

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Ninth Session
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)



General & Debate Section
Parliamentary Library Building
Room No. 10-6-5
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(Vol. XXV contains Nos. 31 to 40)

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NEW DELHI

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, May 9, 2002/Vaisakha 19, 1924 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[SHRIMATI MARGARAT ALVA in the Chair]

[Translation]

(Interruptions)

DR. SANJAY PASWAN (Nawada) : Mr. Chairman Sir, today once again there has been massacre in Bihar. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Not now, you will get an opportunity in Zero Hour.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You can raise it during 'Zero Hour'. Q. No. 621.

(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Shri Paswan, please sit down. Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN : I will give you give time during 'Zero Hour', not now.

(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please have some discipline. This is Question Hour.

[Translation]

Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please give the lady Member a chance to speak.

[Translation]

I will give you time in Zero Hour. Now you please sit down.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please sit down. Do not disturb the Question Hour.

[Translation]

Shri Paswan, you please sit down.

(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Whatever you want to speak you may speak later.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Shri Paswan, Please sit down. Nothing is going on record.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please raise the issue after the Question Hour, I will give you a chance to speak.

(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please raise it in Zero Hour. I will not allow you to speak now. Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Let the Question Hour be over. I will give you time. Q. No. 621.

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTIONS

Closure of Steel Plants

+

*621. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR :
SHRI. T.M. SELVAGANPATHI :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether some steel plants are closed or are on the verge of closure, or have become less-productive during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons therefor, plant-wise;

(d) the profit earned/loss suffered by the steel plants under SAIL during 2001-2002, plant-wise; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to make them effective, operational and profit earning units ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) to (e) A statement is placed on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

*Not recorded.

*Not recorded.

Statement

(a) and (b) In the primary sector (capacity more than half a million tonne of crude steel per annum), no steel plant has closed or has become less productive in the last two years. However, in some of the steel plants, production has gone down marginally mainly due to operational reasons.

In the secondary sector, out of 188 Electric Arc Furnace (EAF) units working in the early nineties, only 38 are working now. Out of the 949 Induction Furnace (IF) units working in the early nineties, only 657 are working at present.

(c) The primary reasons for non-working of steel plants are (i) excess supply and low demand for steel in the domestic market, (ii) import of steel at low prices, (iii) falling steel prices, (iv) high production costs, (v) closure of important export markets for the Indian steel due to protectionist measures initiated by a number of importing countries, (vi) general slow down in the Indian economy and recessionary trends in the global steel market and (vii) technological obsolescence, with particular reference to the secondary sector.

(d) Financial performance in terms of profits earned by SAIL plants, plant-wise during 2001-2002 (April-December) is as under :

Rs. (In Crores)

Plant/unit	2001-02 (April-Dec.)
BSP	(+) 223
DSP	(-) 204
RSP	(-) 797
BSL	(-) 239
ASP	(-) 107
SSP	(-) 112
VISL	(-) 70
Other Offices/Units	(+) 16
SAIL	(-) 1290
IISCO	(-) 155

(e) The Government has taken several steps to help steel plants. Some of these steps are (i) constitution of a National Campaign Committee to promote steel consumption through development of markets especially in the rural areas, (ii) encouraging usage of steel in new

application areas such as grain storage systems, crash barriers in highways and expressways, (iii) providing financial support to R and D ventures in iron and steel sector to reduce production cost and improve quality and (iv) organising seminars for dissemination of knowledge on the use of steel.

In addition, SAIL has also taken the following measures to improve the performance of its plants :

- Intensive cost control drive which envisages improvement of yield, reduction in consumption of coking coal and other raw material, reduction in consumption of power and fuel, reduction in consumption of stores and spares, improvement in other key techno-economic parameters, etc.
- Implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS).
- Market oriented product-mix, increasing sales network and more focus on customer satisfaction etc.

Further, the Government of India has also approved in February, 2000, a financial and business restructuring package for SAIL comprising.

- Waiver of loans advanced to it from Steel Development Fund (SDF) to a value of Rs. 5073 crores and Rs. 381 crores from the Government of India.
- Provision of Government Guarantee with 50% interest subsidy for loan and interest thereon of Rs. 1500 crores to be raised by SAIL from the market to finance reduction in manpower through Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS).
- Government guarantee for loan and interest thereon of Rs. 1500 crores to be raised by SAIL from the market primarily for meeting repayment obligation on past loans during 1999-2000.

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR : The hon. Minister has replied that the Government has set up a Project Coordination Group to find out ways and means and suggest measures of easy compliance of all on-going iron and steel projects so as to address the problems of existing plants of iron and steel. In this context, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what are the various recommendations of the Group and how many of them have been accepted and implemented. What steps are likely to be contemplated in this regard? I would also like to know the reasons for their acceptance.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Madam, the Indian steel industry is currently caught in a prolonged spell of sluggishness in terms of all the major performance indicators such as consumption, investment, price, and profits. The slow down in both the domestic and the global economies has contributed to the current state of affairs. In spite of all these things, the steel plants are doing well in our country. There is an increase in production on all fronts. The Government is quite serious to see how the production and productivity can be improved in steel plants. That is why, the Government has taken so many steps. One of them is that we have constituted a National Campaign Committee to promote steel consumption.

Madam, at the moment, we are a low steel consuming country. Our average *per capita* consumption of steel is around only 26 kilograms whereas the world *per capita* average is 116 kilograms. So, the Government is taking all the steps for increasing the domestic consumption so that our own capacity can be fully utilised and our own production can be utilised in our country itself. That is why, the Project Coordination Group have suggested some steps to sort out the problems faced by the on-going steel plants. This Group is taking many steps and is also suggesting measures to the Government. This Group is helping in implementing the decisions of the Government in the steel plants.

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR : A list of non-working steel and iron plants is also given. I would like to know from the Minister the factors responsible for privatisation of the steel plants. I would also like to know how the interests and benefits of the workers are being protected.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Madam, this question of the hon. Member does not arise from the main question. Anyway, I would try to reply.

Madam, the country had adopted the disinvestment policy in 1990. Since then, the successive Governments are also following the same policy. They have not deviated from that policy. So, whether it is disinvestment or privatisation or joint venture, they are being done on the basis of that policy only.

As far as the interests of employees are concerned, it is quite assured that there is no difficulty for the employees. Their interest will be completely safeguarded. Madam, as per the policy of disinvestment also, first priority is given for safeguarding the interest of the employees. So, there is no difficulty as far as the interest of the employees is concerned.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Madam, Chairman, the answer placed before us on the Table of this House is insufficient and half-baked, I would say, Madam, the main question is that there are certain steel plants which are incurring continuous losses. Therefore, what are the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in order to revive these sick units or the units which are incurring losses ? We find the policy of the Government in the answer. But time and again, we have been informed that some of the units which are incurring losses are to be disinvested and the profits earned through disinvestment should be utilised for the purpose of revamping and reviving the existing units.

Therefore, the answer do not contain the steps with regard to disinvestment, what are the profits, and how are these profits going to be utilised. The policy of the Government is to go in for mass disinvestment. Here, except Bhilai Steel Plants, all other units are incurring losses to the tune of more than Rs. 5000 crore cumulatively. Therefore, my first question is whether the Government propose to disinvest all those units which are incurring losses.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You are entitled to ask only one question.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : This is a serious issue because the entire SAIL is in doldrums. There are industries which are incurring minimum losses like Salem Steel Plant. It has incurred a loss of only Rs. 112 crore as compared to Rourkela, Durgapur and ASP. But the Government has decided to disinvest only in Salem Steel Plant. I am asking the Ministry to reconsider the disinvestment policy with regard to Salem Steel Plant. I would like to know whether they have a fresh proposal for the revival of the Salem Steel Plant.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Insofar as the disinvestment policy of the Government is concerned, it is quite clear that the non-core areas will go for disinvestment. As far as disinvestment of SAIL is concerned, the main units which are producing steel will remain within SAIL without any disinvestment at the moment. But as far as the non-core areas of SAIL which are power producing units, fertilizer production units and some other plans which are incurring much loss, which cannot be revived and which cannot be remedied will go for disinvestment. With regard to units of SAIL, the Government has not yet considered any disinvestment in the integrated Steel Plant.

Insofar as Salem Steel Plant is concerned, the loss at this moment, that is, nine months of last year, is about Rs. 114 crore. In 2000-2001 the loss was Rs. 155 crore; in 1999-2000 the loss was Rs. 145 crore; in 1998-99 it

was Rs. 180 crore; in 1997-98 it was Rs. 120 crore; and in 1996-97 the loss was Rs. 38 crore. So, in all these years since the inception of Salem Steel Plant, it has been running in losses. In spite of its near international operating parameters Salem has incurred losses mainly due to lower production and lower NSR emerging out of low demand for the products produced by SSP. Higher capital related charges due to investments in stackle Mills. Burden on profitability of SSP, on account of depreciation and interest has increased. High cost inputs, difficulty in getting commensurate prices either in the domestic or in international market, etc. Salem Steel Plant is mainly producing special class stainless steel. But it requires to go for integrated product-mix for which it requires further investment. The input cost is getting costly. Therefore, it is not economical to run the Salem Steel Plant.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : His question is whether you are going to revive it or not.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : The Minister may kindly yield for a minute. The loss is not due to low production, but the loss is due to the interest burden. There was a proposal to revive the unit.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Let the Minister answer. Why are you interrupting ? I am not allowing you to raise another question. You please sit down. You have said everything; let the Minister give the answer now. I am not allowing you to raise any more supplementaries.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Madam, I was just narrating the reasons for losses in the Salem Steel Plant. Interest on depreciation is one of the reasons. But that is not the only reason. For stainless steel slabs they are getting these inputs from different plants from far away places. It is very much costly to get the inputs for the Salem Steel Plant. That is why there is the proposal for downward steel producing facility. . . .*(Interruptions)* You are not listening to me. You are just raising questions. Please listen to me now.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You have raised enough supplementaries. Please sit down now. There are many others who would like to ask questions.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : That is why, it requires further investment in Salem Steel Plant. Then the steel slabs can be available there, will be used for making special class stainless steel.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Are you going to invest any further ?

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : For that purpose the Government has no proposal either to go for investment or to go for backward integration or to produce steel. That is why, it will have its own investment to make it a full-fledged special class stainless steel company.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Madam, only disinvestment cannot give us the solution. We cannot disinvest this House. We are people's representatives and we belong to the people. Now, there are so many steel industries in the country like Durgapur, Rourkela, Bhilai, Bokaro, Salem and Visakhapatnam. . . .*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Only a factory can be disinvested and not the people and the House.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : I am sure she does not need your help. Please sit down.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Human beings cannot be disinvested.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Madam, I am not talking about human beings. I am talking about the morale of this House. We cannot disinvest all the industries in the name of economic reforms. You cannot deprive the rights of the workers and employees of this country. I would like to ask the hon. Minister on one point. Like in Visakhapatnam, Rourkela, Durgapur, Salem and Bhilai, modernisation of IISCO is also pending. The IISCO is our pride. You will appreciate that, when IISCO was set up after Independence, the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said that it was the pride of India. But its modernisation is pending since long. We are hearing that Government is also trying for Russian and other companies for modernisation. The BIFR has given only six months' time, and I think two months are already over. So, what is the Government's stand on reviving IISCO and other steel industries in this country ? We would be very happy if you could clarify the situation to the House. . . .*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY : It is the pride of Bengal which has been squandered away. . . .*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You also associate with her.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Madam, I am not speaking about Bengal alone. I am speaking about the whole country because steel industry is our pride and it is a traditional industry of our country. That is why, my specific point, as I mentioned earlier, is that IISCO including other steel industries of the country should be modernised as early as possible. That industry must be revived as soon

as possible. Please clarify the position. I also want to know the steps that you have taken so far in this regard.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY : Thousands of workers are being retrenched. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : There is already a separate question on IISCO and I will answer it separately. There is a Calling Attention Motion listed for today. So, I will answer this point when the Calling Attention Motion would come up.

So far as the information asked by the hon. Member is concerned, I would say that IISCO is continuously making losses and that is why, in 1994 the Government had referred it to the BIFR as a sick unit. The BIFR had taken its latest decision on 1st April, 2002. They have taken a decision to give a last chance to the Government and the entire proposal of revival package is pending before Government for consideration.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Kindly expedite the case.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI : Madam Chairman after independence the first Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawarhar Lal Nehru had set up some of the temples of development, out of which an important steel plant was set up in Madhya Pradesh. It is now in Chhattisgarh. The entire House is expressing concern for the public sector undertakings which are gradually on the verge of closure due to their miserable financial condition, I would like to inform the House that the Bhilai Steel Plant is also on the verge of closure due to its internal disorder. Through you, I would like to know whether the transportation of Ferro-manganese and Ferro-silicon steel products which was earlier being done by railways is being done by trucks by a particular company for last 8-10 years. Have the Government received complaints there due to adulterated ferro-silicon the quality of steel has continuously been declining. Has there been a decline in the demand of steel of Bhilai plant in foreign countries and as a result of this, the Financial condition of the plant has been adversely affected continuously. Is it also true that four officers have already been suspended a few days ago after testing the steel products.

I would like to know the internal facts in this regard. Will a joint parliamentary committee be constituted for a thorough probe into it and whether it will be ensured that, these disorders are set right. ?

[English]

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Madam, so far as the Bhilai Steel Plant is concerned, it is one of our best steel plants. It has received Prime Minister's Trophy so many times for being the best plant. It has received this Trophy so many times which is given for the best public sector undertaking. We are proud of Bhilai Steel Plant and it is not a fact that this Steel Plant is incurring loss. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI : I did not say that it is incurring loss. I said that it is on the verge of collapse. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Give the Minister a chance to reply.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI : You go through the records and accounts. You will find for yourself that continuously over the last decade or so, the economic condition of the Plant or the financial condition of the Plant is deteriorating. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You have said all this.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : It is making profit every year. So, the question of this Steel Plant being in a bad position does not arise. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Shri Chaturvedi, I am not allowing you.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI : Madam, if you allow me I will place them on the Table of the House. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You place them on the Table of the House.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI : It is a misleading answer. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Other conditions are responsible for that. But it is always making profit for the last so many years.

The other question that the hon. Member raised is not related to the main Question. Anyway I will try to get the answer and submit it to the hon. Member.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Madam, Chairman, in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd., is

one of the best steel plants in India. It has modern technology and it is a share-based Steel Plant. Since three years we are making profits. We are making profits year-wise, but overall we have incurred losses. After a hard work, the management and employees of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant submitted a package to the Government of India for enhancement of the production. Otherwise, it cannot be viable. When the Government of India decided to disinvest the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, all political parties and everybody else opposed that disinvestment. The management and employees are working well. That is why it is making profits. It has heavy interest burden and delay in commencement of projects in the background. So, in this present scenario, is the Government willing to accept the package for enhancement of production or not? What is the latest position with regard to Visakhapatnam Steel Plant?

