralised. Union Minister, Shri Shanta Kumar has asked State Governments to procure foodgrains but the State Governments are reluctant. I cannot reply to this question, Hon'ble Minister would reply it better. The Central Government have tried several times to decentralise the procurement process but State Governments are not willing to implement it. It is because, State Government know that it is not an easy task, secondly they do not have adequate funds either. Therefore, I want to say that poverty is increasing because of three-four reasons. The Government are neither developing infrastructure in rural areas and nor preventing felling of trees despite our opposition. KBK-Koraput, Bolangir, Kalahandi districts named as Ethopia by some people where atmosphere is so terrorised that none is willing to invest and set up an industry in these districts. Shri Mulayam Singhji was telling that girls in Orissa are sold for paltry sum. Infact, none is coming forward to invest in Orissa and you yourself are telling that there is nothing to eat or drink in Orissa so who will go and invest there. These sort of talks are adversely affecting development work in Orissa. I humbly request you not to use such words for my State. But poverty exists in Orissa because large number of trees have been cut. It is called "Produchas" in Orissa. It means tribals set the jungle one fire and then utilise that land for cultivation for some years. After some years they leave it and again burn a part of jungle and utilise that

[Shri Kharabela Swain]

land for cultivation. This process has drastically reduced the forest cover from 90 per cent to 10 per cent. Majority of the people are illiterate and they have no desire for betterment. They have left themselves on God and they have accepted that they cannot rise. Therefore, we will have to change their mentality.

Sir, I would like to tell one more thing. I do not want to blame any Government during last 50 years. Sole object of any poverty alleviation programme is to alleviate poverty where as it has been reduced to providing Government job to some people. Tribal people are imparted training under poverty alleviation programme. Infact, people getting training under this programme join the training with an idea of getting a stipend of Rs. 80-100 per mansum and not with an idea of earning livelihood later on. The Government implemented IRDP. Several people contact Members of Parliament and request them to help in getting loan. The purpose or meaning of loan for a person is just to get something from the Government since others are also taking or have taken loan. He has not plans to invest it anywhere or to repay it.

My submission is that the Government should look into all this and not allow this scheme to work as first-aid. Subsidy should be given only to the needy people. Infact, money provided under subsidised schemes goes in black market. Therefore, there is a need to bring structural change in poverty alleviation programmes.

With these words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. I would like to compliment my young friend, Shri Bikram Keshari Deo for having raised this very thought-provoking discussion and Shri M.O.H. Farooq, to raise a discussion regarding acute problems being faced by poor in rural and urban areas in various parts of the country due to non-availability of foodgrains.

Sir, I share the sentiments expressed by my colleague, my distinguished predecessor in the Defence Ministry, our former Speaker, Shri Shivraj V. Patil who raised the level of the debate to a statesman-like standard.

Sir, not only must we approach this subject with all seriousness but in a non-partisan way, above petty party politics for scoring debating points. But I am sorry to say that I do not think, we have lived up to the standard which Shri Shivraj. V. Patil has raised in this debate. It was said Nero was fiddling when Rome was burning. When Hitler crossed the Maginot Line, he asked whether Paris was burning. Today in India our stomachs are burning.

Today, this is a national disaster alliance, a heterogeneous conglomerate in which all parities, which are in power in the all the States, are ruling here. I think all of us here, should hang our head in shame that for the last fifty years, we are debating this again and again, trading charges against such other, living in the past but not thinking how we will have to tackle the present and the future with the vision, the will and direction.

In the last three years, we had disasters, scams and corruption. Three Ministers in my Home State were unceremonisouly removed. I do not know the reason for it. I am told that it is due to corruption. We have been discussing, over the last three years, deaths, deprivation and starvation, whether it is due to cyclone or drought or floods. At least, the Finance Commission does not allow us to call it national disasters. So, we call it natural disasters. It is a play of semantic with English words and English language. Had it been a national disaster, like special category States, being border areas, with strategic areas, with low infrastructure, with high tribal population, then maybe, a poor State like mine would have got 90 per cent grants and 10 per cent loan. Sir, only the day before yesterday, I gave the figures. So, I do not want to repeat them. The Planning Commission formulae and the Finance Commission dictates are merely approved here in Parliament which prevent us, the 750 representatives of people, to do nothing but to debate and start trading charges against each other without solving any problem.

In the last 54 years, are we to say that we are not conscious or not aware of the conditions in the tribal dominated areas in the States of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and the original Jharkhand starting from Meghalaya right upto Vyanad forests of Kerala? Wherever there has been a tribal population that was the original map of Jharkhand. These pockets have always given us an opportunity to debate here because of the peculiar situation. Why is it that our planning has not been able to tackle it?

We Indians are helping in the prosperity of other nations. We say 50 per cent IT of America, 50 per cent NASA, 50 per cent ATNT and in Canada and Britain, our Indian people are now Ministers. And yet, we are unable to solve our problems, here. We had Bal Gangadhar Tilak from Shri Shivraj Patil's own area who said that *swaraj* is his bright right and he shall have it. We have political freedom now.

Prof. Rupchand Pal was referring to Dr. Swaminathan who brought the Wheat Revolution and Green Revolution. There is another doctor called Dr. Vandana Shiva. She is neither from BJP, nor Congress, nor a Communist nor a socialist. She is leading a movement of common people, people who are thinking about the country for *anna swaraj*. She has appealed for this in a memorandum to all Members of Parliament. Many important decisions are to be taken by this Government on food, agriculture, productivity, WTO and then GATT Conferences. It is also to be examined whether liberalisation has had a detrimental effect on our farming community and agriculture. Why is it paradoxical? We have always heard of paradox of Orissa being poverty stricken in spite of plenties. Any number of memoranda have been given to the hon. Prime Minister and to the Leader of Opposition who has sent them to us to pursue here. Any number of memoranda have been given to MPs and the Finance Commission, Planning Commission, Petitions Committee. So, these memoranda have fallen on deaf ears.

Otherwise, why are we talking about poverty amongst plenty after fifty years of Independence? This is the situation today. Hon. Food Minister is present here. Statistics have been given to show how much food grains are in store. Yet, Member after Member has referred to starvation deaths in States Starting from Uttar Pradesh right up to South with the exception of Kerala where there are no starvation deaths. No State has been left out. So, no State in this country is free from these deaths. Whether the Government of the day admits it or not, whether the previous Governments have admitted it or not, it is a fact. It is a moot point. BBC correspondents have been writing about it. In the downloading from the computer, it says that unless in the post-morterm nothing is found in the stomach, it cannot be termed as a starvation death. But people are dying because of prolonged mal-nutrition and being anaemic, as Shri Bikram Keshari Deo was saying. The problem is that there is no purchasing power. The new Targeted Public Distribution System, the APL, the BPL etc., are just imaginary words and divisions.

We are smug that we have enunciated schemes. We have passed it on to the States. For the last one and half years, from 1999 October onwards, I have been hearing, whether it is discussion on drought, floods, or cyclone, it is said that it is the duty of the State Government. The Central Government is feeling so helpless. I was forced to move a Privilege Motion against one of the hon. Ministers. But unfortunately due to bereavement in the family, I was not present on the 27th of April. The CAG Report talks about diversion of funds, misappropriation of MPLADS funds, diversion of cyclone funds and funds earmarked for irrigation projects. We, in the Parliament, are feeling so helpless. My learned friend, an authority on Constitution, former Speaker of Lok Sabha and former Speaker of Maharashtra Assembly, Shri Shivraj Patil, quoted articles of the Constitution to show that the Centre does have a responsibility.

On the 24th of July, the Supreme Court, the highest court of India, has directed the Centre that they cannot allow any person to die of starvation within the Indian Union. I do not want to quote that. In spite of that, why are we feeling so helpless? Is no one accountable or responsible for acts of omission or commission? One poor Captain did not lead his charge in Tololing, in Tiger Hills, so he has been court marshalled by the Army. His name is Captain Manchanda. His Regiment has got two Paramvir Chakras. But here no one's head rolls. If there is misappropriation, nobody's head rolls. I have got a paper cutting which states that in my own State, there is a nexus between mill owner, the civil supply officer, the bureaucrat and maybe sometimes the politician. There is a food Mafia. We are trading charges here in Parliament. We will be trading charges in the State Assembly also. They are not held responsible and accountable. Their heads won't roll and people will be dying. Why has it happened in Kasipur? We have been circulated copies of the Chief Secretary's letter to the Collector and Collector's letter to the Revenue Commissioner and to the Chief Secretary. All the MPs from Orissa have got a copy from our Resident Commissioner. It is harping technicalities. Mango Kernel has been ground and they want to buy it off. My good friend, Shri Kharabela Swain mentioned about Minimum Support Price. We buy it from the market, store in for two years and then sell it at a much lesser rate.

21.00 hrs.

It happened in Maharashtra also that it was not fit for consumption of the humans. So, it goes as the feed. That is picked up by the mill owners or the middlemen and sold in the market at the rate fixed by the Government. It is the poor people, the farmer, the consumer, the fellow who goes to the market who suffer. The middlemen and some other vested interest people gain.

Mr. Minister, you have 600 million tonnes of foodgrains. There is no one to take it. Today, the farmer is doing distress sale because the Government is not buying. The FCI is not in the market. It was not so ten years back. In 1987, we had one of the worst droughts in this country in the century. Many States including mine suffered. But the supply management of the PDS was so

[Shri K.P. Singh Deo]

good that the United Nations in the Labour Conference, where Shri A.P. Sangma had gone to attend in Geneva, gave India one of the highest accolades saying that our supply management was such that even in the worst drought of the century not even a single chap died in 1987. The same Indians are there. The same bureaucrats are there. The same administrators are there. The same planners are there. Why is it that India, which never produced a needle before independence has been able to produce nuclear bombs, submarines, aircraft and everything under the sun? Now, the IT sector is thriving. At one time, we were living from ship to mouth. Today, we are exporting foodgrains. It is an anomaly that when we are exporting it to other countries, we cannot feed our own people.

In 1985, when Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, he said that we had 22 million tonnes of foodgrains which was more than what was required for the buffer-stock. He asked why we did not give it to the poor tribals at a lesser price. General K. Balram, the then Adjutant General of the Army helped. Shri V.P. Singh, the then Finance Minister, helped. In Bastar, Koraput and the agency areas of Andhra Pradesh, we could give cheaper grains to the tribal people. Why can something not be done to prevent the people from dying? There are States which have gone backward. The old Bengal Presidency, Bihar, Orissa and some portions of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh are backward. The Planning Commission must get out of its *Kumbakarna* sleep or slumber. Do we not have brains in India? We got the Nobel Prize winners on writing about poverty. Dr. Amartya Sen was a Lecturer in my own Jadhavpur University. On the developmental economics, he wrote a book. He said that it must be accessible at affordable prices. He narrated his own experience in Bangladesh and his own experience of India. He got the Nobel Prize. Yet, we have not been able to provide two square meals to our people. At the same time, we are not importing it. During Shrimati Indira Gandhi's time, we had not only achieved self-sufficiency and self-reliance but also we made sure that many schemes for these areas were put there.

Shri Bikram Keshari Deo mentioned about the revised long-term action plan for Koraput to which our hon. Prime Minister has given a lot of money. I will show you a sheet of eight papers. Eight Members of Parliament are connected with the KBK districts. The point is that meetings have been postponed. The revised long-term action plan has still not taken off the ground. People are dying in Koraput and Kasipur. When Dr. Giridhar Gomango was there, not a single chap died. He was also a Planning Minister here. He was only a Minister of State. At one time, he was a Deputy Minister of Welfare When I asked for eight hostels in Dhenkanal district, he gave the sanction. So, what is so great about sanctioning a few hostels here and there? Why are people dying? Who is going to live in the hostel? You must first see that they get two square meals a day.

Before 1947, Kalahandi was one time the granary of western Orissa. Rice used to go from there to Raipur and Visakhapatnam. Why is it that today people are living in deprivation. Why are newspaper reports coming and saying that children are being sold? Why is it that no one is going to Orissa today? The economic activities have come down; trade and commerce has come down. It was buoyant during the 1990s.

Why is it slumbering? There is alarming unemployment; there is financial crisis. There are some States which could not live only on doles. The Planning Commission should not be puzzled. It must come out with a mechanism to remove the regional imbalance. If there is an all-round development, then India becomes stronger. If Uttar Pradesh becomes weak, Bihar becomes weak, Orissa becomes weak and West Bengal becomes weak, then India becomes weak. Therefore, what Dr Vandana Shiva had written is the same point which Shri Rupchand Pal has made. Fifty 50 per cent of our population are women. It must be women-centred and decentralised planning for our food security. It must not even be at the district level, it must be at the village level. Food security is national security.

I would conclude by quoting Peter Drukker, the high priest of management. I read it in '*Swagat*' magazine during my Indian Airlines flight that the best exponent of management is the common Indian housewife.

[Translation]

*SHRI A.K.S. VIJAYAN (Nagapattinam): Hon'ble Chairman, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on non-availability of food grains to the poor in this discussion under rule 193.

We find floods on one side. Drought on the other side. We witness bumper harvest elsewhere and non-conducive atmosphere to grow crops somewhere else. Agricultural activities could not go on smoothly. Cultivation is carried on with hardships. On the one hand we hoast of scientific advancement. On the other hand we have backwardness. It is also true that it is a new era of computers. India has completed 50 years of freedom.

*English translation of the speech originaly dilivered in Tamil.

Basic problem that affects people is the problem to get enough food. All of us have failed to attend to this basic problem in a satisfactory way. We have been finding fault with one another. We have not heeded to the complaints of the needy. We have ignored the feelings of the hungry masses.

We could achieve self-sufficiency in food production through our efforts styled as green revolution. But we failed again in the distribution front. At a time when we had acute food grains shortage we got grains under PL 480. Instead of solving the problem of hunger through proper distribution, there were criticisms.

Today we find many States being compelled to stop forthwith the free distribution of power to farmers. It comes under attack now. We fail to understand that we could achieve self-sufficiency though the scheme to provide electricity free of cost to farmers.

Our leader and four time Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. Kalaignar stresses the need to continue with free supply of electricity to farmers. He has been highlighting the point that agricultural activities to go on uninterrupted assuring opportunities to agricultural labourers alongwith the farmers while ensuring food production. Poor can be better fed with the creation of guaranteed employment.

In our agro-economy, long term perspective plans like Ganga-Cauvery link canal scheme ought to have been taken long back. When Dr. K.L. Rao was our Union Water Resources Minister, he was advocating the need to take up Ganga-Cauvery link canal scheme. In order to obviate the need to spend heavily going in for a huge investment, he suggested a way out. He said that daily wage labour could be fed with food till the completion of the project and such labour could be provided with cultivable land on either side of the link canal towards settlement of wages for their labour. Years have passed by. The Ganga Cauvery link scheme has been shelved.

Had we implemented that scheme, there may not be floods on one side and drought on the other side. Even now we could take up that gigantic scheme which would ensure an uninterrupted irrigation, continued food production and over flowing job opportunities. I wish the Centre and its present Water Resources Minister would give thought to it and reconsider to take up Ganga-Cauvery link scheme.

Two years back, both in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat, certain non-governmental organisations helped farmers to conserve rainwater and succeeded in increasing food production. But we have failed to spread this message to all the farmers. The new technique developed could have helped farmers all over the country.

We find poverty and hunger in this country and the solution of this vexing problem is also there already. Everyone is born not only with a stomach but also with two hands to resort to labour and earn their livelihood.

We have aboundant natural resources. But we have not tapped them properly. Unlike cold western world, as a tropical country we have a conducive climate to cultivate round the year.

Poverty lifts its ugly head here and there every now and then. Who is responsible for this? It is needless to ask whether it is those who sit on this side or on that side of this august House. This debate will not be of any help to anyone who goes without food. This debate will not move the hungry masses.

Every year we present Budgets. We have been spending on 20% of the population about 80% of our revenues. This lopsided approach came in the way of under privileged people from improving their lot. We need to have long term plans and perspective plans.

At least from now on we must take up 5 year plans that would ensure the availability of enough food for the hungry masses. People oriented plans must be evolved to help the people acquire enough buying power.

Our basic needs must be met with a coordinated production and distribution. Only then we will remove hunger on one side and indigestion on the other. We may tend to ask whether it would be possible. We are in a new communication era. What happens at one end of the country could reach the other corner within minutes. Hence it is possible to evolve a viable coordinated approach to alleviate poverty.

We the Members of this august House must forget our differences and must sit back with a unified sensibility of think for the poorest of the poor. Let us evolve long term plans to augment food production to ensure proper distribution while taking care to enhance the buying capacity of people especially the hungry masses.

With this I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the discussion on very important subject is being held in the House. I congratulate Shri Shivraj Patil for the way he spoke in the House and the way he expressed the agony and problems of the poor in his own inimitable style. He expressed his views by rising above the partisan interests. There is no shortage of foodgrains in the country and farmers are engaged in increasing the production. Despite all this, some time or other news of starvation death pairs in and sometimes through media it comes into prominence. When it comes into light, we discuss it in the House. Despite the fact that the country which has population of more than one hundred crore, the farmers are increasing agricultural production, people of this country are hardworking, and are making progress in technical field also, the starvation is prevailing in the country. It is definitely a serious issue. The Government have been making efforts for poverty alleviation from time to time and is worried about starvation deaths and makes announcements also, that starvation is not prevailing in the country. Despite this, the cases of starvation deaths are coming into light. The godowns are full of food grains. There is no shortage of foodgrains in the country. The rice and wheat are rotting in the godowns. During discussion on distribution system the House, it was said that State Governments are responsible for the distribution. The demarcation of duties between centre and State Governments is to my mind the reason behind the problems being faced by the poor people who face and die of hunger.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, goods are distributed through PDS. Even if goods reach the villages through PDS, the economic condition of the villages should be such that they should be able to buy those goods. Even if goods reaches fair price shops the benefit of it will not reach them till the economic condition of the people improves.

Till their economic condition is strengthened, and they are able to buy goods from fair price shop the situation will not improve. It is very clear, that in this country mothers are selling their children to get two square meals and women are engaged in prostitution to earn food for their children. It is very unfortunate, but what is the way to improve the situation. The House is concerned about it and all of us are worried. I am of the opinion that there is a need to ponder over on two-three points. The training camps should be run in Aadiwasi areas for very backward, helpless and weak people and in training camps we do not talk about how common man conducts his daily routine but want to tell, how living standard of the people should be raised, what is the way to improve lifestyle. I want to cite an example. Once I was imprisoned in Hazaribhagh jail for a year by the Bihar Government. In that jail, most of the prisoners were Aadivasi. An Aadiwasi fell ill and had upset stomach. The Jail Doctor came and after examining prescribed the medicine and an injection. He did not take the medicine, and was not ready to take the injection too. He said, the Doctor will kill me and the treated himself by chewing a 'bale' leaf like a cattle and drink water. I asked why you havn't taken the medicine, he replied, the 'bale' leaf will cool the stomach, and the pain will subside. He had no trust over Doctor and medicine. Until they are given training and told about way to live, their lifestyle will not change and they will not be able to take the advantage of the system and improve living standard.

Another thing I want to say is that the mental condition of the labour class in the villages of country is so unbalanced whether they are agricultural labourers, or factory workers, they take liquor in evening to get rid of fatigue by spending whatever they earn. They do not feel relaxed till they consume liquor. Untill they are told that liquor is dangerous for them and it will deteriorate their economic condition, they will continue to consume liquor after day's hardwork and have inadequate meal. so that in morning they do not have to ask anybody for food. In this condition, proper guidance is needed to improve their living standard. Untill they are properly guided and trained, the Government's schemes will not do any good to them and they will continue to die of starvation.

Sir, there is an old age pension scheme in the country. We do provide Rs. 75 per month to the helpless aged people who are not having any mean to live. It means we give Rs. 75 to a person for food, and we can imagine how a person can live on Rs. 75 per months.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Government gives Rs. 75 per month to those people who are not having any other mean to live. When the person is having no other mean to live he cannot survive on just Rs. 75 per month and naturally will die, of starvation. Therefore, I want to say if you formulate a scheme and do not want that an old man. Should die of starvation you should make some other sources available to him. As far as the question of Government's control over the sources is concerned, I want to make it clear, and do not want to accuse any State Government and I am not accusing anybody, but it is true that the State Government employees are members of the Mafia groups who divert the food meant for the poor in black market and so they do not let the

Government's aid to reach the villages and homes of the poor. The people who had been assigned the task of monitoring and inquiry are themselves involved in the corruption. If the protector turns predator then how can you expect that the poor will be benefited and the starvation deaths will not take place in the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, despite the Government's policies. The people living below the poverty line are becoming victims of starvation and the actual benefit is not reaching them. I do not know whether the Members of this House will like it or not, but I feel and I would like to submit that as per the Government's reservation policy, we assume that reservation benefits are for some castes, but it is being given to those castes, which are not in need of such benefits, but to those who are in real need have not been extended this facility. Therefore, if reservation policy is reformed and amended and this facility should not be given to the people who economically strong, but aid and help should be given to those who are poor, helpless very backward, very poor, and are residing in villages and till date have not got any benefit of these resources. This facility had not been given to the people who died due to starvation, but reservation facility should now be available to their children so that their children should be able to earn their livelihood and the living standard of this generation improves. Therefore, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister that some reforms should be carried out in the reservation policy and some steps should be taken so that the reservation benefit should be extended to the next generation of the people who are dying due to hunger, whose families are dying due to hunger, who are weak and have not got the benefit to reservation. With these words I conclude and thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN (Tirunelveli): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. On behalf of AIADMK Party, I would like to participate in the discussion about the hungry and needy people of India.

Sir, a great freedom fighter and a Tamil poet, Subramania Bharati, has sung in Tamil:

"Thani Oru Manithanukku Unavuilaiyenil
Intha Jagathinai Azhithiduvom."

It means that if a citizen is not able to get food, the world should be destroyed. The freedom fighter, Subramania Bharati has sung like that. On the centenary celebrations of Subramania Bharati, my late leader, Dr. M.G.R. announced the 'Nutritious Meal Scheme' to feed the young hungry people in India.

Now I could see that the people in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan are feeling hungry. What steps the State Governments and the Central Government have taken so far to eradicate people's hungry? When they asked for bread, you cannot offer cake. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has said that they have made improvements in high technology but there is starvation death there. In respect of other States also, they show progress of improvement in other fields but there are starvation deaths. This is a different belt of India about which we are speaking.

Sir, as pointed out by Shri Shivraj V. Patil, the Constitutional obligation on the part of the Central Government and the State Governments is to guarantee adequate means of livelihood. It is a Constitutional guarantee, Constitutional duty, and a Constitutional obligation on the part of the Government. If a citizen is hungry it is up to the Government to feed him. The Government cannot say, look here, we have no food.

Now, there is availability of food stock. There is buffer stock. I would like to point out that the stock of rice and wheat as on 1.7.2001 in the Central pool against the prescribed buffer stock norms of foodgrains is, 227.51 lakh tonnes of rice and 389.20 lakh tonnes of wheat. The total stock is 616.70 lakh tonnes. With this availability, how are these people feeling hungry? Why should there be starvation death?