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Madam, I am happy to announce that Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is coming out of red. For the last two years, it is making cash profit. For the first time, this year, its cash profit has come very near to net profit. We hope that in the current financial year or, at best, in the next financial year, it will go for net profit. No package is pending with the Government. The Government has taken all the steps to help the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant in regard to interest burden that is due to the financial institutions. On the intervention of the Ministry of Finance, the interest rate has come down. We are trying to help the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant as much as possible. To make a fourth battery there is a proposal pending for the consideration of the Government. If we put a fourth battery, it would be helpful for the future of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. All these proposals are pending. But as such, no package for increase in production is pending with the Government. At the moment, it has not reached the full capacity in regard to production. Till the time it reaches the full capacity in regard to production, other things will come for consideration.
(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : One minute, please listen.

(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You do not allow any one to speak. There is a Calling Attention Motion today. We will see after that.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Please allow Half-an-Hour Discussion on this Question. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You give a notice for Half-an-Hour Discussion. It will be considered.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Madam, we want a Half-an-Hour Discussion on this subject. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : We have already spent 25 minutes on one Question only. There are other important questions also.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : We want a Half-an-Hour Discussion on it on any day.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You have to give notice for a Half-an-Hour Discussion. We will consider it.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : It is an important Steel Plant. It was sanctioned by late Shrimati Indira Gandhi.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You give notice for a Half-an-Hour Discussion. It will be considered. This question is very important. Please listen. Please take your seat.

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : This is also important. We are all concerned about it.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : I would like to know whether you have agreed to have a Half-an-Hour Discussion.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : As I have already told you, you give notice for a Half-an-Hour Discussion.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Let the hon. Minister agree to it. Normally, with the concurrence of the hon. Minister, the Chair announces it.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Let the notice come. The Minister can consider it.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Madam, I have no objection to it. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : I think, he has agreed to have a Half-an-Hour discussion.

[Translation]

Allotment of LPG Dealership to Unemployed

*622. SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has allotted dealership of LPG under various categories with a view to providing employment to the unemployed persons in the country;

(b) if so, whether areas have been demarcated for each dealer;

(c) whether his Ministry has received representations about the distribution of gas by the old dealers in the areas falling under the jurisdiction of new dealers; and

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

[English]

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) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have set up 7486 LPG distributorships under various categories in the country as on 1.4.2002. At present, there is no separated category or reservation for unemployed for allotment of LPG distributorships.

(b) The trading area in respect of each distributor is demarcated at the time of allotment of a distributorship and the same is mentioned in Distributorship Agreement.

(c) and (d) Government have advised OMCs to ensure that the old distributors do not operate either directly or through extension counters in the trading area of the newly commissioned distributors.

[Translation]

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA : Madam Chairman, first of all I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister that during this tenure there has been a revolution in the field of LPG distribution. In his reply he has said that unemployment has not been treated as a criterion for the allotment of LPG distributorship. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the widows of Kargil martyrs, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes have been allotted LPG distributorship ? Secondly whether the hon'ble Minister has received complaints from these people that they had raised infrastructure after taking having loans or had invested their own resources but while some of the older distributors have 40,000 LPG connections and some 20,000 connections the new dealers have no work. They have only 400 or 500 connections. The hon'ble Minister has said that instructions have been issued in this regard. However I would like to know whether any stringent action has been taken against these persons who are adopting unfair means in this business by interfering into the jurisdiction of the Ministry.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam Chairman, One special scheme was introduced in 1980 for unemployed people which ended in 1986. So, there is no provision of separate reservation for unemployed people. The Kargil scheme was prepared for a particular purpose which was welcomed all the over country. In this case education was not the criterion and it was considered as a special case. The situation is such that during the last three years two crore one lakh new connections have been released while at present there are a total of 6 crore five lakh customers in the country. It means that three years ago there were 3.77 crore gas connections. Now due to the release of so many connections more connections have come to the dealers that existed at that time. Besides this the work of giving new agencies was started and 1729 agents have been appointed. It is the transition period. The work of transfer of connections from those who have more connections is going on however I have personally found that the pace of work is not up to the mark. I had fixed 31 March as deadline and had told the officers of the department that if this work is not completed by March, the officers concerned will be held responsible and the transfer work will be done as soon as possible.

SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA : Madam Chairman, through you I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the allotment of distributorship will be done through the Distribution Selection Board as it was being done in the past will distributorship be given through DSP in future also or Regulatory Commission will be constituted ? If it is constituted then who will be its members and what will be their powers ?

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, the House know that administered price mechanism has been abolished since 1st April. There after on 6 May Petroleum Regulatory Board Bill was introduced in the House. We will gradually give more powers to oil companies so that there could be competition and good work in this field. So, we have decided to abolish the Regulatory Dealers Selection Board with immediate effect. After abolishing the board, advertisement was given under the advertisement interview of 30 percent people is yet to be done, while interview of 70 percent people has been completed. In future this work will be done by oil companies. They will work with a competitive spirit. I hope that the efforts we are making now to introduce age of competition will be done well by the oil companies in future. We are cancelling interviews which might be going on at some places in the country today since evening. . . .(Interruptions) Madam perhaps there is some mistake in understanding Hindi. I said that the interview schedule for today will remain as it is. The

interview conducted by the Dealers Selection Board will stop tomorrow. The persons who have applied will be interviewed again by the oil companies.

[English]

SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR : I want to know whether the Government is aware that in the matter of selecting LPG dealership for Ex-Servicemen, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe reservation criteria has not been followed? What steps the Government propose to take in this regard to set right this?

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, Perhaps the hon. Member did not understand the thing. We still have the provision of reservation in which – 25 percent is reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Thereafter 5 percent is reserved for physically handicapped, 8 percent for paramilitary forces, 8 percent for defence, 2 percent for freedom fighters, 2 percent for outstanding sports person and there is 50 percent reservation in the open. However out of this one third is reserved for women. I am glad to inform the House that women have done well in this field.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : All women do well.

(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Why do you get up in the middle every now and then?

(Interruptions)

SHRI SAIDUZAMMA : Discrimination is done in this regard. None of the families of minority community has got the gas agency. . . .(Interruptions) Wrong informations is being given here. . . .(Interruptions)

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN : I have not allowed you to ask the question. You are disrupting the proceedings of the Question Hour.

(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You please allow the lady Member to pose the question.

[Translation]

The lady Member sitting behind you is asking a question. Please sit down. Please maintain the disciplines. I have not called your name.

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL : Hon'ble Member has raised a very serious issue. Please tell the hon'ble Minister

the seriousness of the issue. None of the families belonging to minority community is being given gas agency or the dealership for petrol pumps. It is the biggest discrimination. . . .(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH : The purpose of introducing this scheme in the rural areas in India was primarily not only to provide supply of gas to the rural people but also to generate employment for the unemployed in the rural areas. In the last 20 years, South Central Bihar has been in short supply of gas resulting in deforestation and environment destruction.

It has resulted in large-scale destruction of forests and also in large-scale unemployment. Will the Government take action on this crisis of gas in South Central region of Bihar?

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, at this point of time, I can only say that at present 6 crore 35 lakh families have gas connections. That means only 31 per cent of the total population. We are trying to provide gas connection in all parts of the country. However, these are several reasons due to which the number of LPG users in Bihar is less. Poverty may be one of the reasons. I feel the need of providing gas connections in rural areas also. The question was asked actually in respect of Haryana. In Haryana 50% of the population is having LPG connections. In comparison to it only 7.5% of the families in Bihar are using LPG. It is our endeavour to provide LPG connections to more and more people. We will provide connections to all the persons who apply for it.

[English]

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH : For a population of 20,000 people, we have only 126 gas connections.

SHRI RAM NAIK : That is why we are appointing new gas distributors and as and when they are established, certainly there will be more gas connections in Bihar. But you should ensure that people go and get gas connections because they feel that gas is a little costly.

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH : There is just one dealer in that area for the last 20 years.

SHRI RAM NAIK : I will give you the figures as to how many dealers we are appointing in Bihar. I would like to assure you that according to the geographical area, we are trying to establish LPG agency in each block. We are trying to see that at least one agency is established in each block and in urban areas, if the population of a

particular town is 10,000 or more, there will be a separate agency. We are trying to do that.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA : Madam, as has been said, the Distributorship Agreement clearly states the norms which are to be followed. It states that while allotting the new distributorship, it should be taken into consideration that it should not enter in the areas falling under the jurisdiction of another distributorship. At present, distributorships are increasing regularly and being transferred to other areas also. The mechanism to keep a check on it has been failed and it is being stated that efforts are being made to make it more effective. Besides, approval was granted in the last few days to open new distributorship at various places under the Marketing Plan. I would like to ask as to whether the circumstances have changed, will the circumstances prevailing at the time of formulating Market Plan remain same or there will be reconsideration in this regard ?

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, as per the marketing plan formulated by the Union Government, new agencies will be set up according to that plan only. No change has been made in Marketing Plan and the steps will be taken according to that plan. Several hon'ble Members have been writing to me in this regard. We are considering the suggestions given in their letters. This process will go on. Any Member can write to me if he wants LPG dealership in any area. I will give directions for the same. We have incorporated changes only in the process of interview.

SHRI C.N. SINGH : Madam Chairman, Sir, hon'ble Minister in his reply has written that till now there is no separate category or reservation quota for the allotment of LPG distributorship to the unemployed. On one hand hon'ble Prime Minister is of the view that more and more job opportunities should be generated for the unemployed, but on the other, hon'ble Minister is refusing to make arrangements for the unemployed. Though dealership for gas agencies, are being given to the different members of the same family in 10-15 districts. Poor are becoming poorer and rich people are becoming richer. Will the hon'ble Minister conduct an inquiry to find out the families whose members have got 10-15 gas agencies though their financial position is too strong that they need not any assistance for employment. Will an inquiry be conducted and their gas agency licences would be withdrawn ?

I have a related question also. As all are aware that hon'ble Minister is a very honest person. No allegation can be levelled upon him rather there is not allegation against him and it would be inappropriate to level false allegations. However, the reality is that the Chairmen of the Board are

taking 10-20 lakh of rupees to allot gas agencies. Just like Shri Sidhu, the Chairman the Punjab Public Service Commission who collected huge money through bribe and later on caught. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether an inquiry would be conducted against the chairman of these Selection Boards also ?

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam Chairman, I would like to repeat that the scheme formulated for the unemployed was discontinued in 1986. There is no need to restart it because. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI C.N. SINGH : Madam, Chairman, hon'ble Prime Minister's endeavour is to remove unemployment.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, Chairman, hon'ble Prime Minister and even the entire House want that unemployment should be removed as early as possible. But we have to decide as to which work should be assigned to whom. Secondly, hon'ble Member has said that the members of the same family have got 6-7 gas agencies. I will certainly conduct an inquiry if the hon'ble Member provides me the information regarding that family and the places where that have got agencies. I thank the hon'ble Members for praising my honesty.

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Madam Chairman, my Parliamentary constituency covers an area about 70 thousand sq. kms. with a population of 30 lakh. One and a half years ago, only 6 LPG agencies were there in my area. I kept on writing to the hon'ble Minister to increase the number of LPG agencies in my area during the last 5-6 years. He identified 10 gas agencies out of which 3 have already been allotted. Hon'ble Minister is an honest person but out of some pressure mounted on him or due to political corruption all the three gas agencies have been allotted to the relatives of a Minister. This has happened during last year. I am saying all this in all my senses. The remaining 7 agencies have been identified. Market plans have been formulated but it is being delayed. The reason for the delay is that the old dealers do not want the entry of new dealers. The licences of the new dealers have been cancelled at one or two places. But I talked to the Departmental Secretary and wrote the hon'ble Minister in this regard. The matter got settled with the intervention of the hon'ble Minister.

Madam Chairman, the first part of my question is will the hon'ble Minister conduct an inquiry in the matter of allotment of gas agencies to the relatives of a Minister and if it is found true whether he will take action in this regard ? The second question is will he make efforts to provide the remaining 7 gas agencies to the villages with the population

of 1 lakh who have to cover a distance of 100 Kilometer to get gas cylinder.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam Chairman, I would be grateful to the hon'ble Member if he furnishes the names of those Ministers' their families and the places to which they belong. I will definitely conduct an inquiry if the hon'ble Member provides me all this information.

Madam Chairman, so far as the hon'ble Member has mentioned about his Parliamentary constituency, I would like to tell him that we have proposed some agencies for his area. If he wants a gas agency to be opened in a particular village, he may give a proposal in regard to that. I will clear that proposal after studying it. I will definitely clear it on the basis of the viability and population.

[English]

SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN : Madam Chairman, I am very glad that the Government had advised OMCs to ensure that old distributors do not operate either directly or through extension counters in the trading area of the newly commissioned distributors. The Government has also instructed the OMCs to close those extension counters and to effect the transfer of customers to unviable distributors on the basis of viability limit for each market in September, 2001 itself.

It is very sad to note that these monopoly distributors, till today, to not comply with the Government orders and they simply practise all kind of foul tactics to avoid the inter-company transfer of LPG connections.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister what action has been taken against such LPG distributors and IOC officials for their deliberate and wilful negligence and non-compliance of Government orders. Would the Government take strict action against such dealers and officials of IOC in Tamil Nadu for not following the Government orders ?

I would like to know what steps the Government is going to take in this regard.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You ask your supplementary and he will answer it. You cannot raise the whole sheath of questions like this. Please take your seat.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam Chairman, the original question was of the hon. Member from Haryana and it was for all-India figures. Now, in Haryana about 90,900 customers were to be transferred because of this excess, out of which we have already transferred 40,000. In the case of remaining, we will be doing it in the current month.

So far as the all-India figures, which I am having, are concerned, about 8,74,000 such connections were to be transferred, out of which we have already transferred about 3,26,000.

As I stated in the beginning that I have given clear instructions that by 30th April the report should come. If any hon. Member feels that intentionally somebody is doing any mischief, it will be my duty and assurance to the House that I will look into all such cases individually.

[Translation]

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH : Madam, Chairman, hon'ble Minister has announced to discontinue the oil selection Board and Interviews which will be held till today will be considered as valid. From tomorrow, the selection Board will be closed. I would like to know that there are places where the number of applicants is more and a long number of applications have been received and interviews in their case will not be completed today. What will be their fate, whether such cases would remain incomplete or the board will continue to work till the completion of such cases.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, Chairman, certainly there would be such cases as 100-150 applications are received. Therefore, some cut off date has to be fixed. We will issue separate instructions for the interviews which will be held today, therefore, there will not be any difficulty. However, it is always better if the same group conducts the interview because if different groups are assigned this job, there can be mistakes in assessment and marking. The interview will be conducted again if there would be such cases.

Explosion in Ordnance Factory at Khamaria

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*623. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL :
SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a powerful explosion took place recently at Khamaria Ordnance Factory, Jabalpur as reported in the *Hindu* dated April 17, 2002;

(b) if so, whether any preliminary investigations into the cause of explosion have been conducted;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the details of loss of lives and properties suffered as a result thereof; and

(e) the steps contemplated by the Government to prevent such explosions in ordnance factories ?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir, an explosion took place at Ordnance Factory Khamaria on 16.4.2002.