I say when the Executive failed the people, the Supreme Court had come into play. The Executive failed the people. The political executive has not discharged its Constitutional obligations towards the poor hungry people in these States. That is why, the Supreme Court while delivering a judgement said, 'you must open the closed PDS shops.' What happened to those PDS shops closed in these States? There are godowns full of rice and wheat. There is availability of food. There is availability of these foodstuffs-rice and wheat. Under whose custody is it? It is in the custody of the Central Government and the State Government concerned. So, there would not have been starvation deaths if the Government supervised the Public Distribution System correctly.

I would point out that during the year 1999-2000, the Government of India announced the *Annapurna* scheme for the aged, the senior citizens. Every citizen will become a senior citizen. Then they have guaranteed 20:10 kilograms of foodgrains per month. After that, the

[Shri P.H. Pandian]

Government has restricted to 20 per cent beneficiaries. Eighty per cent of them are not being accommodated. The Government's godowns have buffer stock. They are not able to feed even the 20 per cent of the senior citizens. I talked to Shri M.V. Venkaiah Naidu, the Minister of Rural Development. He also conceded to that fact. They have restricted it to 20 per cent. So, the slackness on the part of the Government, the inability to govern and the inability to manage the food, caused these artificial scarcity.

This artificial scarcity is the cause of these starvation deaths.

I would like to say that when people die of poverty, unemployment is also one of the causes. The youths are unemployed and the poverty situation has not been alleviated. You have poverty alleviation programmes. What happened to those programmes? Poverty is the direct cause of all deliquencies and crimes. The Government is responsible for the maladjustment of individuals in society. When stocks were available in plenty, the Government closed its eyes - I do not know whether it is culpable or negligent.

The hon. Minister often answers questions on this issue in this House. He has given the age-wise break-up of stocks of foodgrains, of wheat, rice and paddy, with the FCI as on 30.6.2001. The stock of up to first two years is 76,09,286 tonnes; for two to three years, it is 23,51,752 tonnes; and for three to four years, it is 9,37,090 tonnes. These are the age-wise break-up statistics of stocks. For four to five years, it is 2,24,470 tonnes. These stocks would become rotten. When these age-wise buffer stocks of foodgrains are going to be destroyed, they would not be of any use to the people. The Government has wasted these foodstuffs and because of wastage people have starved.

We are not lagging behind in agricultural production. India is in the forefront of agricultural production. We have enough stocks. We do not need to import. We have enough stocks but the Government is not able to feed the people with those stocks. The foodstuffs have not reached the common man. The foodstuffs lying in the godowns in buffer stocks do not reach the common man. Let the Government wake up, open its eyes and see the people.

We are now talking about the hungry people and the Treasury Benches are empty. Nobody takes interest in this discussion. When we talked about disinvestment, there was a full crowd; when we talked about industralisation, there was a full crowd. The whole House was present during such discussions.

Who is responsible for these starvation deaths? It is the Government that is responsible. They must allocate stocks for the Food-for-Work Programme, which expires on the 30th September, 2001. It should be extended to all the States till the time the needy are satisfied. I hope the hon. Minister would extend the deadline beyond the 30th September, 2001. He should extend it perennially because these States are drought-prone and they succumb to natural calamities.

Regarding the Judiciary stepping into the shoes of the Executive in the matter of these buffer stocks, taking note of starvation deaths despite overflowing Food Corporation of India godowns, the Supreme Court asked the six drought-prone States to take immediate steps to make the closed PDS shops functional within a week. The Government should have directed them to make the PDS shops functional within a week. Without meaning any disrespect of the Supreme Court, it is the duty of the Executive. They must have directed the States to open the shops. Are they accountable to the Court? They are accountable to Parliament.

The executive has failed in its duty to account itself to this House, to this Parliament.

There is a famous case in Mumbai—Olga Tellis case. All the lawyers know about it. I think, Shri Shivraj Patil knows about it. Right to life is guaranteed in article 22 of the Constitution. In those days, right to life was interpreted against preventive detention. In this Olga Tellis case, it was interpreted in this way by the Supreme Court. Right to life includes right to live and eat. This right is available to all the people of India. It is up to the Central Government to enforce this right, to guarantee this right, and to protect the people from the onslaught of any grabbing or anything like that.

Sir, the Government has not followed the Directive Principles of State Policy. Had they followed the Directive Principles of State Policy, these States would not have been affected. Before going through other provisions of the Constitution, the Government should read the Preamble. What does the Preamble to the Constitution says? It says that the Government must ensure economic justice. This is not only economic justice, but also social justice. The people must live in the society. This Government has not acted in accordance with the provisions of this Preamble and articles 39 and 47. Hereafter, at least let these six hungry States be fed. Let these six hungry States be looked after by the Government, especially because this disease called hunger should not turn into anger in any of these States.

As far as our state is concerned, we are governing it as per the expectations of the people. In Tamil Nadu, there was no starvation death during any of our regimes. Right from 1967, there was no starvation death. The people do not steal or pilfer the buffer stocks.

Though this matters does not pertain to the Southern part of India, it is pertaining to this belt, as Members of the Indian Parliament, we share the views of all the Members, like Shri Shivraj Patil, Shri Rupchand Pal and others who have expressed their views. We share their views. We want the people to be fed. We want the people not to suffer from hunger. They should not be after food. It is not Ethiopia. We have a lot of wheat and rice; we have enough foodstuffs. Despite having a large buffer stock, this Government has failed in its duty. However, the Government should hereafter be responsible and discharge their constitutional obligations properly.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Sambalpur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I will not deliver a very long speech, nor will you permit me to do that. I will discuss the whole thing in two parts.

As you know, the scope of today's discussion arose out of the news item that appeared yesterday and today in some of the print media and also the electronic media regarding the alleged starvation deaths in Kashipur block of Orissa. As I belong to that State, I think, it is my foremost duty to make the picture very clear.

Sir, my apprehension or my feeling is that a systematic attempt is being made to present a very bad picture of the State, to defame the State Government which has been, during the last 15 months after assuming the power in the State, trying its best to deal with the very crucial situation in the State that has been inherited by this Government from the earlier one.

Sir, yesterday and this morning I tried to contact some people as well as some State Government officials over phone. I confidently and stoutly deny that there has been any starvation deaths in that area. People have died. People have died the day before yesterday and also some 15-20 people had died a few days back. The State Government, in the mean time, has sent a high level official team to the area. Proper verifications have been made and the deaths that have occurred in the few villages in the Kashipur block are not owing to starvation.

Sir, this area in an *adivasi* dominated area. People have some peculiar food habits here. They take mushroom curry. Mushroom is not a major food. Sometimes this mushroom gets poisonous. These deaths are due to food poisoning. Again, it is the habit of the people of this area to take the mango kernel in the form of powder and paste. They keep it for a pretty long time and they get poisonous. So, these deaths are purely accidental and due to food poisoning and nothing else.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI HEMA GAMANG (Koraput): However they have not been getting anything to eat, that is why they are eating all these things. This is the main reasons...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: Sir, it is her constituency. A lot of measures, since Independence, in the meantime have been taken by the Government. Although there were around 4,000 people who were getting old-age pensions, now another 500 people are being provided with old-age pension. Programmes under the Employment Assurance Scheme are going on. Test Relief Works are also going on for the last so many months. So, it is not correct to say that people are dying there because they do not have any work to do or they do not have any food to eat.

Sir, I would like to go to the background of the situation a bit and, I think, it would not be of context here. This undivided Koraput district, of which Kashipur is a block headquarter, is a part of the KBK - the undivided Kalahandi, the undivided Bolangir and the undivided Koraput. When Shri Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister and the Congress Government was in power I do not wish to politicise the issue, I want to keep the whole thing above politics, it is a humanitarian problem - at the time a KBK scheme amounting to Rs. 5,000 crore was announced. As the hon. Member from Kalahandi was mentioning, this scheme did not take off. The Government of Orissa had again sent a revised long-term action programme for Rs. 5,500 crore. To me, the whole KBK scheme is nothing but a misnomer. It is nothing but totalling of the regular plans and programmes. There is nothing additional in it. It is only an additional of a few hundred crores of rupees.

Sir, after fifty-three years of Independence, we know who are the people who are responsible for this. It is the same people who are making much hue and cry about starvation deaths in Kasipur block. They were ruling the State; and they were ruling this country. Nothing concrete was done by them.

[Shri Prasanna Acharya]

Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition, yesterday in 'zero hour' mentioned the starvation deaths and had said a lot of things which generated this discussion. I want to take this House back to 1966. In the year 1966, there was an acute famine-like situation in Orissa, particularly in the area of Koraput and Kalahandi Districts. Madam Gandhi visited that area and took the opportunity to taste the leaves the *adivasi* people ate. After decades of that incident, nothing had changed there. Again in the year 1987, the late Rajiv Gandhi the then Prime Minister visited the area along with Shrimati Sonia Gandhi. They also tasted the food the *adivasi* people were eating. That incident was published in the national newspapers and the international media. A lot of things were said then. Nothing happened after that. I do not deny that there is misery in that area of Orissa. Orissa as such is a backward State. As there is misery in Chhattisgarh, in major parts of Madhya Pradesh, and in other parts of the country, there is misery in the State of Orissa. There is no denying the fact that there is poverty in the State. But this poverty has not crept in overnight. My point is, let us rise above the politics. Let us take ourselves above political considerations for a while and find out the reasons. Let the Central Government get itself involved in this problem. Let it take the State Governments into confidence. Let there be some real thinking on the whole problem.

We are discussing the Public Distribution System and the failure of the system. There are many PDS shops in Kalahandi-Koraput-Bolangir area. Yet, there are allegations that people do not get rice. Why? I was listening to the speech of our former Speaker, Shri Shivraj Patil, with rapt attention. I do agree with him. I do not say that nothing has been done in this country during the last fifty years. Yes, we had been successful in bringing the Green Revolution. There is no denying the fact that there is plenty of production of foodgrains in the country. But, during the last fifty years, what systems have we evolved to make the foodgrains reach the starving poor man? Are not the people who have been in power in this country for such a long time, responsible for this situation? During the last fifty years, what have we done to enhance the purchasing capacity of the people? During the last fifty years, what have the Governments done to improve the financial condition of the downtrodden people in the rural areas of the country?

There may be plenty of food available, there may be a number of PDS shops located in backward areas, but, unless we enhance the purchasing capacity of the people, rice and wheat in those PDS shops will not be able to reach the hungry mouths. Therefore, we have to look into the whole problem afresh. I do admit that there are a lot of defects in our Public Distribution System. Starvation deaths were reported to have taken place in Koraput District. It is around 350 kilometres away from Sambalpur, the area I hail from. There is *rasta roko* agitation held by the farmers there. There was a road blockade, there was a meeting, and there were threat of self-immolations by the farmers. It is all because it is a command area and there is plenty of production there but there is nobody to purchase the paddy. There is distress sale of paddy going on there. I had, in my letter, drawn the attention of the hon. Food Minister also to this. The Food Corporation of India sat tight on it, taking the plea of lack of storage space. Thousands and thousands of tonnes of paddy got piled up on the streets and in different marketing yards.

There is no FCI people to purchase it. This is the position there. Where does the defect lie? We have to find out the defect prevailing in the system and remove it.

So, it is my sincere appeal to the Government of India, it is my sincere appeal to the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs and it is my sincere appeal to the hon. Minister of Agriculture that they have to have a fresh look at the whole problem. If we all go on trading charges against each other and go on only just discussing this famine issue in every Session of Parliament, there will be no end to it.

Therefore, it is my sincere request to the Government of India to take all possible steps regarding better public distribution system, procurement of paddy, and implementation of different developmental labour-oriented and employment-oriented works. Let the Union Government take into confidence all the State Governments and immediately convene a conference of all the Chief Ministers to discuss afresh on this acute problem that is prevailing in our country.

If we show a very lethargic attitude towards all these problems, the progeny will not forgive us, the farmers in the rural areas will not forgive us and the common man who is starving for food will not pardon us.

Therefore, again, it is my sincere appeal to the Government of India to look into the problem afresh in a different outlook.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to thank Shri Bikram Kesari Dev for raising the issue of starvation prevailing in various parts of the country owing to the non-availability of foodgrains under rule 193. The problem of hunger and starvation both are very touchy subjects. The threat of starvation is looming large on the face of the entire country like 'yaksha prashana' while the godowns are full of foodgrains. The Hon'ble Minister will give the figures later on but I would like to apprise the House that a total of 616 lakhs, 71 thousand tonnes of foodgrains (rice or wheat) is lying stored in godowns.

Sir, today we are discussing the issue of starvation in this highest body of the country. This is a very important and pertinent subject. If the debate is held within the narrow confines of the urgency to protect any defend the Govt. then it will do justice neither with the society, nor with the nation and nor with this House. This debate is not being held with a view to defend or protect the Govt. I would like to congratulate Hon'ble Shri Shivraj Patil Ji. For giving a direction to this debate and setting an agenda for proceeding along cutting across party lines to discuss the national problem of storage. On one hand, the stores are full of foodgrains and on the other the people are dying of starvation. The names of some States had been mentioned and Shri Roopchand Pal ji had referred to eminent agriculture scientist Shri Swaminathan and reiterated the optimum use of water and soil in rural agriculture. He also thrown light on as to what form the problem of starvation will assume in the future. The food is the most basic of human needs.

21.54 hrs.

(SHRI P.H. PANDIAN *in the Chair*)

I would like to quote Mahatama Gandhi in this regard. Writing in 1926 in Young India he has said, "a person suffering from hunger or one who has no other desire except taking food, sees the image of good in one who provides him with bread. Patil Saheb has given a direction to the subject. Today what situation has been prevailing. I do not say or expect miracles from the Minister to solve this problem. He has his own limitations and the State Govt. are also engrossed in other problems. The entire PDS system moves on time wheels...*(Interruptions)* I have raised this issue to apprise the House about the real condition in the country owing to lack of food. The common man is not able to live the average life span. He dies at the age of 50-60 years if we assume his average life span to be 90 years what is the reason behind it? The reason is obvious that he does not get full calories in his food. He does not get the required quantity of pulses, wheat, rice, ghee or milk in his food I would like to know as to how many persons in our country get a meal of 2700 calories as prescribed? The question is still unresolved even after the passage of 54 years of independence. The normal person in the country has not been living upto the average life span and the country has not been tapping their resources as manpower needed to strengthen the country.

It is said that the god abides in the body of a poor but today the body of a poor person is growing weaker and weaker because a person cannot live without food. Political parties hurl the slogan of 'roti, kapra aur makan' (Bread, cloth and House) but I would say that a person can do without clothes and house but it is very hard to maintain oneself without bread. Hence, a person stays where he earns his bread which leads to political crisis. Hence, the food security is a very important aspect for the poors.

Today, a lot of bloodshed is being caused owing to the uncontrolled anger of misguided people. It further gives rise to a feeling of anger to read the news of carnage and bloodshed, however, where does the root of this problem lies? Whether it is not the hunger which is causing the revolt of the people against the system. I am afraid the lack of food security may force the people towards food riots in the coming days. I feel that this feeling of anger and rage against the exploitation system will assume radical dimensions.

Who is the last person to take their meal, in our families? May be some women in urban areas have food with other family members however even today the womenfolk in rural India where the live spirit of India abodes, are the last person to take their meal. They feed the entire family first then eat whatever has been left. If nothing is left then they just drink water and manage. Owing to this continuous malnutrition, not enough blood is formed in their body and they give birth to unhealthy, blind or handicapped children. A very dismal picture of India is before us.

Hence, I would insist that a revolution seeking to declare hunger as our most basic need and the need to look starvation problem on priority basis should be passed in this House.

[Shri Devendra Prasad yadav]

22.00 hrs.

The people have been dying of hunger even after 53 years of independence. The cash crop growing farmers are committing suicides. The Union Govt. has the responsibility to transport the foodgrains upto godowns. Distribution of these foodgrains upto village, taluka onward level is the responsibility of the State Govt. The people belonging to weaker section of society Adivasi etc. who are very hard working have to sleep empty stomach. They produce wealth for the country. These people construct buildings, plough in the fields and cut grass etc. What an irony it is that the food growers do not get to eat anything and it is a very unfortunate situation. They get the meals after long intervals. Hence, the responsibility for food security of the weaker section of the society belongs to us. There is a need to look into the need to ensure the availability of nutritious food for the persons belonging to the weaker section of the society.

A lot of discussion has been held on PDS today. Why is the feeling of insecurity prevailing among the poor? It is because they do not get even two square meals. 36 per cent of the people are living below the poverty line. A survey in all the States was conducted in 1996-97 under the Lakdwala expert group wherein it was mentioned that 35.97 per cent people are living below the poverty line. Today in what conditions these people are living? Poverty was not alleviated and the means of employment were not made available. I am not casting aspersions on any party or Govt., however, the purchasing power of the poor has not increased. How will they purchase foodgrains in such a condition. Hence, I had protested at that also. At that I had made submission before the Hon'ble Finance Minister and he constituted Finance Commission. It reduced the price by 32 paise. The economic cost was not so such as the increase in prices but the prices of foodgrains to be given through PDS were increased in 1999-2000. The prices of foodgrains in open market were reduced and that of available through PDS were increased, hence the off take. How much did it reduce? I would like to cite the figures in regard to decrease in the quantum of foodgrains in PDS. The total foodgrains available in Central Pool was 616 lakh and 71 thousand tonnes.

A total allocation of 2882 thousand wheat to those living below BPL was made between April 2001 to July 2001. Out of it, the total off take was of 887 thousand tonnes. This allocation starts from April. I am giving the figures of the period before the July 2001. You try to calculate the average off take which has taken place? That has reduced too much in 2000. The Govt. is also making efforts in this regard. It has tried to arrange for quick off take and formulated a new 'Antodya Scheme' Each of the poor family living below the poverty line was to be provided 25 kilogram of foodgrains at the rate of rupees two per kilogram of wheat and three rupees per kilogram of rice to give rise to the off take. A total off take of 3739 thousand tonnes of rice took place. I don't want to name the States due to time constraint. I have already given the figure of wheat as far as off take is concerned. Owing to it the off take became low. Why the problem of storage has arose in the country? Today how much surplus of foodgrains do we have in the country?

This way we have a total stock of 616 lakh and 71 thousand tonnes of foodgrains. (Wheat and rice) in the country. Right now, I have the figures upto 373 lakh and 41 thousand tonnes which is upto July, 2001. The report for the rest of the period is yet to be received. How much money is being spent over the storage of these surplus foodgrains? Earlier when the surplus stock was 295 lakh tonnes, the storage cost was Rs. 18 crore per day which might have become Rs. 20 crores by now. Hence, I would like to say that the announcement by the Hon'ble Minister as regards the zero budgeting made in March was not having substantial basis and I was not in agreement with it. This issue was raised by Sh. Sundeep Bandopadhya, Sh. Yarannaidu and myself and announcement for constituting an Expenditure Commission was made in the presence of the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, why this problem of storage has arisen. The Govt. decided to do away with the subsidy of Rs. 3 thousand crore being given under the PDS for BPL families to realise the aim of zero budgeting. Certainly, you reduced the subsidy but how much was the total expenditure. A total of Rs. 6 thousand crore was spent. But what was the ultimate benefit?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, lastly I would like to lay one more thing about damaged food. Before July, 1, the quantum of damaged food was 1 lakh, 81 thousand and 728 tonnes which was not allowed for TPDS. Then a lot of hue and cry was made over the rotting of foodgrains and the Supreme Court also expressed its concern over it. A PIL was filed in the Supreme Court. I don't know how the Executive interpreted the entire situation but we cannot speak against the Supreme Court. I have with me the report of the Standing Committee. We know as to what type of facts were placed before the Supreme Court. However it has been mentioned in the Report of the Committee.

> "For the purpose of protecting the interests of both the farmers and the consumers, which is the prime

duty of any welfare State, the Govt. ought to make immediate and all out efforts to ensure the disposal of old stock of foodgrains".

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Govt. have the full freedom to formulate a plan for it and create more space by disposing off the rotten foodgrains because new rabi crop will arrive in the month of March. Such an illusion was tried to be created that the Govt. has been dumping the 5-6 years old stock of foodgrains into the sea as it is not foodgrains but something useless like pebbles. If the Govt. wish to formulate any plan then it could be suggested that the rotten foodgrains which is not worth consumption either for human or the animals it then should be dumped into the deep sea so that the new harvest could be stored. The Committee can not pass orders but can only give recommendations. It is upto the Govt. to implement it. We can know about our limitations but this suggestion was made when no there alternative was left.

I don't know as to how this thing was presented before the masses and a lot of propaganda was made. However it is not the new foodgrains which has been dumped but the stock in six to seven years old. Now the question arises as to who is responsible for it. The incharge of FCI godown are responsible for it and it has occurred due to the mismanagement on their part as FIFO norms are not complied by them. FIFO means first in and first out in the foodgrains disposal should take place in order of its arrival.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you are ringing the bell and I don't want to bother you. Moreover, I would like to submit that the damaged foodgrains as a result of management should be immediately disposed off by making efforts on war footings. We have not been able to increase our storage capacity. We want that the storage space should be created and the damaged foodgrains not fit for human consumption should be immediately disposed off so that the new foodgrains could be procured and stored.

Today there is a need to build the godowns on scientific basis so that the storage losses due to rodents etc. could be minimised. A proposal for bulk storage had come for it.

The Hon'ble Minister will tell as to what efforts have been made in this direction. Discussions with many countries were held in this regard. The PDS infrastructure in the poor States under the foodgrains movement is very weak. The infrastructure network in some States like Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh etc. is not as strong as it should be owing to which the foodgrains does not reach up to needy or BPL persons. This is also one of the reasons for starvation. Hence, we want that the Govt. should resolve to increase the purchasing capacity of the people besides guaranteeing them for food security. Constitutional provision in this regard also exists. Escaping from responsibility will not prove helpful.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we should emphasise on floriculture. The Govt. should pay attention to the proper use of water and soil so that two three crops in a year could be grown. With these words, I thank you.

SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH (Arrah): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank Shri Bikram Keshari Deo who has raised an issue in the House which is timely and of great concern. The Government should consider it. There is a saying in our rural areas "Dhobia, jai vich mat Pyasa". *i.e.* water-water everywhere but not a drop to drink. It is ironical that though there is large stock of foodgrains in the godowns but people are dying of starvation. Shri Bikram Keshari Deo trying to protect his Government has said that the State Governments are not cooperating. These two things cannot go together. This is an issue which should be discussed cutting across the party line. We should discuss it on humanitarian grounds. Only then the discussion would prove fruitful and the problem solved. It has been stated here that the poor people whose financial condition is very bad and who are unable to purchase commodities even from PDS shops are dying of starvation.

Hunger and starvation compel them to commit various crimes "Budhukshatm kim no Karoti Papm". Due to hunger and starvation they are becoming delinquents, they are selling their wards and are committing suicide also and sometimes in a fury they kill others also. Therefore, it is a ponderable issue.