(b) and (e) As a result of explosion, one person died and three received injuries. One building was partially damaged. A Board of Inquiry has been constituted to investigate into the causes of explosion, assess the damage caused and to suggest remedial measures to prevent such accidents.

Apart from implementing the recommendations of the Board of Inquiry in every case of an accident, the Ordnance Factories have been asked to scrupulously follow the safety regulations and periodically review the safety instructions. It has been decided to observe the month of May as 'Special Safety Month' and a 13 point drill has been prescribed to be implemented by all the Ordnance Factories. In addition, various steps are being taken to inculcate safety consciousness among the employees of Ordnance Factories.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RATANLAL KATARIA (Ambala) : Madam, Chairman, this is an insult to the House and our defence forces. . . .*(Interruptions)* They are strengthening the hands of Pakistan in that way. . . .*(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL : Madam Chairman, how many explosions have taken place in all the ordnance factories of the country during the last three years, the number of people killed in these explosions alongwith the loss to arms and ammunitions and Property. . . .*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : The hon. Member has asked as to how many accidents have taken place in the last three yeas. In the last three years, ten accidents have taken place. The first accident took place on the 28th of August 1999 at Ordnance Factory, Bhandara. . . .*(Interruptions)*

In that accident there was no loss of human life sustained, damage to Government property was worth Rs. 5.96 lakh and loss of arms and ammunition was to the tune of Rs. 2.17 lakh. . . .*(Interruptions)*

On the 28th October, 1999, there was another accident at Ordnance Factory, Debu Road in which there was no loss of life but Government property worth Rs. 0.20 lakh

was lost while the loss of arms and ammunitions was negligible. . . .*(Interruptions)*

On the 19th February, 2000, an accident occurred at Ordnance Factory, Khamaria where one human life was lost, the loss of Government property was negligible and there was no loss of arms and ammunition. . . .*(Interruptions)*

On the 22nd March, 2000, at Ordnance Factory, Chanda, there was an accident in which no life was lost, the loss of Government property was worth Rs. 4.40 lakh and loss of arms and ammunitions was worth Rs. 3.55 lakh. . . .*(Interruptions)*

On the 7th August, 2000, at the High Explosive Factory, Kirkee, an accident occurred in which one life was lost, the loss of Government property was to the tune of Rs. 0.01 lakh while there was no loss of arms and ammunition. . . .*(Interruptions)*

On the 28th September, 2001, there was another accident at Ordnance Factory, Varangaon where one human life was lost, the loss of Government property was to extent of Rs. 0.11 and the loss of arms and ammunition was 'NIL'. . . .*(Interruptions)*

At Ordnance Factory, Khamaria, on the 16th October, 2001, there was another accident in which one life was lost, the loss of Government property was negligible and the Board of Inquiry Report is under scrutiny to ascertain the loss of arms and ammunition. . . .*(Interruptions)*

On the 30th November, 2001, an accident occurred at the Ordnance Factory, Itarsi in which three lives and Government property worth Rs. 46.55 lakh were lost. . . .*(Interruptions)* In this accident, there was no loss of arms and ammunition.

On the 7th January, 2002, there was an accident at Ordnance Factory, Khamaria in which there was no loss of life. . . .*(Interruptions)* The Report of the Board of Inquiry is awaited to find out the loss of Government property and the loss of arms and ammunition.

On the 16th April, 2002, another accident occurred at Ordnance Factory, Khamaria in which one life was lost and the Report of the Board of Inquiry is awaited to ascertain the loss of Government property and arms and ammunition. . . .*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL : Madam, Chairman, it is unbecoming of the opposition. They want to violate my right to raise question. . . .*(Interruptions)*

Through you, I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister about the amount of compensation given to the Families of the deceased ?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Sir, Rs. 25000 as ex-gratia payment has been made to the family of the deceased Shri Anil Kumar Rajak who was killed in the explosion that took place at ordnance factory, Khamaria. Rs. 4,07,700 under workman compensation Act are still to be given, and GPF CGEIS amount of Rs. 16,080 and Rs. 20,222 has been given Rs. 56,672 as death gratuity are yet to be given. The entire amount has not been given so far. The wife of the deceased has given an application to appoint her brother-in-law on compassionate ground. Deputy Commissioner, Labour Welfare is considering the application, that's why the payments were stopped and would be released after judging the situation.
(Interruptions)

11.54 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari and some other hon'ble Members came and stood near the Table of the House.)

[English]

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : We are proud of our Defence Minister. He is one of the best India ever had. He visited Kargil during wartime. . . .(Interruptions) He takes care of his Army and visits the border like Siachen regularly. We would like to know what other measures the Ministry has proposed to boost the morale of our Army. . . .
(Interruptions)

Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline

*624. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Pakistan and Iran have signed a memorandum of understanding in Islamabad to undertake a pre-feasibility study of proposed 20,600 kilometer Iran-India Gas Pipeline; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Government have seen reports that Pakistan and Iran have signed a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) for a pre-feasibility study of transit of Iranian gas through Pakistan. The proposal of supply of Iranian gas to India is a bilateral matter between India and Iran. The Government of India and the Government of Islamic Republic of Iran have set up an Indo-Iran Joint Committee to examine all aspects relating to import of natural gas from Iran to India through pipeline.

SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI : Madam, of late there have been different types of reports regarding India-Iran pipeline. One report said that Iran and Pakistan have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to undertake a feasibility study for proposed 2,600-kilometre gas-pipeline.

Another report had stated that Iran has agreed to supply natural gas directly to India via deep sea pipeline to avoid Pakistani territorial waters and an Iranian Company has signed agreement with two Italian companies for conducting feasibility studies for laying pipeline through sea.

Therefore, I would like to request the Government to clarify the position in this regard.

SHRI RAM NAIK : We want to establish Indo-Iran gas pipeline so that we get more gas for the country. For that purpose, the agency has been appointed by India and Iran to prepare an estimate of the cost involved. As and when the report is received, the decision would be taken. . . .
(Interruptions)

11.57 hrs.

(At this stage Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari and some other hon'ble Members went back to their seats)

SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI : Madam, further what action the Government has taken in this regard during the last one year and whether there is any possibility of getting gas from any other foreign country including Bangladesh, and if so, the negotiations made in this regard ?

SHRI RAM NAIK : So far as importing of gas from other countries is concerned, we have already entered into an agreement with Qatar for supply of gas for 25 years. Petronet CNG would be constructing at Dahej Terminal, which would pump in about five million metric tonnes. That Terminal would be completed by December, 2003 and thereafter more gas would be available.

So far as Bangladesh is concerned, we are very keen to have gas from Bangladesh. But they have yet to take a decision to sell gas to other countries including India.

As soon as they take a decision, we will be the first one to approach them because our Eastern part of the country including West Bengal and Bihar and other States have no gas. . . .(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South)
Tripura also !

SHRI RAM NAIK : Tripura also, they need gas. It is our endeavour to ensure that Eastern India also gets gas as early as possible. But it would naturally depend upon the decision of the Bangladesh. . . .(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR : Madam Chairman, I would like to say that. . . .(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please sit down. I have not called you. Hon'ble Pandianji is asking a question.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Madam, it has been stated that a Memorandum of Understanding has been reached between India and Iran. . . .

What is the cost sharing for laying the pipeline between India and Iran? How much India has to pay?
(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, the cost is being worked out. First, the estimate has to be arrived at. For that, there has been an understanding. The Memorandum of Co-operation has been signed and the party has been appointed. After appointing the party, the estimate is being arrived at. As soon as the estimate is arrived at, then it will be possible to decide what will be the share, what will be the cost. We are working on that. (Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : The Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Mega Power Projects Policy

*625. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the details of fiscal incentives provided to such Mega projects under the Mega Power Project Policy; and

(b) the names of such projects recognized by the Government so far, State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) The revised Mega Power Policy of the Government of India was announced in November, 1998. This policy provides for zero custom duty for import of capital equipment for the 19 identified mega power projects. In addition, the income-tax holiday regime would be continued with the provision that the tax holiday period of 10 years can be claimed by a promoter in any block of 10 years, within the first 15 years. The State Governments have been requested to exempt supplies made to mega power plants from sales tax and local levies. Details of the 19 identified mega power projects are given in the enclosed Statement. However Chamara-II project is not eligible for zero custom duty, since its capacity is less than 500 MW, the minimum capacity requirement for this facility.

In addition to the above, the Sipat Super Thermal Power Project (4x660 MW) being implemented by the National Thermal Power Corporation in Chhattisgarh has been accorded mega power project status by the Government of India in December 2001. The Ministry of Finance have been requested on April 5, 2002 for amending the relevant Custom Notification so as to include the above project in the list of projects for which zero custom duty will be available for import of capital equipment.

Statement

S. No.	Name of the Project/State	Capacity (MW)
1	2	3

Private Sector

1.	Hirma Thermal Power Project, M/s. Southern Electric Asia Power Ltd. (SEAP), Orissa	3960
2.	Cuddalore Thermal Power Project, Tamil Nadu	1000
3.	Krishnapatnam Thermal Power Project, Andhra Pradesh	1500
4.	Pipavav Thermal Power Project, Gujarat	2000
5.	Narmada Thermal Power Project (LNG), Gujarat	1000

Public Sector

1.	Kahalgaoon Thermal Power Project Stage-II, NTPC, Bihar	1500
2.	North Karanpura Thermal Power Project, NTPC, Bihar	2000
3.	Barh Thermal Power Project Stage-I, NTPC, Bihar	2000

1	2	3
4.	Mailthon Thermal Power Projeject, Damodar Valley Corporation	1000
5.	Cheyur Thermal Power Project, Stage-I NTPC, Tamil Nadu	1500
6.	Anta CCPP Stage-II, NTPC, Rajasthan	1300
7.	Auraiya CCPP, NTPC, Uttar Pradesh	1300
8.	Kawas CCPP Stage-II, NTPC, Gujarat	1300
9.	Gandhar CCPP Stage-II, NTPC, Gujarat	1300
10.	Koel Karo HEP, NHPC, Bihar	710
11.	Chamera HEP Stage-II, NHPC, Himachal Pradesh	300
12.	Teesta HEP Stage-V, NHPC, Sikkim	510
13.	Koldam HEP, NTPC, Himachal Pradesh	800
14.	Parvati HEP Stage-II, NHPC, Himachal Pradesh	800

Reduction of Excise and Sales Tax for Ethanol Blending

*626 SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering reducing excise and sales tax on ethanol blending;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the price of imported ethanol is less than the price of indigenous ethanol; and

(d) if so, the details and reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) and (b) To make the ethanol-blended petrol competitive price-wise, Government have already announced a concessional reduction in special additional duty (surcharge) by 75 paise per litre in the budcet for the year 2002-03. Further proposal for excise concession for ethanol used for blending with petrol is under consideration.

(c) and (d) The Government do no monitor the price of ethanol as it is a decontrolled product.

Medical facilities to Ex-Servicemen

*627 COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken note of inadequate medical facilities being provided to Ex-servicemen and their families;

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

(c) whether the Government have received a number of representations from Ex-servicemen league and other Ex-servicemen associations in this regard;

(d) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to extend the same medical facilities to pensioners and their family members as are available to other Central Government employees;

(e) the likely time by which the wide disparity in providing medical facilities to ex-servicemen and their families would be removed; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (f) The Ex-servicemen, their families and families of deceased service personnel drawing pension of any kind are entitled to free out-patient treatment in 127 Military Hospitals (109 Army, 11 Air Force and 7 Navy Hospitals) and over 1000 Medical Inspection Rooms (including 24 MI rooms and 12 dental centres exclusively meant for Ex-servicemen) in terms of provisions of the Regulations for the Medical Services for the Armed Forces 1983 (RMSAF-1983). Ex-servicemen are provided in-patient treatment in Military Hospitals subject to the availability of beds. These facilities can be availed of only by those who live in proximity. Others on the recommendations of the 5th Central Pay Commission may opt to receive a fixed medical allowance of Rs. 100/- per month for meeting expenditure on day-to-day medical expenses. The scope of these concessions, however, does not include treatment of cancer, pulmonary tuberculosis, leprosy, mental disease, malignant disease or any other disease for which the treatment is not available from local military sources. In addition to this, financial assistance for specified diseases at specified rates is provided to ex-servicemen and their dependents from Armed Forces Flag Day Fund. The Army Group Insurance (AGI) introduced a medical insurance scheme for ex-servicemen/dependents to provide cover for treatment for heart, cancer, renal transplant, hip/knee joint replacement, prostrate surgery etc. in authorized hospitals.

Representations have been received from various ex-servicemen organisations/individuals to provide adequate medicare at par with Central Government civilian pensioners.

A proposal to provide comprehensive medicare to ex-servicemen and their dependents is under active consideration of the Government.

Electrification of Rail Routes

*628. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of new/on-going/pending rail route electrification projects in the country, project-wise;

(b) the amount allocated to each project along with the expenditure incurred thereon so far;

(c) whether there has been inordinate delay in the electrification of certain routes in the country;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the target date fixed for their completion, project-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : (a), (b) and (e) No new railway electrification project has been included in this year i.e. 2002-03. However, the details of the on-going/pending electrification projects alongwith expenditure incurred till 31.3.2002 and the target date of completion are as under :

(Figures Rupees in crores)

S. No.	Name of Project	Route kilometre	Cost	Expenditure upto 31.3.02	Outlay for 2002-03	Target Date
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Circular Railway around Lucknow area under Northern/North Eastern Railway including Malhaur-Safedabad-Barabanki	38	33.34	17.99	6.00	The work on Circular Railway completed. The electrification upto Safedabad to be completed by June, 02 and further upto Barabanki at a later date.
2.	Kusunda-Jamuniatand	23	16.42	6.42	10.00	June, 02
3.	Barsat-Hasnabad	52	36.90	12.14	1.00	June, 02
4.	Bhubaneshwar-Kottavalasa	426	319.63	275.45	30.00	Completed except for Khurda Road – Puri which came up at later stage and targeted for completion by March 2003
5.	Bokaro Steel City-Muri-Hatia-Bondamunda-Barsuan/Kiriburu including Purulia-Kotshila	434	269.81	265.24	4.57	Mar., 03
6.	Patna-Gaya	92	36.44	0.00	5.00	Mar., 03
7.	Ambala-Moradabad	274	152.21	111.11	40.00	Mar., 03
8.	Kharagpur/Nimpura-Bhubaneshwar including branch line of Talcher-Cuttack-Paradeep	540	317.36	192.45	21.57	Mar., 03
9.	Udhna-Jalgaon	306	140.99	108.90	30.00	Mar., 03
10.	Tambaram-Villupuram and Chengalpattu-Arakkonam	197	38.44	24.47	11.00	Mar., 03
11.	Renigunta-Guntakal	308	168.34	10.61	16.00	Mar., 04
12.	Gadhiana-Amritsar	136	98.19	37.53	21.00	Mar., 04
13.	Ernakulam-Trivandrum	320	161.76	20.58	15.00	Mar., 04

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	Krishnanagar-Lalgola	128	72.12	0.01	6.00	Mar., 04
15.	Delhi-Sarai Rohilla-Gurgaon	30	12.00	0.01	1.00	Awaiting requisite clearances
16.	Mughalsarai-Zafarabad	68	49.96	0.01	11.00	Awaiting requisite clearances
17.	Khurja-Meerut-Saharanpur	207	89.21	0.00	1.00	Awaiting requisite clearances

(c) and (d) There have not been inordinate delay in completion of electrification projects. However, the progress of electrification works depend upon annual budget provision and Law and Order situation in that region.

Demand of CNG/LNG

*629. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering special package to cope up with the increasing demand of CNG and LNG;

(b) if so, whether the various State Governments including Maharashtra have urged for Special quota of CNG gas;

(c) if so, the present status thereof;

(d) whether due to short supplies by GAIL, various industries including Rashtriya Chemical Fertilizers are suffering;

(e) whether the Government have decided to frame any policy for short supply of CNG/LNG to industries;

(f) if so, the present status of short supply;

(g) whether any new proposal to increase the gas production including LNG/CNG has been considered; and

(h) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (h) To meet the increasing demand of natural gas, steps such as import of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and speeding up of indigenous exploration/exploitation of domestic hydrocarbon resources have been initiated. Allocation of natural gas for supply to the transport sector as compressed natural gas (CNG) to any State is dependent on the availability of natural gas and infrastructure for distribution. The supply of gas to various industries including Rashtriya Chemical Fertilizers in Maharashtra has been reduced on account of declining production in the ONGC's fields supplying gas at Uran. The industries to which gas allocation is made, are required

to have dual fuel capacity as per the terms of the contract. In case of short supply of gas, pro-rata cut is generally effected on the consumers but priority is given to power projects and fertilizer units. As against the present allocation of 16.6 million standard cubic meters per day (MMSCMD) of natural gas ex-Uran, the present gas availability is only around 8.3 MMSCMD.

[Translation]

Demand and Supply of Kerosene

*630. PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the supply of kerosene is less than its demand in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the quantity of kerosene demanded and supplied during the last three years in the country, State-wise; and

(d) the quantity of kerosene imported to meet the demand along with the rate at which imports were made during the said period ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (d) Kerosene supplies under Public Distribution System (PDS) are made as per the allocation approved by Central Government to various States/Union Territories. Allocation to various States/Union Territories for the year 2002-2003 has been made on historical basis keeping in view the additional LPG connections given to the States/Union Territories. Oil Companies make available the product at their supply locations for upliftment by the concerned State/Union Territories. The requirement for distribution other than under PDS is met by public Sector Oil Companies and parallel marketeers.

The details of State-wise PDS Kerosene allocation and upliftment during 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

The quantity of Kerosene imported to meet the demand and the rate at which the import is made is given in the enclosed Statement-II.

Statement-I

State-wise SKO Allocation and Upliftment during 1999-00 to 2001-02

(Figures in MT)

States/UTs	1999-00				2000-01				2001-02 (Provisional)			
	Allocation	Adhoc	Total Allocation	Upliftment	Allocation	Adhoc	Total Allocation	Upliftment	Allocation	Adhoc	Total Allocation	Upliftment
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Andaman and Nicobar	6736	301	7037	7169	6736	0	6736	6731	6382	0	6382	6371
Andhra Pradesh	679848	0	679848	675171	650596	778	651375	633225	592517	1946	594463	589555
Arunachal Pradesh	10295	623	10917	10835	10346	0	10346	9896	10079	0	10079	10439
Assam	272623	0	272623	272288	273270	0	273270	272839	267475	0	267475	268784
Bihar	870036	0	870036	869069	894246	0	894246	883001	655846	0	655846	657969
Chandigarh	15408	0	15408	15248	15408	0	15408	13718	14729	0	14729	13310
Chhattisgarh*					*	*	*	*	150966	0	150966	147165
Dadar and Nagar Haveli	3238	0	3238	3215	3238	0	3238	3229	3119	0	3119	3096
Daman and Diu	2438	0	2438	2962	2438	0	2438	2393	2374	0	2374	2231
Delhi	204672	0	204672	203057	204672	0	204672	202792	198823	0	198823	197717
Goa	28075	0	28075	28084	28075	0	28075	28067	23639	0	23639	23647
Gujarat	832432	4864	837295	837545	832432	42023	874455	857169	804436	0	804436	799031
Haryana	171731	0	171731	173673	175633	0	175633	174466	166976	0	166976	171503
Himachal Pradesh	61067	778	61845	63997	61434	0	61434	52986	59690	0	59690	49353
Jammu and Kashmir	91921	19844	111765	117232	92376	12840	105216	96942	90544	2568	93112	90693
Jharkhand*					*	*	*	*	219783	0	219783	217815
Karnataka	531167	0	531167	528190	534360	0	534360	533396	520903	0	520903	520080
Kerala	302078	0	302078	301198	309149	0	309149	307639	269497	0	269497	266655

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Lakshadweep	921	0	921	727	921	0	921	784	902	0	902	255
Madhya Pradesh	666632	0	666632	665148	685182	0	685182	669284	511168	0	511168	507218
Maharashtra	1577953	0	1577953	1570502	1488926	0	1488926	1514231	1442085	0	1442085	1440203
Manipur	22781	78	22859	22169	22781	0	22781	19460	21880	900	22780	16315
Meghalaya	20960	74	21034	22037	21086	0	21086	20991	20597	0	20597	21204
Mizoram	8146	0	8146	8018	8195	0	8195	7736	7284	0	7284	7182
Nagaland	14284	78	14362	14296	14370	0	14370	14393	13513	0	13513	14076
Orissa	318903	62793	381696	343427	327777	54475	382251	336512	321994	5837	327831	319792
Pondicherry	15363	0	15363	15268	15363	0	15363	15037	14606	0	14606	14101
Punjab	343127	0	343127	341875	343127	0	343127	331800	301725	0	301725	297969
Rajasthan	443265	0	443265	446844	450930	93385	544316	509834	428299	0	428299	424012
Sikkim	7895	0	7895	8875	7895	0	7895	7541	6924	0	6924	6393
Tamil Nadu	720076	12451	732527	731008	720076	12451	732527	721605	633880	778	634658	634891
Tripura	32562	0	32562	32469	32757	0	32757	30440	32274	0	32274	30856
Uttar Pradesh	1401255	9650	1410905	1409905	1440246	16537	1456783	1438437	1288674	9339	1298013	1292742
Uttaranchal*												
West Bengal	812309	7782	820091	817261	816158	15564	831722	827053	795453	0	795453	795592
All India	10490199	119316	10609516	10558762	10490199	248054	10738253	10543627	10011095	21367	10032462	9968887

*New States were formed during Nov., 2000 – Allocation is included in undivided Bihar, M.P. and U.P.

Statement-II*Kerosene Imports for the last three Years*

Year	Quantity (TMT)			Rate	
	Public Sector Under-takings	Parallel Marketing Scheme	Total	\$/MT	Rs/MT
1999-00	5144	1168	6312	202.10	8808.54
2000-01	1606	312	1918	272.26	12496.76
2001-02 (Provisional)	90	240	330	261.18	12283.92
Total	6840	1720	8560		

- TMT is Thousand Metric Tonne.
- PMS imports are based on industry assessment
- Rate is approximate average for PSU imports only.

*[English]***Rural Electrification**

*631. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH :
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have prepared a new scheme to provide subsidy on interest to those States which would undertake developmental works in rural electrification;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the funds earmarked for the new scheme during 2002-03, State-wise;

(c) whether to upgrade the rural electrification, new guidelines have been issued by the Union Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the target set for rural electrification during the current year; and

(e) the achievements of rural electrification during the past few years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) The Government of India has introduced a new interest subsidy scheme called the "Accelerated Rural Electrification Programme" (AREP) under which a provision of Rs. 164 crore has been kept in the budget for 2002-03.

(c) and (d) It has been resolved in the Chief Ministers' Conference held on 3rd March, 2001 to complete rural electrification by the end of 10th Plan i.e. by the year 2007 and the coverage of all households by the year 2012. In order to attain this objective, rural electrification has been treated as a Basic Minimum Service and has been included under Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) from the year 2001-02. Under this programme, Ministry of Finance have released an amount of Rs. 412.236 crores to the States during 2001-02. Ministry of Finance have also released an amount of Rs. 175 crores during 2001-2002 under Minimum Needs Programme (MNP) for rural electrification.

The Planning Commission have made an allocation of Rs. 2747.00 crore for all the six components of PMGY including rural electrification, as Additional Central Assistance for the year 2002-03. Under the revised guidelines of PMGY formulated by the Planning Commission, the States would have flexibility to decide the interse allocation of ACA among the six PMGY sectors as per their own plan priorities and discretion. The Planning Commission have made a budget provision of Rs. 600 crore as ACA for rural electrification under Minimum Needs Programme for 2002-03. In addition to this, Rural Electrification Corporation have formulated new schemes for electrification of dalit bastis and hamlets at lower rate of interest.

(e) The State-wise achievement of Village Electrification and Pumpset Energisation from the year 1997-2002 (February) and the Status of unelectrified villages are given at enclosed Statement-I, II and III respectively.

Statement-I*Yearwise and Statewise Progress of Village Electrification during the last five year*

S.No.	States	Villages Electrified during the year				
		1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02 (Upto Feb. 2002)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Andhra Pradesh	②	②	②	②	②

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	38	48	24	3-5	NIL(e)
3.	Assam	20	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL(d)
4.	Bihar	5	8	43	37	25(g)
5.	Jharkhand (#)					
6.	Goa	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
7.	Gujarat	9	4	@	@	@
8.	Haryana	@	@	@	@	@
9.	Himachal Pradesh	139	45	25	37	5
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	14	NA	NA	NA	NA
11.	Karnataka	NIL	13	15	60(*)	8(f)
12.	Kerala	@	@	@	@	@
13.	Madhya Pradesh	463	300	87	15	NIL(g)
14.	Chhattisgarh (#)				1	NIL(b)
15.	Maharashtra	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
16.	Manipur	52	50	11	NIL	NIL
17.	Meghalaya	43	NIL	NIL	8	33(f)
18.	Mizoram	12	3	4	NIL	NIL
19.	Nagaland	NIL	10	33	16	NIL(c)
20.	Orissa	800	817	748	42	NIL(b)
21.	Punjab	@	@	@	@	@
22.	Rajasthan	698	685	510	465	231
23.	Sikkim	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
24.	Tamil Nadu	@	@	@	@	@
25.	Tripura	15	3	4	3	NIL
26.	Uttar Pradesh	851	711	476	260	105(f)
27.	Uttaranchal (#)				158	NA(a)
28.	West Bengal	48	83	113	81	37(g)
Total (States)		3207	2780	2093	1218	444
Total (Uts)		@	@	@	@	@
Total (All India)		3207	2780	2093	1218	444

Note : Target not finalised

(*) Inclusive of 48 Nos. of villages which have already electrified earlier.

@ Cent Percent village electrified

\$ Cent Percent villages electrified as per 1981 census

NA Not available

(#) Newly constituted States in 2000-01

(a) progress reported to the end of 31.3.2001

(b) progress reported to the end of 30.4.2001

(c) progress reported to the end of 30.9.2001

(d) progress reported to the end of 31.10.2001

(e) progress reported to the end of 30.11.2001

(f) progress reported to the end of 31.12.2001

(g) progress reported to the end of 31.1.2002

Statement-II

Yearwise and Statewise Progress of Pumpset during the last five year

S.No.	States	Pumpset Energisation during the year				
		1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02 (Upto Feb. 2002)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Andhra Pradesh	3398	59997	34026	5831	2052(e)
2.	Arunachal Pradesh					
3.	Assam	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL(d)
4.	Bihar	932	813	1539	2282	874(g)
5.	Jharkhand (#)					
6.	Goa	391	136	68	209	NA(a)
7.	Gujarat	25931	26262	26665	23741	34574
8.	Haryana	943	835	783	9450	6607
9.	Himachal Pradesh	318	294	370	405	444
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	533	NA	NA	NA	NA
11.	Karnataka	32685	59674	40139	81896	24831(f)
12.	Kerala	14723	24050	20457	18433	11863
13.	Madhya Pradesh	52699	45857	23235	11369	5848(g)
14.	Chhattisgarh (#)				1244	81(b)
15.	Maharashtra	59473	58810	65530	52185	17689(c)
16.	Manipur				NIL	-
17.	Meghalaya				-	-
18.	Mizoram				-	-
19.	Nagaland				-	-
20.	Orissa	1903	1312	1167	99	NIL(b)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Punjab	8941	9810	10169	22713	24360	
22. Rajasthan	25306	25051	22942	26070	15051	
23. Sikkim				—	—	
24. Tamil Nadu	41920	34673	36397	43466	36660	
25. Tripura		121(*)	209	NA	—	
26. Uttar Pradesh	11645	16113	11403	7980	7260(f)	
27. Uttranchal (#)				106	NA(a)	
28. West Bengal	1610	2855	2053	1502	650(g)	
Total (States)	283351	366663	297152	308981	188844	
Total (Uts)	713	581	442	255	130	
Total (All India)	284064	367244	297594	309236	188974	

Note : Target not finalised

(*) Inclusive of last year achievement.