Sir, I would like to say that the Public Distribution System should be made liberal. There is a provision in every state to provide foodgrains to red card holders. However, they are not getting food and most of them are drying due to starvation. Shri Devendra ji had been the Food Minister also and he has made some valuable suggestions. Several hon'ble members have said that foodgrains are rotting in godowns. We have made various achievements in agriculture sector. Our farmers and labourers have produced huge quantity of foodgrains which are stored in godowns. However, these foodgrains are rotting due to the failure of the Government. Just now Shri Devendra ji said that earlier stock of foodgrains should be cleared first. However, the staff deployed in these godowns take bribe and supply the fresh stock of foodgrains first and the earlier stock of foodgrains continue

[Shri Ram Prasad Singh]

to rott. That is why these remaining foodgrains are not fit even for animal consumption. Therefore, I would like to say that a permanent system be evolved and a survey conducted in this regard.

Sir, Shri Shivraj Patil ji said that the responsibility lies with the Central Government but the State Governments also cannot shrik their responsibility. Therefore, my suggestion is that a survey should be conducted and such areas be identified as has been done in Gujarat and Orissa where large scale destruction takes place due to drought and floods claiming lives of many people. It is the responsibility of the Central Government to conduct a survey on the economic situation of the people of these areas. The Government should give a guarantee in this regard and it is their responsibility to identify such areas where people are drying due to starvation. I would like to make a suggestion that the Government should identify such areas and formulate a long term planning in this regard so that such as situation does not arise in future.

The poor do not get employment when there are floods and drought. They run from pillar to post due to shortage of money and die of starvation. Therefore, a special programme should be formulated and a survey conducted to provide employment to such people. The Government should set up small and big industries in such areas so that the poor could earn livelihood for their families. Foodgrains should be distributed under "Anpurna Scheme" When godowns are over-flowing and foodgrains are rotting, these can be provided to some people free of cost under "Anpurna Scheme" at least on humanitarian grounds.

Sir, increase in production of foodgrains is not in proportion to increase in population. If the Central Government fail to check population growth or make some effective laws in this regard, a day will come when it would become difficult for the vehicles to ply on roads, people will not get houses to live, land for cultivation will be reduced and people will die of starvation.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government should at least control population growth rate to save people who are dying due to starvation. Our population is the highest. With these words I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH (Satna): Mr. Chairman, Sir, a famine had struck West Bengal before independence. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the senior leaders of the Congress Party. He went to Bengal and asked people as to why they were dying of starvation, why they did not loot the Government godowns. This was the speech of Jawaharlal Nehru. Shri Kedarnath Aggarwal wrote a poem on this famine which we used to recite in our student days:

"Bap beta bechta hai bhookh sey behal hoker,
dharam, dheeraj, pran khoker,
Rashtra sara dekhta hai, Bap beta bechta hai".

It is unfortunate that in front of Bapu's portrait, we are discussing the problem of starvation even after 53 years of our independence. The situation today is the same as was depicted by Shri Kedarnath in his poem. The plight of people of Orissa has been discussed here. I am raising the issue of Madhya Pradesh people here. Today our administrative system is in a bad shape. The Central Government blame the States and the State Chief Ministers are sitting on a dharana against the Centre. Recently, the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh was on hunger strike. How the country will be run in such a situation.

22.23 hrs.

(SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*)

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am happy that Shri Shivraj Patil from the Congress Party who has been the Speaker of this House and is one of the top leaders of the Congress Party gave a constructive turn to the discussion. He delivered a very substantial speech.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, in 1967 when I was an MLA in Madhya Pradesh, I heard Shri Vinoba Bhavey's speech. He mentioned about the priorities—bhukhia, dukhia and then sukhia. These priorities should be written on the wall of the House. However, today we are giving priority to cellular phones, computers, and other modern amenities. The poor have no place in the priorities. Even after 53 years of independence, people are dying due to starvation despite a stock of 616 lakh tonnes of rice and wheat in the godowns. Our requirement is of 243 lakh tonnes of foodgrains whereas the stock is of 616 lakh tonnes of foodgrains. The Union Government have mentioned of providing foodgrains to States under various schemes with an open heart.

10Kgs. of foodgrains Per month were provided to the people below poverty line (BPL). Last year the quota was increased to 20 Kg and now it will be 25 Kg. of foodgrains per family but inspite of that the State Governments are not able to lift the entire foodgrains. They make a demand of releasing 160 lakh tonnes from the Centre but at the time of lifting only 90 tonnes are

taken. After all where is the problem? Similarly under the Antayodaya Scheme the Central Government made an announcement to provide 25 kg. of foodgrains per family per month to 5 crore poor people by supplying wheat @ Rs. 2 per kg. and rice @ Rs. 3 per kg. Today I came to know that this scheme is being implemented in several States. However there are some States including Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh where this scheme has not been launched. Why Antayodaya Scheme is not being implemented, what is the problem in the way of implementing it? I have high regards for our hon'ble Minister of food. He used be the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh while I was a Minister in Madhya Pradesh Government. He is also a man of literature and very sympathetic towards the poor people and they are large hearted persons also.

May I know why foodgrains under the Antayodaya Scheme are not reaching Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh? Has any information have been received from there? 10 Kg. of foodgrains per month is given to old people above 65 years of age all over the country under the Annapurna Scheme, however this scheme is also not being implemented in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and some other States. Last year almost all the district of Madhya Pradesh had been affected by drought and in fact thousands of people died of hunger. The Government give publicity of its achievement by way of giving advertisements in newspapers but I would like to give a specific example where a tribal died this years of hunger at Chiraura Village in Satna district. I have written about this to Shrimati Maneka Gandhi. In Pratap pur the position of old age pension is such that one old lady did not receive pension for six months. She was a tribal woman and now she is dead. After her death the Sarpanch of that village got her thumb impression and drew her pension. An FIR in this regard has also been lodged in the Police Station. My submission is that in Satna and Panna less than 3 per cent area is irrigated, while it is 36 per cent in the rest of the country. In Madhya Pradesh it is only 18 per cent...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: In Madhya Pradesh starvation situation is very severe. Even today the same situation prevails but Antyodaya Scheme has not yet been introduced there...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now please conclude.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: I would like to move a suggestion. The Central Government are blaming the State Governments and the State Governments are blaming the Central Governments. It will not solve the problem. There is the provision of financial emergency in the Constitution of India. Financial emergency should be imposed in those States where many persons are dying of hunger. Salaries of Legislators and Government employees should be cut and the money so saved on this account should be spent on schemes meant for the poor. There are States where administrative expenditure is more than 75 per cent. Madhya Pradesh is one such State where administrative expenditure is 92.98 per cent that means only 7 percent is left for development. Attention is not being paid to welfare of poor people in those States which indulge in extravagant expenditure. It should be duly provided in the Constitution that the States the administrative expenditure of which exceeds 75 per cent will be brought within the purview of financial emergency.

Shanta Kumarji though you are making efforts but in spite of that in the name of autonomy States are conducting themselves in a willfull manner. There is a need to put a check on such a tendency...*(Interruptions)*. The Central Government say that they will not interfere in the State matters. You are in the Centre. After all what is happening at the Centre? Can you not call for an explanation from the State Governments?...*(Interruptions)* Can you not apply constitutional provision to them in this regard? Necessary provision should be made in the Constitution to save people from the onslaught of hunger and suitable schemes should be implemented to improve centre state relationship. The States whose financial condition is not good must be brought under financial emergency...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Lakhs of tonns of foodgrains are rotting in the centre. Please give ten to twenty lakh tonne of foodgrains to them. Please take into consideration the point of supplying foodgrains to the poor people of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Orissa. This is what I would like to suggest.

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA (Alipurduars): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on such an important issue.

We have sufficient stocks of foodgrains and our godowns are full of grains however the irony is that today the poor people in the country are dying of hunger. We are capable and the people of our country especially the farmers brought Green Revolution in the country. We are proud of them. The people of our country cooperated

[Shri Joachim Baxla]

with the Government and as a result of this our godowns are full of grains, but inspite of this our position is quite shameful. I am calling it shameful because in spite of having sufficient stocks of foodgrains our countrymen are dying of hunger. It is not the problem of any one State alone rather the entire country is facing this problem. It is a national problem so there is a need to think about it cutting across party lines. Today starvation problem is being discussed, however, it is not the occasion to make arguments and counter arguments rather it is time to make suggestions and need to do self retrospection. If the ruling party make charges against the opposition then it is not going to solve the problem. So today our present objective is...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please make suggestions.

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: I am speaking in brief. It is the responsibility of the ruling party which should take a lead in this regard so that the country may face this shameful situation where godowns are full of foodgrains but people are dying of hunger. There is a need to improve coordination among all the States. It is necessary for us to think seriously about the measures to remove the shortcomings prevailing in our present public distribution system. I would like to suggest that the Government should seek advice from all the State Governments in this regard. We can find out a solution to the problem if we get the cooperation of the Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads. For example we are solving this problem in West Bengal with the cooperation of Panchayats. Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads so that we may be prepared to face such problems in future in a transparent way. So I would like to submit to the ruling party especially the Minister of Food that we have skill, capability to make our country self sufficient in food. We should not adopt a negative approach in this regard.

[English]

We must have positive Approach; we must have positive attitude so that we can overcome this problem some day.

[Translation]

so let us find out a solution to the problem we have to proceed further after making this strong resolve.

With this, I conclude my short speech.

SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA (Bhatinda): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to tell the Hon'ble Food Minister that it is a very serious matter and the Government should take note of it. It is good that this issue is being discussed today in the House. 32 crore people in India belong to BPL category and as per a survey recently conducted, 5 per cent people do not get meals at all. Therefore, the Government should ponder over it. I feel, if the Government are serious about it, we should do away the lacunae, if any, in PDS...*(Interruptions)*. Issue of PDS is quite serious one. If we look at lover level; corruption is rampant. If we streamline PDS, supply of ration to all can be ensured. The hon'ble Minister is not present now. A person from Punjab was Chairman of Super Bazar, Delhi who embezzled crores of rupees and misappropriated crores of rupees in the name of Longwal Tower.

Though CBI investigated the matter, yet none has been arrested so far. The hon'ble Minister has arrived, I would like to tell him that the Chairman of Super Bazar*

He embezzled crores of rupees. CBI conducted an inquiry but nothing could be done against that person so far.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That name will not go on record.

SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: If we tone up PDS, then only the people will get ration. I hope the hon'ble Minister will surely pay attention towards it and will strictly enforce PDS so that the people get ration.

[English]

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity.

This is a very vital issue raised by the Leader of Opposition any my party leader Shrimati Sonia Gandhi yesterday. Again, it is at her instance that it has come up for this discussion under rule 193. I have to make only two-three points; I would not take much time.

The co-ordination between the States and the Centre is more important. When there is a buffer stock, it has to reach the people who are suffering. It is a shameful matter for the country to have starvation deaths. We have to recollect what happened in 1965-66, when Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri was the Prime Minister. The situation in the country was worse because of droughts. At that time, when we were in a bad position, the United States of America provided a little bit of assistance by giving foodgrains but he declared, 'We have to live with one meal for one day for one week; and we have to stop

*Not recorded.

using power after nine o'clock. We will not ask anybody for food. We will become self-sufficient; we have to maintain our dignity and decorum. We should not beg'. That was the decision that Government took to maintain the dignity and decorum of India in the outside world.

Today, that is not the position. We have attained self-sufficiency in foodgrains. This shows the incapacity of the Government in distribution of foodgrains and co-ordinating with the States, irrespective of the parties in Government. This is what is happening. As a result of starvation deaths, India's dignity and decorum will go down in the eyes of the international community. That is why I would like to make two suggestions.

Even today, the Government can expedite action wherever foodgrains are badly needed. They should take care of the drought affected areas. They should immediately call the Chief Ministers of all States and find out the position. The Central Government should come forward and call the Chief Ministers to find a solution immediately.