(#) Newly constituted States in 2000-01

(a) progress reported to the end of 31.3.2001

(b) progress reported to the end of 30.4.2001

(c) progress reported to the end of 30.9.2001

(d) progress reported to the end of 31.10.2001

(e) progress reported to the end of 30.11.2001

(f) progress reported to the end of 31.12.2001

(g) progress reported to the end of 31.1.2002

Statement-III

Progress of Village Electrification as on 28.2.2002

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Total inhabitant villages	Cumulative villages electrified as on 28.2.2002	Balance villages to be electrified as on 28.2.2002	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	26586	26565	NIL	Balance 21 villages declared non-feasible for electrification
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	3649	2206	1443	Progress reported to the end of 30.11.2001
3.	Assam	24685	19019	5666	Progress reported to the end of 31.10.2001
4.	Bihar	67513	47950	19563	Progress reported to the end of 31.1.2002
5.	Jharkhand (#)++				
6.	Goa	360	360	NIL	

1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Gujarat	18028	17940	NIL	Balance 88 villages declared non-feasible for electrification
8.	Haryana	6759	6759	NIL	
9.	Himachal Pradesh	16997	16886	111	
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	6477	6315	162	Progress reported to the end of 31.3.98
11.	Karnataka	27066	26759	26	Balance 281 villages non-feasible for elec- trification
12.	Kerala	1384	1384	NIL	Progress reported to the end of 31.12.2001
13.	Madhya Pradesh	51806	50286	1520	Progress reported to the end of 31.1.2001
14.	Chhattisgarh(#)	19720	18076	1644	Progress reported to the end of 31.4.2001
15.	Maharashtra	40412	40349	NIL	Balance 63 villages declared non-feasible to electrification
16.	Manipur	2182	2001	181	
17.	Meghalaya	5484	2551	2933	Progress reported to the end of 31.12.2001
18.	Mizoram	698	691	7	
19.	Nagaland	1216	1212	4	Progress reported to the end of 30.9.2001
20.	Orissa	4699	35232	11757	Progress reported to the end of 30.4.2001
21.	Punjab	12428	12428	NIL	
22.	Rajasthan	37889	36143	1746	
23.	Sikkim	447	405	42	42 nos. forest villages
24.	Tamil Nadu	15822	15822	NIL	
25.	Tripura	855	813	42	
26.	Uttar Pradesh	97122	77152	19970	Progress reported to the end of 31.12.2001
27.	Uttaranchal (#)	15681	12488	3193	Progress reported to the end of 31.3.2001
28.	West Bengal	37910	29633	8277	Progress reported to the end of 31.1.2002
Total (States)		586165	507425	78287	Balance 453 villages declared non-feasible for electrification
Total (UTs)		1093	1090	NIL	Balance 3 villages declared non-feasible for electrification
Total (All India)		587258	508515	78287	Balance 456 villages declared non-feasible for electrification

Newly formed States

++ separate data is not available

Survey of Hazira Gas Fields

*632. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a revised survey of the Hazira Gas Fields off the South Gujarat coast has found much greater reserves than the initial estimates;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to explore the reserves ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) and (b) Based on a recent study, inplace natural gas reserves in Hazira field have been estimated at 17.8 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM) as against 0.052 BCM at the time of offer of the field in 1992.

(c) Following steps have been taken to explore and produce natural gas from the field;

(i) Geological and Geophysical studies have been carried out.

(ii) 3 D (Three Dimensional) seismic data in offshore part of the field has been acquired.

(iii) Two delineation wells have been drilled.

(iv) Eighteen production wells have been drilled and the field is currently producing natural gas @ 2.5 million cubic meter per day.

Promotion of Hydro Power Generations

*633. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a recent study of the Asian Regional Research Programme in Energy, Environment and Climate (ARRPEEC), has stressed the need for a major boost to the hydro-power generation in the country;

(b) if so, whether any action plan has been drawn to adopt and promote this strategy for conservation of hydro-carbons, fossil fuels and controlling of Green House Gases (GHGs) for implementation during the 10th Plan and thereafter; and

(c) if so, the details of such a plan of action ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Asian Regional Research Programme in Energy,

Environment and Climate (ARRPEEC) have suggested that hydro power generation is an attractive option to mitigate Green House Gases emission from the power sector.

The Government of India is already giving boost to non-fossil fuel generation. The likely capacity addition through Hydro Power generation in the 10th Five Year Plan and 11th Five Year Plan is 17,311 MW and 19,262 MW respectively. In order to reduce green house gases emission in the Power Sector, the Government is encouraging adoption of clean coal technologies like super critical boilers, IGCC, use of washed coal etc.; promoting efficient use of energy in industrial, commercial, agricultural and domestic sectors; and giving thrust to efficiency improvement in the thermal power plants through renovation and modernization and losses reduction in transmission and distribution sectors. The Government is also promoting and developing renewable energy sources. These efforts will eventually reduce green house gases emission and also result in conservation of fossil fuel.

Self-Sufficiency in Power Sector

*634. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether India is not technologically self-sufficient in power sector, specially in transmission; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) As far as the Transmission Technology is concerned, India is self sufficient to cater to the requirements. 400 KV AC networks (consisting of lines and substations) have been built and are being operated. For the transmission voltages 400 KV- and below, the country is fully self sufficient in technological terms. In the 765 KV AC transmission system, considerable indigenous expertise is available. In High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) transmission at ± 500 KV, though the systems (for bulk power transmission from point-to-point and for inter-regional connection through back-to-back mode) are in operation over a decade, indigenous development of components is very much limited.

Nevertheless, technology needs to be upgraded continuously to meet the growing requirement of demand and give the benefits of cost effectiveness, increased reliability, durability of equipments and higher availability of transmission system. To this effect, a continuous interaction with various leading manufacturers, utilities, consultants and academia is carried out by POWERGRID to keep

abreast with the latest technological advancements, innovations, expertise and other techniques available in this field across the globe.

Supply of Gas to Industries by GAIL

*635. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether GAIL has spent Rs. 135 crore on the infrastructure for supply of gas to industries with a view to protect Taj Mahal from the harmful effects of pollution;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether GAIL propose to increase the price, at which it transports natural gas, by Rs. 50 thousand standard cubic meters;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the extent to which industries are likely to be effected by this decision of the GAIL;

(f) whether the Government have since cleared the hike proposed by GAIL; and

(g) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (g) GAIL has spent a total amount of Rs. 102 crore till March, 2002 in the Taj Trapezium Zone on creation of pipeline infrastructure, such as Bajhera – Agra spur line, Agra-Ferozabad spur line, Agra-Ferozabad City Gas Distribution pipeline network and establishment of city gas station for supply to industries with related metering stations for individual consumers. No decision about the increase in the transportation tariff has been taken.

Uplinking Facility from Indian Satellites

*636. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN :
SHRI C.N. SINGH :

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

(a) the number of television channels that have applied for uplinking facility from Indian satellites;

(b) the number of applications cleared so far, channel-wise; and

(c) the time by which the remaining applications are likely to be cleared ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) The present policy of uplinking from India allows television channels to uplink both to Indian as well as foreign satellites. Proposals envisaging use of Indian satellites are accorded preferential treatment 56 private television channels have been permitted to uplink from India and none of them has applied for uplinking from Indian satellite.

(c) Eight applications are under examination, in consultation with other Ministries. No firm time frame for their clearance can be indicated at this stage.

Freight Traffic on Konkan Railways

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

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Zonal Railways are reluctant to ply goods trains through Konkan Railway resulting in heavy loss;

(b) if so, whether the Konkan Railway is unable to pay its debt;

(c) if so, the loss suffered by the Konkan Railway during the last three years;

(d) whether the freight traffic in Konkan Railway is not up to the expectation of the authorities; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by the Konkan Railway to attract the freight traffic and to make up the losses ?

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

(b) Even though there is no reluctance to move freight traffic over Konkan Railway, it is unable to pay its debt and interest liabilities which the Corporation incurred during its construction phase;

(c) On account of the provisions required to be made for the financing cost incurred on market borrowings and on depreciation, the Corporation is showing a loss in its Balance sheet as follows :

1998-1999	Rs. 340 crores
1999-2000	Rs. 385 crores
2000-01	Rs. 382 crores
2001-02	Rs. 380 crores (provisional)

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The following steps have been/are being taken by Konkan Railway to attract freight traffic and to make up losses;

- Aggressive marketing.
- Formation of Konkan Railway Freight Users Group to facilitate better coordination between users and Konkan Railway.
- To attract traffic moving by road, Konkan Railway has started Ro-Ro service (Roll-on-Roll-off) between Kolad and Verna.

Speedy and Inexpensive Legal Movement

*638. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government are considering result oriented speedy and inexpensive legal movement for the benefits of the weaker section; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this direction ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) and (b) (i) At present, the Lok Adalats can settle disputes only on the basis of compromise or settlement among the parties. If the parties do not arrive at a settlement, the case is either returned to the court of law or the parties are advised to seek remedy in a court of law. To remove this drawback, it has been decided to add a new chapter in the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, which will facilitate setting up of permanent Lok Adalats for providing compulsory pre-litigative mechanism for conciliation and settlement of cases relating to public utility services. A Bill to this effect has already been introduced in Lok Sabha. The National Legal Services Authority or the State Legal Services Authority, as the case may be, may establish permanent Lok Adalat at such places and in such numbers as may be expedient to enable the Lok Adalats to exercise its jurisdiction in respect of one or more public utility services as necessary from time to time. The permanent Lok Adalats would have jurisdiction regarding public utility services such as transport (air, road, water), postal, telegraph or telephone, power, water sanitation, hospitals and insurance. To avoid prolonged litigation it has also been proposed that the award made by the Lok Adalat shall be final, binding and shall not be questioned in any original suit, application or

execution proceeding. The jurisdiction of the Lok Adalats would be limited to cases upto a monetary value of Rs. 10 lakhs. Under clause 22C of the Legal Services Authorities (Amendment) Bill, 2002 which is yet to be passed by Parliament, Government has power to increase the limit of ten lakh rupees in consultation with National Legal Services Authority. After the Bill is passed, the scheme of setting up of permanent Lok Adalats for providing compulsory pre-litigative mechanism will come into being. The setting up of these permanent Lok Adalats will result in speedy and inexpensive justice to the weaker sections.

(ii) According to Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 (39 of 1987), every person who has to file or defend a case shall be entitled to legal services if that person is –

- (a) a member of a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe;
- (b) a victim of trafficking in human beings or beggar as referred to in Article 23 of the Constitution;
- (c) a women or a child;
- (d) a mer lly ill or otherwise disabled person;
- (e) a person under circumstances of underserved want such as being a victim of a mass disaster, ethnic violence, caste atrocity, flood, drought, earthquake or industrial disaster; or
- (f) an industrial workman; or
- (g) in custody, including custody in a protective home within the meaning of clause (g) of section 2 of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, or in a juvenile home within the meaning of clause (i) of section 2 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986 in a psychiatric hospital or psychiatric nursing home within the meaning of clause (g) of section 2 of the Mental Health Act, 1987; or
- (h) in receipt of annual income less than rupees nine thousand or such other higher amount as may be prescribed by the State Government, if the case is before a court other than the Supreme Court, and less than rupees twelve thousand or such other higher amount as may be prescribed by the

Central Government, if the case is before the Supreme Court.

The Central Authority constituted under Section 3 of the said Act is taking steps to establish vibrant legal aid programmes such as promotion of legal literacy, setting up of legal aid clinics in universities and law colleges, training of para-legals, and holding of legal aid camps and Lok Adalats. The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) is also formulating policies and schemes to achieve the aims and objects of the Act.

The National Legal Services Authority provides grants-in-aid to the State Legal Services Authorities and the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee for providing legal assistance to the needy applicants, who fulfill the criterion laid down for the purpose under Section 12 of the Act. During the year 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01, a sum of Rs. 2,45,89,000/-, 2,54,50,000/- and 3,32,55,000/- respectively have been released. A detailed Statement in enclosed.

Statement

Number of Persons benefitted through Court Oriented Programmes for the last three years viz., 1998, 1999 and 2000

(Based on the information provided by the State Legal Services Authorities)

S. No.	Name of the State/Union Territory	No. of persons benefitted during the year			Grand Total (Col. Nos. 3 to 5)
		1998	1999	2000	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1,623	1,584	1,268	4,475
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	—	50	—	50
3.	Assam	—	—	—	—
4.	Bihar	1,680	1,457	558	3,695
5.	Goa	—	—	93	93
6.	Gujarat	1,393	2,306	2,252	5,951
7.	Haryana	332	1,054	1,519	2,905
8.	Himachal Pradesh	178	303	232	713
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	371	935	1,563	2,869
10.	Karnataka	1,050	1,778	1,814	4,642

1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	Kerala	717	701	604	2,022
12.	Madhya Pradesh	26,298	31,738	33,722	91,758
13.	Maharashtra	5,204	4,873	3,258	13,335
14.	Manipur	—	2	—	2
15.	Meghalaya	—	—	—	—
16.	Mizoram	1,376	926	1,942	4,244
17.	Nagaland	—	1,610	1,262	2,872
18.	Orissa	1,023	1,923	1,610	4,556
19.	Punjab	1,591	1,824	1,707	5,122
20.	Rajasthan	1,999	2,465	2,747	7,211
21.	Sikkim	4	46	247	297
22.	Tamil Nadu	39,705	43,823	70,080	1,53,608
		84,544	99,398	1,26,478	3,10,420
23.	Tripura	23	18	45	86
24.	Uttar Pradesh	2,217	4,54,617	4,47,204	9,04,038
25.	West Bengal	2,600	1,700	1,544	5,844
26.	Andaman and Nicobar Island	29	103	229	361
27.	U.T. Chandigarh	258	685	1,031	1,974
28.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	—	3	5	8
29.	Daman and Diu	—	—	—	—
30.	Delhi	4,855	4,421	3,970	13,246
31.	Lakshadweep	—	—	—	—
32.	Pondicherry	928	802	1,121	2,851
33.	Supreme Court Legal Services Committee	343	603	345	1,291
Total		95,797	5,62,350	5,81,972	12,40,119

Medical facilities at Railway Stations/Trains

*639. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VERMA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to provide medical facilities at all the railway stations and in the running trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the said facility is likely to be provided; and

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

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : (a) to (d) In order to provide emergency medical aid to railway passengers, First Aid Boxes have been provided in all stations and with guards of all passenger trains. Staff of stations and guards are imparted training in rendering first aid. Further, augmented First Aid Boxes with a wider range of medicines and equipment have been provided for the benefit of the travelling public at nominated larger stations and nominated long distance trains. Initially 162 pairs of long distance trains with limited halt were selected for provision of these boxes, out of which 30 pairs of long distance trains, all Rajdhani/Shatabdi Express trains and 156 'A' class stations were identified for implementation in the first phase. Twenty-nine (29) long distance trains, 14 pairs of Rajdhani Express/13 pairs of Shatabdi Express trains and 150 'A' class stations have already been provided with augmented First Aid Boxes. In order to supplement above efforts, a compiled list of medical facilities near railway stations with particulars are displayed in the Station Superintendent/Deputy Station Superintendent's office. Particulars such as name of hospital, nursing home, names of doctors with telephone number/numbers, distance of each facility from the station, details regarding facilities provided etc. are provided. The above information will be helpful to the travelling public at times of urgent need and also during unfortunate incidence of passenger train accidents.

Further during medical emergencies, Station staff are authorised to summon a railway medical officer 'on call' to attend on the needy person/persons.

The facility for providing augmented First Aid Boxes will be completed by July, 2003.

[Translation]

Digital Telecast

*640. SHRI JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Doordarshan is planning to beam digital telecast, country-wise;

(b) if so, the benefits likely to be derived therefrom; and

(c) the time by which digital telecast is likely to be introduced ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) Five (5) Doordarshan channels are presently being uplinked in digital mode and these signals are available through satellite in the entire country. Prasar Bharati has no scheme to start Digital telecast throughout the country in terrestrial mode. However, Doordarshan is setting up digital terrestrial transmitters at Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai for starting experimental service. The main advantages of Digital Terrestrial Transmission, as compared to analogue transmission, lie in its superior quality of audio and video signals; multi-channel operation; mobile reception and less transmission power requirement. The transmitter at Delhi has been installed and is presently under testing. Transmitters at Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai are expected to be installed during 2002.

[English]

Chlorinisation of Drinking Water

6448. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the drinking water has been spoiled due to chlorinisation carried out by Airforce plant situated in civil areas, Pune, Maharashtra; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Airforce to protect the drinking water ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Testing for AIDS

6449. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Ministry of Health has requested to his Ministry suggesting that those joining the armed forces may be tested for AIDS;

(b) if so, the reaction of his Ministry in this regard;

(c) whether only recruits have to go through a complete check-up or the whole armed forces are required to go under tests; and

(d) if so, the details regarding the policy of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above. However, the Government of India has announced the National AIDS Prevention and Control Policy in April 2002 which stipulates that no mandatory HIV testing should be imposed as pre-condition for employment or for providing health care facilities during employment. In the case of *Armed Forces*, before employment, HIV Screening may be carried out *voluntarily* with pre-test and post-test counselling and the result may be kept confidential.

MOU Signed by KPTCL with Xavier Institute of Management

6450. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI :
SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar, entrusting pilot projects in three operations and maintenance units to improve revenue collections and power service in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which it is likely to be helpful to the Karnataka State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Pilot Project covers 3 O and M Sections viz. Budigere in Devanahally Taluk, Bangalore Rural District; Kaiwara in Chintamani Taluk of Kolar District and Monavinakere in Tiptur Taluk of Tumkur District. The project will be for a period of 12 months from March, 2002. The objective of the project is reducing distribution losses and improving the revenue realization from consumers using electricity in rural areas. The project would cover all categories of LT consumers availing power supply from the distribution transformers of the sections.

This is a pilot project covering the consumers using electricity in rural areas and, if successful, would be replicated all over the State.

[Translation]

Revenue Earned by DD through Popular Serials

6451. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO :
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE :

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

(a) the names of the most popular serials telecast on Doordarshan which have earned huge revenue for the Government; and

(b) the details of the income earned by the Government from their telecast during the last three years, year-wise, serial-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) The details are given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Details of most successful TV serials and revenue earned by them

1997-98

S. No.	Name of Serial	Net Revenue earned (Amount in (Rs.))
1.	Om Namah Shivay	22,27,83,000/-
2.	Sri Krishna	17,52,07,450/-
3.	Jai Hanumaan	13,18,46,050/-

1998-99

1.	Jai Hanumaan	22,94,37,000/-
2.	Om Namah Shivay	22,03,53,000/-
3.	Sri Krishna	11,16,05,000/-

1999-2000

1.	Jai Hanumaan	24,22,13,700/-
2.	Noorjahan	21,06,00,000/-
3.	Om Namah Shivay	20,25,34,000/-

[English]

US Assistance for Development of Naval Variant LCA

6452. DR. RAJESWARAMMA VUKKALA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India has sought assistance from United States for developing Naval variant of Light Combat Aircraft; and

(b) if so, the response of the U.S. in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Royalty on Crude Oil

6453. SHRI A. NARENDRA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount provided as royalty to Andhra Pradesh during the last three years and total tonnage/ barrel extracted during the said period year-wise; and

(b) the details of royalty paid to other States, State-wise during the said period?

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 amount of royalty paid by ONGC on crude oil production in Andhra Pradesh was to the tune of Rs. 9.73 crore in 1999-2000, Rs. 19.83 crore in 2000-01 and Rs. 25.68 crore (provisional) in 2001-02. The production of crude oil by ONGC in the State of Andhra Pradesh during the last three years was of the order of 0.146 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) in 1999-2000, 0.262 MMT in 2000-01 and 0.282 MMT in 2001-02.

(b) A Statement indicating the details of royalty paid to various States during the last three years is attached.

Statement

Royalty paid to States on crude oil during the last three years

(Rupees in Crores)

S. No.	States	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02 (Provisional)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	9.73	19.83	25.68
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	4.09	3.67	2.87
3.	Assam	341.29	399.43	417.13
4.	Gujarat	413.51	464.18	547.49
5.	Rajasthan	1.51	2.50	2.05
6.	Tamil Nadu	26.59	34.38	39.93

[Translation]

Difficulties in Purchasing IInd Class Ticket at Delhi Railway Station

6454. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI :
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the passengers purchasing second class tickets at old Delhi Railway Station have to face huge rush;

(b) whether the Government are also aware that there are no proper arrangements for fresh air and water for the said passengers and the number of counters are much less in comparison to the number of passengers;

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to provide basic amenities to the passengers; 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) During the peak hours in morning and afternoon, long queues are formed in front of the booking counters for purchasing tickets.

(b) and (c) The main booking hall at Delhi Main Station has been made more airy by replacing the glass doors by grills. One Water cooler each has been provided in East Hall and Reservation Hall. 25 booking counters have been provided at Old Delhi station which work in 3 shifts and on an average approximately 500 tickets are issued by one counter in one shift which is within limit. However, during peak hours, Supervisors/Inspectors are being deputed to keep a watch on the queue length at the counters and to open extra counters, if necessary.

(d) Does not arise.

Jubilee Retail Outlets on Labour Contract System

6455. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH BARWALA :
SHRI BALI RAM KASHYAP :
SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL :
SHRI SUBODH MOHITE :
SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN :

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

(a) whether the various Public Sector Oil Companies are running Jubilee Retail outlets in the country;

(b) if so, whether all the oil companies have appointed labour contractors for running their jubilee retail outlets;

(c) if so, whether all the oil companies follow the uniform guidelines in making such appointments;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of new facilities provided at Jubilee Petrol Pump of oil companies in the country?

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) The oil marketing companies (OMCs) are operating Jubilee Retail Outlets (JROs) in the country. These JROs are operated under the supervision of an officer of the OMC concerned. Labour assistance for day-to-day operation of the outlet is provided through the labour contractors, appointed by the OMCs in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Government in this regard. The tenure of the labour contractor for the JROs is normally one year.

(e) The scheme for setting up JROs on highways was launched with a view to fulfilling the demand of travellers like tourists and truckers for fuels along with multiple associated facilities. These facilities inter alia include parking lot restaurant/dhaba, toilets, bathing and washing rooms, rest rooms for drivers, recreation facilities, telephone facilities, mini shopping mart, etc.

[English]

Recommendations of Nitish Sengupta Committee

6456. SHRIMATI MINATI SEN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Nitish Sengupta Committee recommended merger of IBP with Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited during 1998;

(b) if so, the present status of the recommendations of the Committee; and

(c) the reasons for not following the Committee's recommendation in toto?

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) Nitish Sengupta Committee had recommended, inter-alia, that Government should disinvest 33.6% share holding of IBP to a strategic partner i.e. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) directly as permissible under the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) take over guidelines. However, IBP Co. Limited was one of the companies referred to the Disinvestment Commission in September, 1996 and the Commission in its 5th report presented to Government, recommended that Government should disinvest 33.6% of the Company's equity out of Government holding of 59.6% in IBP through strategic sale. The recommendation of Sengupta Committee and the report of Disinvestment Commission were examined by the Government and a final decision was taken to retain 26% of its equity in IBP and the balance to be disinvested to a strategic partner.

[Translation]

Power Generated from NCES

6457. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether any programme has been launched or proposed to be launched for exploration and research to find out possibilities of non-conventional energy sources in Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any progress has not been made in the work of exploration, development and implementation of non-conventional energy sources in Rajasthan as adequate funds have not been allocated by the Union Government;

(d) if not, the details of the steps taken for promoting power generation and the funds allocated for this purpose; and

(e) the expenditure incurred thereon during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources has taken up resource assessments in the area of wind, solar, biomass and small hydro power in Rajasthan. Wind resource assessment has been undertaken at 56 sites. Of these, eight have been identified as potential sites for wind power projects. A solar

observatory has been set up at Mathania in Jodhpur district. Biomass resource assessment studies have been taken up in 20 talukas in the State, of which 10 have so far been completed. 49 potential sites for small hydro power projects, having a potential of 27.26 MW, have been identified in the State.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) A wind power capacity of 16 MW, including demonstration projects of 6.4 MW capacity, has so far been set up in the State. A 140 MW Integrated Solar Combined Cycle Power Project is proposed for village Mathania in Jodhpur district. Two grid interactive Solar Photovoltaic Power Plants of 25 KW capacity each have been installed in Jaipur, 10 small hydro power projects aggregating to 23.85 MW capacity have also been set up in the State.

State-wise allocation of funds is not made. Sanction of projects is considered on the basis of proposals received from the State agencies. The Ministry has released an amount of Rs. 12.66 crores for non-conventional energy based power projects in Rajasthan during the last three years.

[English]

Administrative Scenario in Cantonments

6458. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the high level committee has reviewed the administrative scenario of all cantonments across the country as reported in the 'Indian Express' dated February 23, 2002;

(b) if so, the findings of the committee;

(c) whether the Government have postponed elections to all Cantonments Boards;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the time by which the election would be held ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) The Committee constituted to examine the feasibility of merger of Indian Defence Estate Service with the Military Engineering Service has not finalised its findings

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. No time frame has been fixed for holding of elections to Cantonment Boards.

Setting Up Wind Power Project

6459. SHRI SANJIT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to set up any wind power project for Sundarbans, West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) to (c) Based on wind resource assessment studies, Frazergunj and Sagar Island in Sunderbans area of West Bengal have been identified as potential sites for wind power projects. A 1 MW demonstration wind farm project has already been commissioned at Frazergunj. It is planned to increase the capacity to 2 MW. A 100 KW wind diesel project has also been commissioned at Sagar Island for village electrification. The capacity of this project is proposed to be increased to 500 KW.

Production Target of DSP

6460. SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Durgapur Steel Plant has fulfilled its production target during 2001-2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there was a proposal to give Rs. 200 crores assistance to Durgapur Steel Plant for launching finished mill; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not given the Rs. 200 crores to DSP for the purpose ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Saleable steel target has been fulfilled during the year 2001-02 by Durgapur Steel Plant. Details are as follows :

	Unit' 000 t		
	Target	Actual	%Ful.
Saleable Steel	1510	1527	101

(c) and (d) A new Finishing Mill was planned to be taken up during the later part of 9th Plan, depending upon techno-viability and market condition. However, due to the sluggish market conditions and adverse financial position of SAIL, the same could not be taken up and will now be considered during the 10th Plan.

Electricity Rates by NTPC

6461. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the NTPC is charging abnormal amount from Kerala Governments with regard to electricity produced at Kayamkulam in Kerala than they charge from other power stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government of Kerala has represented to reduce the rate; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) The tariff for all generating companies including National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) owned and controlled by the Central Government is determined by Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), constituted under the Electricity Regulatory Commissions Act, 1998. Accordingly, the tariff for various NTPC stations including Kayamkulam is determined by CERC.

Kayamkulam is a combined cycle power plant using naphtha as the bridge fuel. Because of high cost of naphtha, the energy charges for Kayamkulam station are higher compared to other thermal power stations of NTPC which use coal or gas as fuel.

The capacity and energy charges for Kayamkulam station at normative level of generation of 68.49% plant load factor (PLF) as per provisional tariff approved by CERC are as follows :

Capacity Charges – Rs. 259.84 crore per annum.
This works out to Rs. 1.24/kwh at normative level of generation

Energy Charges – Rs. 2.39/kwh at naphtha price of Rs. 13136 per Metric ton billed for March, 2002.

(c) and (d) The entire power from Kayamkulam is allocated to Kerala. Ministry of Power had taken up the

matter with Government of Kerala to surrender part of its share from Kayamkulam station. After protracted correspondence, Government of Kerala has recently expressed its intention to surrender 100 MW power from this station for one year during off-peak hours. The issue was discussed by Central Electricity Authority with Southern Region State Electricity Boards for inclusion of Kayamkulam power in a pooling arrangement of Regional Energy Accounting of Southern Region. However, the beneficiaries of the Southern Region have shown reluctance to utilize Kayamkulam power at its present tariff on a regular basis. The issue of pooled tariff for power generation from Kayamkulam Station is under discussions with Southern Region States.

[Translation]

VVIPs Programmes on Doordarshan

6462. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the Ministers and Members of Parliament from Rajasthan who were invited in various programmes of DD-1 and Metro Channel during the last one year;

(b) whether permission from Central Government has to be sought to invite a Minister or Member of Parliament on DD-1 and Metro Channel;

(c) if so, the criteria fixed to invite the VVIPs for programmes of DD-1 and Metro Channel;

(d) whether the norms fixed have been adhered to by the officials; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Prasar Bharati has informed that following MPs and Ministers from Rajasthan were invited for Doordarshan programmes during the last one year :

National Network

1. Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Affairs, Government of India
2. Shri L.M. Singhvi, MP
3. Shri K. Natwar Singh, MP
4. Shri Ram Das Agarwal, former MP

DDK, Jaipur (Regional Service)

11. Shri Ram Das Agarwal, former MP
12. Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargav, MP
13. Dr. Chanderbhan, Minister for Power and Energy
14. Shri Shanti Dhariwal, Minister for Local Self Government and Town Planning
15. Shri Rajendra Choudhury, Minister for Health
16. Shri C.P. Joshi, Minister for Education
17. Shri Abdul Aziz, Minister for State Statistical Department
18. Shri B.D. Kala, Minister for Labour
19. Smt. Zakia, Minister for Women and Child Development
20. Shri Ram Singh Bishnoi, Minister for Public Health Department.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) VVIPs are invited for programmes of DD-1 and Metro Channel as per programme requirements and availability of the VVIPs.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Norms for Defence Purchase

6463. SHRI B.K. PARTHASARATHI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that new norms for defence purchases are considered too rigid by the representatives of defence industry as mentioned in the news-item "Defence purchase norms exacting" appearing in 'The Hindu' dated March 17, 2002;

(b) if so, the objections raised in this regard; and

(c) the steps, if any proposed to be taken to relax the norms ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Government had not received any representation from the defence industry regarding the norms being rigid.

(c) There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to relax the norms.

Purchase of Refinery by ONGC

6464. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether ONGC has expressed their desire in forward integration and has sought to purchase a refinery and also marketing companies;

(b) if so, whether the Government have assessed the impact of ONGC leaving its core business activity;

(c) if so, the impact of ONGC diversifying in this manner;

(d) the steps proposed to ensure that ONGC concentrates on finding new sources of oil in the country; and

(e) the steps proposed to ensure that ONGC is more focused on its principal activity ?

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) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has informed that it has interest in forward integration of its activities, in line with its mission to be an integrated company in the energy business. ONGC has, however, no plans at this stage for purchase of a refinery or entering into the refining business on its own. ONGC has also informed that its focus and core activity would continue to be in finding new sources of oil and gas in the country and in acquiring equity oil abroad. Any future equity participation by ONGC in downstream companies/facilities would, however, provide synergy to its business.