As far as Karnataka is concerned, I would like to thank the hon. Minister Shri Shanta Kumar. He has given a support price 3.79 lakh tonnes of maize. Otherwise, we could not get even the cost of production from the traders. The traders are asking for Rs. 250 per quintal. By giving a support price of Rs. 445, the sale price is now Rs. 405. So, he has helped the farmer. There are another 20,000 tonnes in stock. I would request the hon. Minister to clear that also because it is under the control of the FCI. That would solve all the problems of Karnataka. Also, the hon. Minister of Rural Development has given an assurance when the Chief Ministers met the Prime Minister that one lakh tonnes would be released.

It has not yet been released, and I would request you to release that. On this drought issue, we have also represented to the Prime Minister requesting him to give an assistance of Rs. 903 crore. Out of the available funds, the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Shri S.M. Krishna, is doing his best. This is a very severe drought. Earlier, we have never seen such a drought in Karnataka, and we are facing problems now. Therefore, the request made by the hon. Chief Minister should be considered at the earliest and the funds should be released immediately.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank the leader of the opposition Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and Shri Vikram Dev Saheb. What Shri Shivraj Patil has said, I would like to go into practical aspects of it. Right since independence we have been discussing either figures or politics just to save our face and practical aspect is never allowed to be taken up for discussion. People die of hunger, in Orissa and five persons of a family belonging to minority community in Bihar have died of hunger. When someone dies, we make an issue out of it, but we do not bother about the people starving due to the shortage of foodgrains. On several occasions, many labourers die of hunger on platform itself, while in search of job. Our population is 100 crore. Out of this, lakhs of people do not get even two square meals, they have to sleep hungry. Even babies are devoid of milk. Therefore, discussion in this country is not practical.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please give suggestions.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: After independence political system of this country has become unsuitable for socially economically and politically weak sections of society. It resulted in further poverty which lead to death of several persons. Therefore, if one looks at practical aspect, one would find that people of that areas where inhabitants protected their language and culture, poverty is less. When Britishers first came to India they first attacked India's language and culture. Right from Mughal period till today, the area where people protected their language and culture poverty is less and areas where people could not protect their language and culture poverty is more such as Bihar, Orissa, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

But certain States such as Punjab, Kerala and West Bengal not only protected but enriched their language. Though, the people in these States may be poor, labourer, yet they are educated thus starvation deaths are rare in these States. What I mean is that if one goes to Bihar, one finds that the labours in Bihar is neither able to speak in Hindi nor in English. If we want to discuss in our mother tunuge we are prevented on the pretext that we are illiterate and backward.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is not a debate on language, we are discussing availability of foodgrains in various States under Rule 193.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: Our godowns are bulging out with foodgrains. Members from treasury benches and from opposition as well have spoken at length on this issue. But, unless we are able to root out inferiority complex from the minds of the people we can't eradicate poverty. We can not unite majority population. Politicians lure such people and we cannot organise them. My submission is that if mother tongue is given priority then we can surely educate the people and

[Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav]

will do be able to banish poverty and will be able to remove inferiority complex from their minds.

Sir, I would like to say one more thing. It is said that India is primarily an agricultural country, but in fact, agriculturally we are poor. What a peculiar situation a country it is, where 70 percent people are dependent upon agriculture and no budgetary allocation is made for agriculture whereas only half-percent people travel by air and an allocation of billions of rupees is made for this purpose. Every three minute one vehicle is purchased in Delhi. In 1947 there were 12 thousand vehicles in Delhi whereas today there are 49 lakh vehicles, out of which 29 lakh vehicles are in Delhi only.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude your speech now.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: Sir, I would like to say that a country where politicians have no intention of developing agriculture, we are discussing condition of poor labourers. It is a country where there is no policy to strengthen agriculture, where 'Paan' and 'Biri' seller fixes price of his items, where a farmer who produces agriculture items, be it five Kgs or fifty quintals, cannot fix the price of his produce. He has no right to fix price of his products. Therefore, I do not term this agriculture policy as appropriate. Hence, there can be no new agriculture resolution in this country.

Sir, they have implemented land ceiling law. On the one hand, the Government have brought this law and on the other, they have also allowed five persons to keep wealth amounting to billions of rupees. Seventy percent of the labourers, who are dependent on agriculture, have no right. As long as the Government and the Parliament do not restrict the people from accumulating wealth, the poverty is not going to be alleviated. Wealth needs to be decentralised. Cooperative system needs to be introduced in the villages.

Small scale and large industries should be set up in the villages through the cooperative system. Agriculture should be divided in three categories to bring about a new revolution. I believe that there are 20-25 persons in our country, who have immense wealth. The Government should take out this money power from them and distribute it in the villages through cooperative system. Unless the cooperative system is introduced. We can not bring revolution in the country...*(Interruptions)*

You may speak as much as you can, politicise as much as you can...*(Interruptions)* save your face outside the House, everything is futile. Therefore, I believe that the country should be saved, the poor people of the country should be saved...*(Interruptions)* with these words I conclude.

SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY (Andaman and Nicobar Islands): Sir a central team under the leadership of Hon. Minister should be sent to Orissa to verify the claim of the Government that the 19 deaths reported were not starvation deaths. If the claim proves wrong, then guilty officials should be punished.

This Government has taken a number of measures to eliminate hunger and starvation Annapurna Scheme was brought for the aged persons. Under the Antyodaya scheme, one crore families would be given 25 kg. each of wheat at Rs. 2 per Kg. and rice at Rs. 3 per Kg every month. On this account, the Government will have to pay subsidy of Rs. 2300 crore. But it is unfortunate that though the scheme was announced on 25.12.2000, 15 State Governments — Asssam, Delhi, Nagaland, West Bengal, Tripura, Bihar, Goa, Manipur, Meghalya, Orissa, Sikkim, Tamilnadu, Uttaranchal and Arunachal have not responded with regard to the identification of the poors. Under the scheme, each of the identified family is supposed to get the benefit of about Rs. 200. Under Food for work programme, 10 States affected by drought and flood, were allotted 23 lakh tonnes grain free of cost, out of which only 13 lakh tonnes were lifted. The free foodgrains proposed to be distributed by the Government under food for work programme, will cost Rs. 2300 crores.

On 15th of August, Hon. Prime Minister announced that 50 lakh tonnes of foodgrains will be distributed free of cost every year. Only 15 percent population is covered under the Antyodaya scheme, the limits should be increased to 30 percent. Under Annapurna Scheme 10 kg foodgrains are provided, it should be increased to 20 kg. Instead of providing 3 kg rice under Mid-day, meal scheme, wholesome food should be provided. The poor and labourers women should be brought under Annapurna Scheme. The BPL criteria adopted during Ninth Plan was wrong, it should be modified during the tenth plan. Keeping in view the damage to grains in the FCI godowns, on FCI committee of local MPs was proposed to be constituted for each state. Only 11 items are covered in this popular scheme, all items of daily use should be included in it.

SHRIMATI HEMA GAMANG (Koraput): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the death of 19 persons is not a small issue. Therefore, through you, I request the hon. Minister to send a committee there to inquire into the circumstances in which they died. Some people are saying that the deaths did not occur due to starvation. But because the

victims were eating Mango stone (guthali) and leaves. Therefore, I request hon. Shanta Kumar to go there and provide assistance of Rs. one lakh to each of the families of the victims.

[English]

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram): Hon. Chairman Sir, I will speak very pointedly. Firstly, will the Government come forward to set up a community food grains storage facility in my constituency from the MPLAD scheme within a stipulated period of time?

The NDA Government has given a note about its achievement for the last one year. However, in this regard, I have certain clarifications to ask. I hope the hon. Minister will consider them.

In regard to the National Storage Policy, is the Government providing all necessary facilities for the bulk handling of foodgrains?

To discourage the import of food grains into the country, they may fix 60 per cent tariff on wheat and 80 per cent tariff on rice.

Similarly, what are the steps taken to revamp the targeted public distribution system through six-point strategy including the provision for social auditing system through involvement of Panchayati Raj institutions and setting up of a Vigilance Committee?

So, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would urge upon the Government, especially, the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution to kindly give humanitarian consideration on the issue of starvation deaths and take all possible steps to help them.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to say that a survey should be conducted to identify the people living below the poverty line, the aged, the handicapped, those suffering from any particular disease, the weak and the people who have no one to care for them, should be provided rice, pulses and wheat etc. at Rs. 2 or 3 per kg. Secondly the State Governments which have not submitted report on deaths should be asked to submit the same and the starving persons should be provided with pulses, rice, fruits and food having full vitamins. That is all I had to submit.

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Members sat in the House upto 11 o'clock. To participate in this very important discussion and they have made some very useful suggestions by discussing the matter in a very constructive manner. I am grateful to Shri Bikram Kesari Deoji who initiated this discussion and expressed his views on this subject and the situation prevailing in the country. I am especially thankful to hon. Shivraj Patilji for raising the discussion to a very dignified and constructive level. During his speech. He said all that was required, cutting across party line. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I felt that there was no need to discuss the matter any further after his speech. I felt like saying that we and they will join hands and work out a solution to this problem.

23.00 hrs.

I am grateful to him. Really this is a very grave problem. I feel that the oath taken on the bank of Ravi is still unfulfilled. Even, the 9 great patriots of the ilk of Swami Vivakananda who opted to renounce the worldly pleasures to attain moksha were forced to give up there pursue of attainment of Moksha after seeing the sufferings and starvation of the millions of their countryman. Swami Vivekananda, standing on the rock at Kanyakumari is said to have remarked that he does not need any moksha until each of his countryman got enough meal to feed himself. He has raised a very important issue and a discussion has been taking place on it. When he was referring to hunger and expressing the pain and anguish of poverty from the core of his heart. I recollected the following lines by poet Neeraj:

Anna ki Havas man ko gunahagar bana deti hai,
Bag ke Bag ko beemar bana deti hai.
Khookhe paeton to desbhakti sikhane vale
Bhukh insaan ko Gaddar bana deti hai.

What is that a hungry person cannot do? Today a lot of deliberations were held on this subject. I think that the need of the hour is to identify the causes of this thing and cooperate with the Government in their efforts to ensure best utilisation of foodgrains. Please tell us as to where we are lacking in our efforts. Then we will try to resolve the problem by considering suggestions of the hon. members with an open frame of mind. I would like to clearly express my views on some points. It has been said that the godowns were filled beyond their capacity due to exclusion of APL persons from the PSS. I want to say that it was not we who have done so. In the final

[Shri Shanta Kumar]

draft of the Ninth Five Year Plan it was said that less attention is being paid for the poor. Hence PDS, instead of being univeralised should be made more targeted and the names of rich people should be gradually deleted from it. Subsequently a decision to this effect was taken in the Chief Minister's Conference held on 4-5 July, 1996. Again this decision was confirmed in the meeting of the Food Ministers and the National Development Council. Universal PDS had assumed the form of Targetted Public Distribution System before the assumption of power by our government. Today also we agree to and support this change in principle. The purpose of this change was to shift our focus towards the more needy the interest of whom had taken a beating owing to the universal nature of the system. Hence this changed approach was adopted to pay maximum attention towards the 36 crore people living below the poverty line. I think that the intention behind it was very right and there is a need to work on it accordingly. The Government godowns are full with foodgrains and it is the good fortune of the country that we don't have to look to others to feed us. I would like to tell hon. Shivraj Patilji that we know as to how this was achieved. The entire country including his party contributed to bring country to this destination and so many schemes like grow more food were formulated and launched. The farmers of the country put in a lot of effort and hardwork and the credit for it goes to the then governments and the farmers of the country. We never said that nothing was done in past fifty years. The important achievement made by them and their Governments cannot be ignored. It is the good fortune of the country that the godowns are full of foodgrains and we are trying to make best use of it. He had also raised one more point whether or not we have talked to the Chief Minister and others? The feelings expressed by him are very much the feelings of the Government and it is with this perception that we have been working for the past ten years? One more question raised by the hon. Members was whether or not we held talks on Bill issue?