(d) and (e) ONGC is planning to significantly step up exploration activities in frontier basins, particularly deepwater, during the X Plan period, as a part of its reserve accretion enhancement programme. Further, ONGC has made plans to invest about Rs. 12,000 Crore in augmenting oil/gas production and increasing the ultimate recovery from its 15 major fields

Illegally Smuggling of Important Records of DPC

6465. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the allegations regarding smuggling of some important records

of the Dabhol Power Company out of the country and also some documents were destroyed by setting it on fire;

(b) if so, whether any inquiry has been conducted into this incident; and

(c) if so, the details of findings along with the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) The Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), who are one of the lenders to the Dabhol power project, have informed that Dabhol Power Company has indicated that some electronic chips and coded computer drives have been removed for security reasons and that these components are in India and can be used for plant operations at any time. The company has also informed that all the critical documents and records are in London with their Counsel in connection with the arbitration proceedings with various Indian Government authorities. Dabhol Power Company has also informed that no original documents or records have been destroyed and to minimize storage costs, the company undertakes destruction of duplicate records from time to time.

Dabhol Power Company has also informed the Bombay High Court that the components are in India and would continue to remain so, and that they can be used for plant operations at any time. IDBI has advised Dabhol Power Company to intimate the address of the place(s) where the computer drives and records are kept and to assure that they have been preserved in the manner required and that inspection of the assets removed and records would be given to the Lenders and persons authorised by the Lenders, whenever required.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Incentives for Small Hydro Power Projects

6466. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated a package for small hydro power projects in the country;

(b) if so, the States which have availed these incentives;

(c) whether the Government have identified the small hydro power projects in every State; and

(d) if so, the small hydro power projects identified and executed in Orissa with the package of incentives granted by the Union Government during the Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources (MNES) is implementing a number of incentive schemes for the development of Small Hydro Power (SHP) projects in the country. These include, financial support for Detailed Survey and Investigation, and Detailed Project Report preparation; Capital Subsidy for Government sector projects, Interest Subsidy for commercial projects and support for Renovation and Modernization of old SHP projects. Almost all States except Rajasthan, Gujarat and Goa have availed incentives under these schemes of the SHP programme.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Potential sites for the development of small hydro power projects have been identified by all the States. 161 potential SHP sites aggregating about 156 MW have been identified in the State of Orissa. So far, 4 SHP projects aggregating 1.30 MW have been set up in the State and 7 SHP projects aggregating 9.93 MW are under implementation. MNES has so far provided financial support for preparation of Detailed Project Reports for 4 SHP projects in Orissa. However, no proposal for sanctioning incentives under the SHP schemes of MNES have been received from Orissa during the 9th Plan period.

Utilisation Certificates for Grants

6467. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether CAG in its Report No. 5 of 2002 on page 9 has brought out the fact of large number of Utilisation Certificates for grant aggregating to Rs. 18.15 crore not being received from the statutory bodies, Non-Governmental institutions etc. confirming that the grants had been utilised for the purpose for which these were sanctioned;

(b) whether the grants were conditional and the prescribed conditions were fulfilled;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to get the utilisation certificates from those bodies to whom the grants were given without delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Grants are sanctioned by the Ministry on fulfilment of the terms and conditions of various Schemes of Renewable Energy Programmes. The grantee institutions are required to furnish Utilisation Certificates within the prescribed time limits which are generally adhered to. Cases of outstanding Utilisation Certificates are being continuously monitored and pursued and, as a result, some outstanding Utilisation Certificates have since been obtained from such institutions. Utilisation Certificates aggregating to Rs. 14.39 crore are pending as on 31.12.2001 as against Rs. 18.15 crore as per C and AG Report.

Setting Up of Oil Trading and Risk Management by IOCL

6468. SHRI GUNIPATI RAMAIAH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether IOCL proposes to set up an oil trading and risk management desk abroad;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the reasons for such decision?

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) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Setting Up of Power Plants by NTPC in other Countries

6469. SHRI SUBODH ROY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

- (a) the countries where the tenders submitted by the NTPC have been cleared for setting up power plants;
- (b) the annual dividend guaranteed from the proposed power projects of the NTPC;
- (c) whether the Government of the concerned countries are prepared to give necessary guarantee before setting of power projects by the NTPC; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) No tender has been submitted by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) so far for setting up power plants in other countries.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

[English]

Overweight Fishplates

6470. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Eastern Railway accepted overweight fishplates resulting into extra expenditure as has been brought out by the CAG in its Report No. 9 of 1998 in paragraph 4.3.8 on pages 159-160?

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken against the persons responsible for the same;

(c) the loss caused to the State in the matter and whether there is any proposal to recover the financial loss from the persons concerned and to fix the accountability and responsibility of the authorities;

(d) whether there is a great deal of corruption in the purchase of stores in the Railways; and

(e) if so, the steps taken to overcome such corruption?

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) As per standard procedure, fishplates were ordered on Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP) of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) in terms of weight. Payment has been made on the basis of actual weight of fish plates supplied. Hence, as far as weight of steel supplied and paid for, there is no difference. Still due to each fish plate being heavier than the nominal weight prescribed, the total number of fish plates supplied were less than the number that would have been supplied had they been of nominal weight prescribed for them. This matter has been taken up with the inspecting agency i.e., Directorate General of Supplies and Disposal (DGS and D) and also with DSP, SAIL. Since both are Government agencies, the matter is expected to be sorted out to the satisfaction of all concerned through mutual discussions. The details of fish plates supplied to Eastern Railway are :

Quantity in the purchase order	No. of fish plate due as per standard weight of fishplates (14.355 Kg per fish plate)	Number of fish plates actually received (in Nos.)	Number short
2283.612 MT	1,59,080 Nos.	1,44,718	14,362

(d) and (e) No, Sir. However, Railway Vigilance carries out regular checks in the areas of purchase of stores and suitable action wherever necessary is taken against the staff responsible for irregularities observed during the vigilance checks.

Commission on CNG

6471. DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether BPCL is giving 93 paise per Kg. and IOCL is giving 73 paid per Kg. as commission to their petrol pump dealers for supplying CNG from their pumps in Delhi and the reasons for discrimination;

(b) the cost of electricity per kilogram consumed by each filling station, on line station-wise and daughter station-wise separately;

(c) the running cost of CNG per kilograme consumed by such stations which are operated through generations;

(d) whether IGL/Oil Corporation are duty bound to reimburse the actual cost of electricity as per the bill to such CNG filling station where separate electricity meters have been provided;

(e) if not, whether the same would not adversely affect the supply position; and

(f) 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. It is @ 73 paise per kg in case of IOCL as well as BPCL.

(b) The cost of electricity charges per kg consumed is as follows :

Online station : 79 paise per kg

Daughter stations : nil.

(c) As per survey conducted by the industry team, the cost works out of Rs. 1.18 per kg at online stations and Rs. 0.95 per kg at daughter booster stations.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise Sir.

Joint Patrolling of Malacca Strait

6472. SHRI AMBAREESHA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indian and American Navy is jointly patrolling the Malacca Strait;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether joint patrolling of the Malacca Strait is a regular feature; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Joint patrolling to guard high value assets is being carried out on the basis of a request from the United States. Indian naval assets deployed for this purpose operate under Indian Command and flag.

(e) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Presence of Foreign Defence Forces In Jammu and Kashmir

6473. SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI :
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether some foreign defence forces are present in Jammu and Kashmir;

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

(c) the Government's response in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Defence Information Cell

6474. SHRI VAIKO : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether K. Subramaniam Committee suggested setting up a Special Cell known as Defence Information Cell;

(b) if so, the salient features of the suggestions and the reasons for its suggestions;

(c) the reaction of the Ministries on examining the suggestions;

(d) whether the suggestions have been accepted;

(e) if so, the time by when those suggestions will be implemented; and

(f) if not, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to plug up the deficiencies occurred in the past in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) The Kargil Review Committee headed by Shri K. Subramanyam had after highlighting the inadequacy of the existing Defence Public Relations structures recommended that the Government review its information policy and develop structures and processes to keep the public informed on vital national issues.

(c) to (f) The matter has been examined at the highest levels of the Government including the Group of Ministers (GOM) set up by the Government to review the National Security in its entirety. The issue relating to re-organisation of the present Directorate of Public Relations (DPR) set up in the Ministry of Defence has also been examined by two high level Committees established by the Government. Decisions as considered appropriate to strengthen the Defence Information set up will be taken by the Government in due course after evaluating all relevant factors.

Code of Conduct of Summary Court Martial

6475. SHRI MANJAY LAL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the maximum court martial proceedings against army men are on simple matters and the Government always embarrasses upon interference of High Courts and Supreme Court; and

(b) if so, the reasons for not considering to change the code of conduct of summary court martial keeping in mind the Human Right Commission's recommendations ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Provisions for conducting Court Martials, including Summary Court Martial, are contained in the Army Act and Army Rules and Regulations which are amended as and when necessary, keeping in view the various relevant factors on the subject. Ministry of Defence is not aware of any recommendations of National Human Rights Commission in this regard.

Rejected Interpolated Scenes in Films

6476. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware the various Cinema hall managements interpolated scenes in films which had been rejected by the Censor Board or even from X-rated foreign films;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of incidents brought to notice during each of the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to check this practice ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has been receiving reports of violation of the provisions of the Cinematograph Act, 1952, by way of exhibition, of uncertified films or films with interpolation of scenes deleted by the CBFC or insertion of portions not shown to the Board, in several States and Union Territories. The number of prints of films seized on account of interpolations during the last three years are as under :—

Year	Number of prints of films seized
1999	32
2000	57
2001	144

(c) Although enforcement of the Cinematograph Act is a State Government responsibility, yet CBFC has also hired a private detective agency for carrying out regular checks in the theatres, initially in the four metropolitan cities, to detect cases of violation of the provisions of the Act and report the same to the concerned State authorities for prompt investigation and possible prosecution.

[Translation]

Import of Rail Coaches

6477. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether rail coaches were imported during the last three years;

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

(c) the total foreign exchange spent on these imports; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for production of such types of coaches in the country ?

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) 24 Nos. of All Metal Light Weight High speed coaches have been imported from M/s ALSTOM-LHB, Germany.

At present, coaches being manufactured in India are of a technology of 1950's and need improvements as regards reduction in tare weight, reduction in maintenance and operation costs, resistance to corrosion, seating capacity, safety features, speed potential, braking system, riding and passenger comforts, availability and reliability etc. Therefore country needed new design of coaches so that alongwith improved safety and comfort, more number of passengers could be carried per coach/train and the maintenance and operation costs could be reduced, so as to be cost effective in the long run for Indian Railways. It was, therefore, decided to upgrade the design and manufacturing capabilities of Indian Railways by going in for procurement and transfer of technology of Light Weight Coaches of state-of-the-art technology with such features.

(c) Foreign Exchange spent on import of 24 coaches was Deutsche Marks 52,663,00 (Rs. 106 crore approx.)

(d) Indian Railways have entered into a transfer of technology (TOT) contract alongwith supply of 24 coaches with M/s ALSTOM LHB, Germany for building latest technology coaches in India. Manufacturing capability and expertise for these new type of coaches are being developed at Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala and actual manufacturing of such coaches has already commenced there.

[English]

Railway Accounts Staff

6478. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal for modification of pay scale and other facilities of All India Railway Accounts staff;

(b) if so, the present status thereof; and

(c) the time by which the pay scale of Accounts staff is likely to be revised ?

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) One draft proposal has been sent to Group of Ministers for their consideration.

(c) The proposal for allotment of improved pay scales to the Railway Accounts staff is still to be considered by the 'Group of Ministers'. Hence, no time frame can be specified.

[Translation]

Assessment of Vacancies of Assistant

6479. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the matter relating to misuse of position and other serious irregularities in assessing the vacancies in Assistant Cadre in the Ministry of Defence (Main Secretariat) had come to light;

(b) whether the matter has been suppressed by giving only minor punishment to the guilty officers in contravention of rules;

(c) if so, whether the matter was deliberately suppressed in haste without consulting the Central Vigilance Commission.

(d) if so, the motive of the Government behind suppressing the matter;

(e) whether the Government propose to reconsider the matter in order to ensure punishment to the guilty persons as per rules; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) An internal enquiry into the matter revealed that the revision of vacancies for the Select List of 1993 of Assistants was not in accordance with rules and instructions laid down by the Government of India. It, however, did not establish any misuse of official position.

(b) The matter has not been suppressed and action has been taken against the erring officers as per rules on the advice of UPSC.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

- (e) No, Sir.
- (f) Does not arise

[English]

NCC Unit in Sainik Schools

6480. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :
SHRI NARESH PUGLIA :
SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested the Union Government for the allotment of NCC units in all the Sainik Schools in Maharashtra

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto; and

(d) the time by which the NCC units are likely to be established in all Sainik Schools ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. There is only one Sainik School in Maharashtra at Satara run by the Sainik Schools Society, Ministry of Defence, which is already under NCC.

(c) and (d) Question does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above

Set-Top Box

6481. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether several private channels have sought the permission of the Government for making it mandatory for pay channels to be routed through a set-top box;

(b) if so, the viewers are to be benefited by the proposed system;

(c) the cost the viewers have to bear to avail of the benefit of the either Direct To Home Service or the set-box facility;

(d) whether the Government have taken any decision with regard to the private channels for the proposed system; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Government had constituted a Task Force consisting of Stake holders including the representatives of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Cable Operators, Multi Service Operators (MSOs) and Broadcasters to examine requests from the stake holders for mandating Conditional Access System. The Task Force has since given its recommendations which, inter-alia, include mandatory viewing of Pay channels through a set top box.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Cost of Set-Top Boxes need not necessarily be borne by the subscribers. It could be met by the broadcasters or cable service providers or subscribers or a combination thereof depending upon the market dynamics. Direct-to-Home Service generally targets a niche audience with higher paying capacity, who would like to view more channels including premium channels, and are willing to make payment for choice of service and channels.

(d) and (e) It is proposed to amend the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 to empower the Government to mandate in a phased manner, installation of an addressable system for viewing pay channels.

Construction of Tunnel in Himachal Pradesh

6482. DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Border Roads Organisation proposes to construct a nine Kilometre tunnel under the Rohtang Pass in Himachal Pradesh for linking Ladakh Region of Kashmir;

(b) if so, the time by which the work on the project is likely to be commenced and completed;

(c) whether the construction cost would be shared with the Government of Himachal Pradesh; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) The technical feasibility studies for construction of underground tunnel at Rohtang have been completed. M/s. RITES have been asked to prepare the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and the Environmental Impact Study Report. Action is being taken to start the work of construction of approach roads to North and South Portals of the tunnel. The construction of tunnel will

commence after the project is cleared by the Planning Commission and the investment decision is taken. There is no proposal of cost sharing with the State Government.

Optical Fibre Cable Network

6483.DR. C. KRISHNAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the total kilometers optical fibre cable has been laid down by Railways (Railtel Corporation) to link metros as on date;

(b) the total kilometres optical fibre cable are likely to be laid down and the time by which the whole work is likely to be completed;

(c) the total expenditure likely to be incurred thereon along with the expenditure incurred so far in this regard, zone-wise; and

(d) the extent to which the railways are likely to be benefited from this project ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL) :
(a) As on date, a total of about 4500 R.Kms. of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) has been laid by Railways and RailTel Corporation of India Ltd. to link metros.