I would like to apprise the House that some days ago Chief Minister's Conference was held on other subjects. The Hon. Prime Minister was also present in it. During the conference I raised this issue before that being the Food Minister I am unable to understand as to how the 36 crore BPL persons can manage to survive on only 20 kilogram foodgrains while as per the report of a scientific survey, a minimum of 73 kilograms of foodgrains are requested for a family to sustain itself. When we have been providing foodgrains at subsidised rates *i.e.* wheat at Rs. 4.15 per kilogram and rice it Rs. 5.65 per kilogram. These commodities are sold as high prices in the open market. Then why the off take, instead of being 100 per cent is only 55 per cent. I put forth several such questions during the conference. Still the Government is trying to provide assistance to all by various schemes.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are many such schemes and I don't want to dwell on it in detail. The Government has been allocating 160 lakh tonnes of foodgrains for BPL and 24 lakh tonnes of mid day meal scheme. An allocation of 303 lakh tonnes was made the previous year and out of it only 130 lakh tonnes of foodgrains were lifted. I totally agree with this query by the hon. Member as to why the remaining 173 lakh tonnes of foodgrains which contained subsidized and highly subsidised stocks of foodgrains and was allocated to the State Governments to distribute among the poor and the needy, were not lifted? All of us should try to make efforts in this regard and also to identify the bolt areas. Shortcomings once identified should be brought to the Notice of the Government and we are ready to remove those but PDS needs joint and collective efforts.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the job of the Central Government is to procure foodgrains and that we are doing. It is also our job to look at the storage aspect besides making allocations to the State Governments and we are doing that. There are a total of 4 lakh 62 thousand ration shops in rural areas of the country and it is the responsibility of the State Governments to make available foodgrains and other material to them. This needs a lot of resolution and if the union and State Governments are resolute enough than foodgrains can be made available in each of the villages and starvation can be checked. We were making all out efforts in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, foodgrains to the tune of 23 lakh tonnes were given free of cost to ten drought affected states under the Food for work programme however only 13 lakh tonnes of foodgrain out of it have been lifted so far. We want that these foodgrains are immediately lifted. When foodgrains were allocated free of cost then problem of starvation should not have arisen. Foodgrains were given free of cost so that people could work and foodgrains may be given in lieu of it. Besides, the union Government have decided to allocate 20 kilograms of extra foodgrains in the drought affected areas. We have given 32 lakh tonnes of foodgrains into those areas wherein such accuncements have been made without making any difference between APL and BPL.

Orissa had demanded for 823 tonne grains under Emergency Feeding Programme and the Central Government allocated it. Had this entire stock of grains been distributed properly through 4 lakh 62 thousand ration shops the hunger problem would not have become so grave in the villages.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have three reports with me, though I would not like to elaborate what the report contain. Out of these three, first one was released by Tata Consultancy quite earlier. It stated that 30 per cent stock is diverted. Second report is released by Planning Commission which relates to Mid term Appraisal of PDS. Third one is CAG's report on PDR. Public Distribution System is mainly covered in these reports. In these reports, nowhere it is mentioned that the Central Government do not procure foodgrains, nor it is mentioned that they are not storing these foodgrains properly nor that the Central Government are not allocating grains to the states. Under present system, the Government are entrusted three jobs, and nowhere any finger has been raised regarding any lapse on the part of Central Government. Though a mention has been made regarding transit losses of foodgrains. Rest, whatever lapses have been pointed out in these reports that come under the responsibility of State Governments. By saying so, I do not want to escape from my responsibilities nor I want to criticize the State Governments. I do fully agree with you that criticism is not the solution. All of us should sit together and find out solution to this problem. I want to tell that the role of Central Government has not been criticized in any of the reports. What a great fun it is that there are 18.2 crore house-holds in India, whereas the number of ration cards is 19 crore 83 lakhs. It means out of this, 1 crore and 83 lakh ration cards are either bogus or illegal. On the contrary, CAG has stated that a large number of families still do not have ration cards. We have been asking the State Governments to identify bogus ration card holders, cancel their cards and also punish them. Hold the verifying authorities responsible for such cards. I have urged that issuance of ration cards be brought under Section-3 of Essential Commodities Act. What a great irony it is that on the one hand CAG says that large number of poor families are still deprived of ration cards whereas the number of ration cards is more than the number of households in India. Thus either 1 crore 83 lakh ration cards are bogus or illegal. Who helped in making these cards? I would say the—State Governments. So the State Governments should carry out a checking and cancel bogus ration cards. Time and again we are telling that these bogus and illegal ration cards should be cancelled. He said that the Central Government do not carry out checkings. In fact, how can the Central Government check 4 lakh 62 thousand ration shops. We have a federal system in our country and the State Governments are duly elected and we have faith on them so this work should be entrusted to them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, whenever, the Government have received any complaint we have tried to investigate the matter. Sir, I received an anonymous letter from Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh. The sender wrote to me in a sarcastic manner stating that you talk so much, you claim that you are helping the poor a lot through PDS, you may come and see the horrible condition of six ration shops in my vicinity. The letter was written in a sentimental mood. I sent the area officer there and got the matter investigated.

Investigation report revealed that the ration shops were not at all there. Some ration shops existed which were managed by relatives or servants of Village Pradhan and all bogus entries were made in the register and ration was not distributed. When people belonging to BPL category were enquired about these six shops they said that they get only sugar from these shops on festivals such as Holi or Dipawali and sometimes they get two or three kilo wheat and rice also. I went to Lucknow, there I discussed the matter with the State Government. I am glad that U.P. Government took action within a week. Several officials were suspended and shops were cancelled. Whenever any irregularity has come to our notice, we have taken action on that. You may recall, a horrowing report appeared in India Today wherein 2000 children were reported to have died because of malnutrition in Maharashtra. I was very sad to have read it. I was in Mumbai at that time. I felt, I should do something. I rang up to my Ministry and deputed one area officer for every State as an incharge. I asked Area Officer of Maharashtra to rush up to district Nandurbar the same day and submit a report to me after thorough investigation. He reported of large scale diversion of ration. Ration cards were kept with the depot holder for the last two years. No register was maintained and five kilo ration was being given to card holders in place of an entitlement of 20 kilo. At several places ration was not distributed for the last five months and there were villages where no ration was lifted after December, 2000. The report indicated that the ration was lifted but did not reach the shop. It was diverted on the way itself. I wrote a letter to hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra. I sent a copy of report to him and told him that if 2000 children have died of malnutrition then both of us will have to take responsibility for it. There are 100 ration shops in that area. Subsidised ration was allocated to these shops but it did not reach the shops. The Government will have to remove these lapses. But, I performed my duty, sent an Area Officer, got the matter investigated and wrote a letter to hon'ble Chief Minister, which was even acknowledged. But, further course of action, I do not know.

Matter related to reduction in off-take is also mentioned—why our godowns are bulging out with stocks—because food security is a very important aspect

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and we have to maintain the stock. When with a view to provide remunerative price to the farmers, the Government fix minimum support price, which is deemed to be fair, the farmers want to sell their maximum grains to the Government. That's why our godowns are full of grains. We have made it Targetted Public Distribution System and people belonging to APL have been excluded from it on economic grounds though its cost has been reduced by 30 per cent. This matter was finalised after detailed discussion amongst Members, Chief Ministers and NDA partners. As far reduction in off-take is concerned. I would like to tell you that BPL's off-take has not reduced. BPL's off-taking during 1997-98 was 43 lakh tonnes, during 1998-99 it was 59 lakh tonnes, during 1999-2000 it increased to 70 lakh tonnes and during 2000-2001 it surged to 95 lakh tonne. So, off-take for BPL has increased and not decreased. We may calculate. When 10 kilo ration per card was allotted the off take was 43 lakh tonnes and when allotment was doubled to 20 kilo, off-take increased to 95 lakh tonne, which is even more than double. So, I want to say that off-take for BPL has not decreased but increased.

As on today, 23,42,000 tonne grains have been given free of cost to 10 drought affected states under Food for Work Programme.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, so far 13 lakh 20 thousand foodgrains have been lifted for starting Food for Work Programme. Rest quantity is being lifted gradually. But the states to whom we have allocated 23 lakh tonnes grains free of cost are yet to start work. If any one is hungry in those states and tears roll down the checks of poor people living in hutments, the Government of India are not to be blamed. 23 lakh tonne foodgrains have been allocated free to certain states though the Central Government is facing financial constraints, yet if those states do not distribute foodgrains to the poor people the Central Government cannot be blamed.

Mr Chairman, Sir, the issue of Karnataka is being debated in the House. 1 lakh tonne of foodgrains has been allocated for Karnataka. On demand, we are providing foodgrains. Under the 'Food for Work Programme' such a huge quantity of foodgrains has not been provided free of cost earlier from the viewpoint of taking action at the earliest. Now implementation of the programme is to be done by the states. We are providing foodgrains to states as per their demand and sometimes more than the demand too.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we received a demand of 2 lakh tonne of foodgrains from Andhra Pradesh and we have given 3 lakh tonne of foodgrains. It is being said that there is enough stock of foodgrains in the country. I admit this and would like to say that allocation of foodgrains is also not a problem from our side, but there are shortcomings in distribution of foodgrains. It is a bitter truth. We are ready to provide foodgrains to states as per their demand.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, during the discussion in the Group of Ministers the demand of foodgrains for drought affected areas was revised and a decision was taken to provide foodgrains to them as per their requirements. But out of this 23 lakh tonnes foodgrains only 13 lakh tonnes has been lifted so far. We want that the rest of the foodgrains to be lifted and distributed in the States at the earliest.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, poverty and starvation, if it is in any part of the country are a matter of concern for every one but its undue publicity is not correct. The MPs from Orissa have rightly stated that we should not tarnish the image of our country. Population of this country is 100 crore. If any such incident takes place anywhere and it is blown out of proportion then wrong message goes to the world.

Mr. Chairman Sir, the news regarding starvation deaths in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh poured in and that was also discussed in this august House. I would like to tell about that detailed news items which were published in Himachal Pradesh newspapers that a person called Amar Singh died due to starvation at Jounta in Noorpur tehsil of Kangra district. I, myself, conducted an inquiry into the matter and the administration also conducted the inquiry and found that it was not a case of starvation death. That man had 67 Kanal of land and anorchard. His wife and father told that he committed suicide by consuming poison. Even village Pradhan termed it as a case of suicide. He committed suicide due to some other reasons but the whole Himachal Pradesh discussed that issue for ten days as starvation death in Kangra district. The second incident was reported from a place just 10 kms. away from my house. A news item was published that Hansraj of Naura village died of starvation. After inquiry into this matter the Government received a report that the above mentioned person had 8-10 Kanal land and a cow, whose milk was sold. The family of the deceased had bought 50 kg wheat and 20 kg rice just four days ago. The person are well before the death but news was spread all over the country that starvation death took place in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, starvation deaths are a cause of concern and really unfortunate for the country but I would like to make a submission that fabricating and publicizing

false story of starvation death is much more unfortunate. News regarding Orissa was received but Chief Secretary of Orissa wrote two letters on 22nd August and 29th August to the Food Secretary wherein it has been mentioned clearly that:

[English]

"There has been no case of starvation death"

[Translation]

Alongwith it he has also sent the report of District Collector of Raigarha under whose jurisdiction the place called Kashipura falls and from where starvation deaths were reported. As per this report.

[English]

By no stretch of imagination these can be called starvation deaths.

[Translation]

According to the Orissa Government food poisoning is the cause of these deaths. The Collector has also refuted the statement published in the Times of India wherein it was stated that—

[English]

Starvation is round the corner in Kashpura.

[Translation]

I would like to submit that it can be investigated again if there is any doubt. But is it proper to refute the version of the Government, collector and all other people. Therefore, I would like to make a submission that such news should be verified and examined properly.

I have already stated that the Government are providing huge amount of funds and foodgrains under various schemes. Not a single state has ever raised the demand for allocating more foodgrains on the grounds that despite the ongoing schemes starvation deaths are taking place so more foodgrains are needed. The affected state should inform the Union Government that starvation deaths may occur there if more quantity of foodgrains is not allocated. Foodgrains are made available to states for the purpose stated by them and as per their demand. 36 crore people of this country are living below the poverty line. The complaints of starvation deaths are reported from among them. Earlier these people were given 10 kg of foodgrains which was raised to 20 kg and now to 25 kg. But the foodgrains do not reach these 36 crore people as the off take is only 55 per cent. I made clear my doubts in the conference of the Chief Ministers as to whether the foodgrains actually reach the poor or not and arrangements for it should be made. Under various schemes of the Government these 36 crore people are supposed to be given 25 kg of foodgrains.

I remember that a report was submitted in 1997. This emotional issue is being raised here and I would like to assure that the Government is performing its duty honestly and diligently. A survey was conducted in 1997 which revealed that 36 crore people live below the poverty line. But all of them are not on the verge of starvation. It was revealed in the survey that 5 crore people do not get full meal. Some people have arrangements for food for six months and some less than that and some more than that. I was pained and disturbed after reading that report as were you disappointed while highlighting their cause. I took the report to the hon'ble Prime Minister and inform him that 5 crore people are not getting even one square meal. Children would have asked their mothers to give them bread and mothers would have distributed the available bread among them. What will be the condition of such families? I felt myself guilty conscious for being Food Minister of the country when the godowns are overflowing. I presented my views before the Hon'ble Prime Minister. I proposed to introduce a new scheme for these 5 crore people. We are trying to scrap subsidy and thus Antyodaya Yojana was Started. The subsidy of Rs. 23 crore was given for this purpose. We also associate with the feeling expressed by you all. This scheme has been started in 19 states for those 5 crore people. We have asked time and again the remaining states to start this scheme. I asked my colleague, the Minister of State, Shri Shriram Chouhan to take measures in this regard. He toured those States and capitals of the States to ask the Chief Ministers to start this scheme. I also complained that the foodgrains allocated by the Union Government are not being lifted. Now, we propose to give wheat at the rate of Rs. 2 for 1 kg and rice for Rs. 3 per kg. So far it has not been started in all the states. Under the 'Annapurna' scheme there is a proposal to provide 10 kg foodgrains free of cost to all the senior citizens above the age of 65 years. It has not been started completely at present.

One year ago a decision was taken that if any State Government wants to launch any welfare scheme, or any NGO wants to launch any scheme for beggars home, hostels for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, we are ready to provide foodgrains at BPL rate. The Government strives to meet the demands coming from

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any quarter. Our godowns are full of foodgrains and we have reduced 30 per cent rate even for APL people.

The Government has provided Rs. 23 lakhs for drought affected areas. It was decided a year ago that if any State Government wants to launch any welfare scheme, we are prepared to provide foodgrains at BPL rate under 'food for work', however no state came forward. Perhaps the states have not taken the initiatives due to their own economic condition. We have launched 'Sampurna Rozgar Yojana' to ensure that no one remains hungry. Under this scheme 50 lakh tonnes foodgrains worth Rs 5000 crores would be provided to states free of cost of start food for work programme. What I mean to say is that there are so many schemes for poor people of villages I feel that if the schemes are implemented properly there would be no problems have like poverty, hunger etc.

You asked as to what the Government is doing. In this connection, I would like to submit that during the last two years we have tried to make the public distribution system a success and for this the State Governments and the Central Government need to work unitedly. As I have said the godowns are full with the foodgrains and for this we congratulate the previous Governments and the farmers. The PDS was introduced after IInd world war the present form of PDS, is working very well and it is a boon for the country. Where the number of poor people living in far flung villages is high. It would be better if my friends do not make the allegation that the system has failed. The system has not failed. However, there are some shortcomings in it. According to Tata Consultancy, it was said that diversion was 30%. A lot of effort had been made during last two years. In this regard the States have made lot of efforts for which I have congratulated them too by personally visiting those states. It resulted in less diversion. I feel that this system is 80-85 percent a success. This is not a small thing. I have no hesitation to accept the shortcomings. I am not saying that this system is a perfect one but my request is that one should not comment that this system has failed. It sends a wrong message the world over if we say that though godowns are full and the foodgrains are rotting yet the people are starving. Out of 616 lakh tonnes, the damage is of 1,80,000 tonnes and we are saying that the foodgrains are rotting and perishing. I accept that there has been negligence and corruption in Food Corporation but we have tried to investigate each and every matter. Many cases had been referred to CBI for investigation and the accused had been removed from their positions. We are trying to take stringent action. Around three lakh employees and officers are working in Food Corporation. In this many are capable, honest and good but some are corrupt also and we are trying to identify them. Similarly, it sends a wrong message the world over if we say that the foodgrains are rotting and perishing. We should desist from making such statements. I accept that at some places there has been negligence. The members of Standing Committee have said that the foodgrains are rotting and perishing. I have myself seen this when I visited Luni godown during the session of Lok Sabha after receiving a phone call.

When I went to Luni Godown, I found that around 3000 tonnes of rice was rotting. I would like to say that even storage involve expenditure. The rice was getting rotten and crores of rupees was being spent on its storage and therefore we have taken stringent action. I accept that there has been negligence but where the matter has been reported, we had taken stringent action. But we have decided one thing that wherever the foodgrains are rotting and perishing, we will auction it immediately. Alongwith this, we have also decided to fix the responsibility so that the money can be recovered from the salary of the guilty officers because it is national wealth. We have taken tough stand to ensure quality. The State Governments have been issued instructions to check the quality of foodgrains while taking the delivery. And if they find that our officers are supplying inferior quality foodgrains they should report us. For this we have made provisions to have joint sampling. However, if in any ration shop, the quality of foodgrains is inferior then it is not our responsibility. We have issued instructions to State Governments not to accept inferior quality foodgrains. We have 1600 godowns, if they complain to us that at particular place, inferior quality foodgrains are being supplied, we will give them good quality foodgrains from another godown but we will not compromise over quality. We have also prescribed strict specifications while procuring foodgrains. We have received complaints from many State Governments and we have asked them to check the quality while taking the delivery. We had 30 lakh tonnes of rice of relaxed specification which was of fair average quality. It could be issued, but when some Chief Ministers compained to us. We have also seen and found that it is not of that standard. Even the Prime Minister also accepted it. Hence we decided not to issue this 30 lakh tonnes of rice under PDS and decided to auction it. It resulted in loss of crores of rupees but we decided not to issue this rice through PDS. That is why we have taken tough stand. We are not compromising with quality also. We have issued instructions to State Governments not to procure inferior quality foodgrains and if at all inferior quality is being supplied, they should report to us. If everyone cooperates then there will be no inferior quality foodgrain in any shop.

We had held zonal meeting also. I have myself toured the entire country. The area officers have been appointed who look after the states. We have constituted flying squads also. They look into the complaints which are made. Besides this, we have done one more important thing. Since this a massive task, we need to work unitedly. This system is spread over the entire country. We have constituted regional consultative committee in the states, which would be headed by the Member of Parliament. Such committees have been constituted at 30 places and the MPs of these places have been appointed as their Chairman. There will be one committee in every state and its chairman would be an M.P. This committee would have officials from centre as well as State Governments. Some persons of that state will be nominated to that committee. This committee will look after the work of FCI. This way, we have created a link and a forum between the centre and the state. It has been notified. We have undertaken a new experiment. Soon its meeting will be convened. In this regard, orders are also being issued. We have constituted this committee so that the shortcomings in this system can be rectified and MPs can remove the misunderstanding prevailing between centre and state and thus ensure better co-ordination among them.

We are going to launch a consumer awareness drive in 120 districts next year and we would organise the camps there. In that, we will call all consumers of that district. Atleast 200 families, who are covered under Antyodaya Yojana or BPL, will be asked to come to the district centre alongwith their ration cards where the officials of both centre and State Governments will be present. They will ask the families whether they got the foodgrains last year. This way it will be as good as survey.

We have also said that the Central Government will bear the expenses of bringing poor people from villages to the district centre. The Government of India is providing a grant of Rs. 50,000/- to each district to organise such camps. The committee headed by Member of Parliament would make arrangements to organise such camp. We will unite the poor consumers of 120 districts and wherever there is a shortcoming, we will try to remove those shortcomings. The officers of centre and State Governments and member of Parliament will be present there who will consider their problem and try to solve those problems. You rightly commented that the Central Government is not helpless. We have issued many instructions. I am not complaining. I would like to point out all this to State Governments.

I gave a small suggestion that suppose there are 200 shops in the district and when District Food Officer allocates rations to these shops, one copy of allocation letter should be sent to Panchayat. The Government have issued orders that Panchayat should be linked to shops as a tool of Social Audit. A charter has been issued in this regard and the Government have desired that a copy of allocation letter be sent to Panchayat. A notice-board should be displayed outside Panchayat Ghar wherein monthly details of allocation of ration should be written. Second order issued by the Government pertains to displaying of a notice-board outside ration shop indicating allocation of sugar and rice during any particular month. But, so far, these two things have not been implemented whereas it involves no funding.

How pilferage takes place? A poor villagers approaches depot-holder and enquires about issuance of sugar and rice on his card but the depot-holder says that this month sugar has not been allocated. He visits ration-shop two-three times but does not get ration from there. Consequently, that poor fellow buy ration from other shops are credit basis. And one can easily imagine what sort of burden he will have to face in such circumstances. If information regarding allocation of ration is displayed on notice-board this sort of pilferage can be checked. But so far even this things has not been implemented, so should not I take it otherwise? Though the states and Chief Ministers are ours but our orders are not being obeyed at all the places wherever these orders are obeyed, it has proved useful. I would like to tell that the Government want to tone-up the system. As you have said, I am sure the Government can streamline the system and there is no reasons to get dismayed at it. If everyone of you and the states as well cooperate with the Government, the Government can surely improve the system. But, even small orders have not been implemented. I have discussed it with hon'ble Prime Minister, Minister of Law. Many hon'ble Members have said that the Government are not incapable to do anything. For the last two months the Government have been pondering over whether Public Distribution System can be strengthened and implementation of these orders can be made mandatory or not and very soon the Government may be able to improve present system and ensure transparency in it. We would try to make it mandatory. You have very rightly said that people do not have enough money to buy 25 kilo ration at a time. In this connection, the Government have issued instruction that ration-shops should be opened daily and card-holders can buy ration at least four times in a month. Some Members have complained about inadequate number of ration-shops and have said that these shops are located at longer distances. Opening of more shops is the duty

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of State Governments. If State Governments desire to open more shops, they can do it so. The Government of India honestly want to tone up the system and I feel it is a very important task. Ration will be provided for 36 crore poor villages and the Government have even fixed prices of ration for APL category. If we are able to distribute ration through these shops, I feel we will be discharging our duty as it is a collective decision that there should not be poverty and hunger anywhere. Then only we can achieve our target. I would like to thank you for the suggestion made and I would like to assure that the Government have been working for the last two years with the same spirit as desired by you and the Government would act upon the suggestions.

The Government would try to seek cooperation from states and it is sure of getting cooperation. The Government will try to tone-up the system with everybody's cooperation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House now stands adjourned till 11 a.m. tomorrow.

23.45 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the clock on Friday, August 31,2001/Bhadra 9, 1923 (Saka).

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