(b) A total of about 10,000 R.Kms of OFC are likely to be laid to link the metros and the work is expected to be completed by December 2003, depending on availability of funds.

(c) The total expenditure likely to be incurred by all Zonal Railways to provide OFC systems to link the metros, will be about Rs. 485.00 crores and the expenditure incurred so far is about Rs. 175.00 crores.

(d) This OFC network will provide reliable and modern Railways Communication System for train control, operation and safety. The surplus telecom capacity will be marketed by Rail Tel Corporation.

[Translation]

Construction of Five Star Hotel in Delhi by Railways

6484.SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has decided to construct a five star hotel in Delhi; and

(b) if so, the total expenditure to be incurred thereon and the source from which the funds will be mobilised for this purpose ?

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.

Survey of Manmad-Indore Rail Line via Malegaon, Dhule, Shirpur, Mahu

6485.SHRI RAMDAS RUPALA GAVIT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the survey of Manmad-Indore rail line via Malegaon, Dhule, Shirpur, Mahu has been completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefore; and

(d) the time by which the said work is likely to be completed and work for the project is likely to be started ?

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) The surveys for Manmad-Shirpur new line and Indore-Mhow gauge conversion as part of Ratlam-Akola-Purna gauge conversion have been completed. Due to unremunerative nature of the projects and acute constraint of resources being faced by Railways, the proposals could not be considered for the present. A survey for construction of new line between Shirpur and Mhow is in progress. Further consideration of the proposal would be possible once the survey report becomes available.

Expenditure on Non-Productive Work

6486.DR. M.P. JAISWAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether expenditure on non-productive works in the Ministry and departments under the Ministry is increasing during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the efforts made by the Government to reduce the expenditure on this account ?

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.

[English]

Construction of Overbridge at Ghatkopar Railway Station

6487. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the construction work of overbridge at Ghatkopar Railway Station in Mumbai has not been completed so far though its construction was started about three years ago;

(b) if so, the reasons for abnormal delay in completion of the overbridge; and

(c) the fresh steps taken for early completion of the construction work of the overbridge?

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) Railway had completed its portion of work (Bridge over the track portion) on 30.6.2001. The work of approaches for the bridge was being carried out by Brihan Mumbai Municipal Corporation which has now been completed and bridge has been opened to traffic on 01.05.2002.

Energy Parks Project in Karnataka

6488. SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources has initiated Energy Parks project in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the places where these Energy Parks have been established during 2001-02 in Karnataka;

(c) the amount sanctioned to these energy parks during the said period; and

(d) the amount utilised for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Energy parks have not been established during 2001-2002 in Karnataka. However, an energy park has

been sanctioned for setting up at Mangalore University, Karnataka during 2001-2002. The State implementing agency – Karnataka State Council for Science and Technology (KSCST) have informed that implementation of this energy park project is under progress and is scheduled to be completed by June, 2002.

(c) and (d) The above energy park project was sanctioned during 2001-2002 at a total cost of Rs. 5.18 lakh and 50% cost of the energy park i.e. Rs. 2.59 lakh was released along with the sanction of the project as per guidelines of Energy Park Scheme. The State nodal agency – KSCST have informed that the funds released for the park have not yet been utilised. KSCST have placed the orders for supply and installation of some of the sanctioned energy systems and devices.

[Translation]

Removal of Brake-Vans from Trains

6489. KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the department is contemplating to remove brake-vans from the trains and run special trains on selected routes in lieu thereof;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some routes have been identified for the said purpose in different States including Uttar Pradesh; 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) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Privatisation of Distribution of Electricity

6490. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have issued any guideline to the State Governments on the privatisation of the distribution of electricity supply;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by various State Governments in this regard; and

(d) the position with regard to the generation, demand, supply and distribution of power in various States at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) to (c) Distribution of electricity is the responsibility of the States. The decision to privatize distribution, therefore, lies with the State Governments. The Government of India has been encouraging States to undertake reforms so as to improve the financial health of the power sector in general and of the SEBs in particular. A Conference of Chief Ministers/Power Ministers was organised in march, 2001, which recognised that the real problem of management and challenge of reforms in the power sector lies in the

distribution sector. It was resolved inter alia to achieve commercial viability in the distribution sector in 2-3 years through measures like creation of profit centres, handing over of local distribution to panchayats/local bodies/franchisees/users associations, or privatization of distribution.

In an effort to bring in more focused approach to power sector reforms, Government of India has signed Memoranda of Understanding with 21 States. The States have broadly agreed on the reform mile-stones of 100% metering, energy audit, constitution/operationalisation of State Electricity Regulatory Commissions, unbundling/corporatisation of SEBs etc. In reciprocation, the Government of India has also committed assistance of various sorts.

(d) The position with regard to generation, demand, supply and distribution of power in various States may seen in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Actual Power Supply Position

(all figures in MU net)

Region/State/System	March' 2002				April' 2001 – March' 2002			
	Require- ment	Availability	Shortage	%	Require- ment	Availability	Shortage	%
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Northern Region								
Chandigarh	76	76	0	0.0	111.0	1108	2	0.2
Delhi	1420	1404	16	1.1	19350	18741	609	3.1
Haryana	1505	1499	6	0.4	18138	17839	299	1.6
Himachal Pradesh	280	245	35	12.5	3293	3206	87	2.6
Jammu and Kashmir	615	558	57	9.3	6635	5899	736	11.8
Punjab	2100	2094	06	0.3	28780	27577	1203	4.2
Rajasthan	2275	2246	29	1.3	24745	24495	250	1.0
Uttar Pradesh	4080	3741	339	8.3	48332	43545	4787	9.9
N.R.	12351	11863	488	4.0	150383	142410	7973	5.3
Western Region								
Chhattisgarh	763	751	12	1.6	8054	7825	229	2.8
Gujarat	4895	4332	563	11.5	53693	47530	6130	11.5
Madhya Pradesh	2835	2377	458	16.2	31013	26233	4780	15.4
Maharashtra	7295	6836	459	6.3	80489	73438	7051	8.8

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Goa	163	163	0	0.0	1767	1767	0	0.0
W.R.	15951	14459	1492	9.4	175016	156793	18223	10.4
Southern Region								
Andhra Pradesh	4947	4415	532	10.8	48394	44302	4092	8.5
Karnataka	3201	2820	381	11.9	32556	28493	4063	12.5
Kerala	1255	1124	131	10.4	13334	12349	985	7.4
Tamil Nadu	4297	3897	400	9.3	46232	42951	3281	7.1
S.R.	13700	12256	1444	10.5	140516	128095	12421	8.8
Eastern Region								
Bihar	806	781	25	3.1	9370	8992	378	4.0
D.V.C.	689	687	2	0.3	8319	8312	7	0.1
Orissa	1087	1085	2	0.2	12328	12318	10	0.1
West Bengal	1881	1850	31	1.6	20670	20575	95	0.5
E.R.	4463	4403	60	1.3	50687	50197	490	1.0
North-Eastern Region								
Arunachal Pradesh	12.2	12.2	0.0	0.0	136.3	134.6	1.8	1.3
Assam	264.2	262.3	1.9	0.7	3450.5	3425.2	25.3	0.7
Manipur	39.2	38.3	0.9	2.3	456.5	440.6	15.9	3.5
Meghalaya	68.8	68.8	0.0	0.0	700.1	705.0	-4.9	-0.7
Mizoram	25.0	23.2	1.8	7.2	284.5	278.5	6.0	2.1
Nagaland	20.7	19.9	0.8	3.9	260.1	258.4	1.7	0.7
Tripura	55.2	50.0	5.2	9.4	647.1	612.6	34.5	5.3
N.E.R.	485.3	474.7	10.6	2.2	5935.0	5855.0	80.0	1.4
All India	46950	13456	3495	7.4	522537	483350	39187	7.5

Actual Peak Demand Vs Peak Met

(Figures in MW net)

Region/State/System	March' 2002				April/2001 – March' 2002			
	Peak Demand	Peak Met	Shortage	%	Peak Demand	Peak Met	Shortage	%
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Northern Region								
Chandigarh	151	151	0	0	180	180	0	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Delhi	2605	2575	30	1.2	3118	2879	239	7.7
Haryana	2700	2655	45	1.7	3000	2900	100	3.3
Himachal Pradesh	520	520	0	0	562	562	0	0
Jammu and Kashmir	1149	946	203	17.7	1209	999	210	17.4
Punjab	3975	3727	248	6.2	5420	4936	484	8.9
Rajasthan	3700	3657	43	1.2	3700	3657	43	1.2
Uttar Pradesh	6977	6399	578	8.3	7584	6887	697	9.2
N.R.	20800	19954	846	4.1	23200	21346	1854	8

Western Region

Chhattisgarh	1347	1284	63	4.7	1357	1311	46	3.4
Gujarat	8005	6598	1407	17.6	8005	6700	1305	16.3
Madhya Pradesh	5558	3951	1607	28.9	5683	4457	1226	21.6
Maharashtra	12265	10726	1539	12.5	12265	10726	1539	12.5
Goa	280	280	0	0	316	316	0	0
W.R.	26117	21486	4631	17.7	26510	22024	4486	16.9

Southern Region

Andhra Pradesh	8585	6873	1712	19.9	8585	6873	1712	19.9
Karnataka	5338	4428	910	17	5338	4428	910	17
Kerala	2633	2039	594	22.6	2633	2189	444	16.9
Tamil Nadu	7158	6218	940	13.1	7158	6218	940	13.1
S.R.	22757	19201	3556	15.6	22757	19201	3556	15.6

Eastern Region

Bihar	1325	1230	95	7.2	1409	1288	121	8.6
D.V.C.	1214	1151	63	5.2	1296	1209	87	6.7
Orissa	2132	1977	155	7.3	2132	1977	155	7.3
West Bengal	3457	3339	118	3.4	3614	4314	200	5.5
E.R.	7701	7548	153	2	7940	7648	292	3.7

North-Eastern Region

Arunachal Pradesh	42	42	0	0	50	50	0	0
Assam	594	585	9	1.5	688	618	70	10.2
Manipur	89	89	0	0	98	94	4	4.1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Meghalaya	145	138	7	4.8	165	160	5	3
Mizoram	72	69	3	4.2	75	73	2	2.7
Nagaland	58	55	3	5.2	61	58	3	4.9
Tripura	152	107	45	29.6	156	140	16	10.3
N.E.R.	1066	1000	66	6.2	1148	1043	105	9.1
All India	78441	69189	9252	11.8	78441	69189	9252	11.8

**NOC for Basic Amenities to Slum
in Mumbai**

6491. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of slum colonies are situated on railway land in Mumbai. Greater Mumbai (Maharashtra);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested his Ministry for No Objection Certificate (NOC) to enable it to provide basic facilities and amenities and construct multi-storeyed buildings on that land under their Slum Rehabilitation Programme for improving the standard of living of slum dwellers and also to improve the environmental conditions of the slum;

(d) if so, whether the said NOC has since been issued to the Government of Maharashtra;

(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) and (b) There are approximately 21000 no. of encroachments on Railway land in entire Mumbai covering an area of approximately 37 Hectares.

(c) to (f) As per normal policy of the Railways, unauthorised encroachments are to be removed to clear the railway land of the encroachers. However, in the case of encroachers in Mumbai a meeting was held in 1998 with officers of the State Government and it was indicated that Railways can examine the feasibility of granting NOC after receipt of request from the State Government No. such request has been received.

[Translation]

Power Generation by SEBs

6492. DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA :
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have assessed the cost of power generated by the State Electricity Boards in the country;

(b) if so, the average cost of generation of power in each electricity board during March, 2000-March, 2002;

(c) the transmission and distribution losses suffered by the said boards during the said period separately;

(d) whether the Government have explored the possibilities to reduce the cost of power generation, transmission and distribution losses; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) As per available information, the average cost of generation of various States for thermal power projects and hydel projects for the year 2000-2001 is enclosed at Statement-I.

(c) The details of latest figures of transmission and distribution losses, as reported by SEBs, are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(d) and (e) Union Government have emphasized the need for efficiency improvement in generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. Efficiency improvement results into reduction of cost per unit of power. The Government of India has been encouraging States to undertake reforms so as to improve the financial health of the power sector.

A Conference of Chief Ministers/Power Ministers was organised in March, 2001 which recognized that the real problem of management and challenge of reforms lies in the distribution sector. It was resolved, inter-alia, to undertake full metering of all consumers, energy audit at all 11 KV feeders, develop an effective Management Information System (MIS), launch an effective programme for identifying and eliminating theft, achieve commercial viability in distribution in 2-3 years through measures like creation of profit centres, handing over of local distribution to panchayats/local bodies/franchisees/users associations, privatisation of distribution etc.

The Government of India has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with twenty-one States. The MOUs are a joint commitment of the Centre and the States to undertake reforms in a time bound manner. The State Governments' commitment in these MOUs include construction/operationalisation of SERCs, 100% metering of 11KV feeders and all consumers, energy audit, reduction of technical and commercial losses, achievement of commercial viability in distribution etc. Government of India has committed its support through additional allocation of power from Central Generating Stations and financial assistance through Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme (APDRP) for strengthening of subtransmission and distribution as well as for renovation and modernisation of thermal and hydel power plants.

Statement-I

Cost of Power Generation of various SEBs for the year 2000-2001 (Paise/KWH)

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Hydro	Thermal	Average
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Haryana	23.14	267.66	41.04
2.	Karnataka	43.46	343.83*	260.09
3.	Orissa	—	118.89	—
4.	Himachal Pradesh	112.75	—	112.75
5.	Meghalaya	86.01	—	86.01
6.	Andhra Pradesh	36.31	179.31	141.73
7.	West Bengal	357.99	157.59	187.63
8.	Tamil Nadu	23.89	187.18	149.44
9.	Maharashtra	44.95	133.09	124.7

1	2	3	4	5
10.	Punjab	46.86	208.79	154.97
11.	Gujarat	129.71	172.53	171.65

*DG Sets

Statement-II

Percentage Transformation, Transmission and Distribution losses (including commercial losses such as pilferage etc.) in SEBs/EDs

Region/SEB/ED	1998-99
1	2
Nothern Region :	
Haryana	35.33
Himachal Pradesh	26.11
Jammu and Kashmir	47.64
Punjab	18.11
Rajasthan	29.53
Uttar Pradesh	30.23
Chandigarh	22.48
DVB (Delhi)	43.71
Western Region :	
Gujarat	20.83
Madhya Pradesh	19.87
Maharashtra	18.41
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	15.37
Goa	30.40
Daman and Diu	21.83
Southern Region :	
Andhra Pradesh	34.09
Karnataka	30.45
Kerala	17.18
Tamil Nadu	17.22
Lakshadweep	12.78
Pondicherry	10.44

1	2
Eastern Region :	
Bihar	24.80
Orissa (GRIDCO)	36.72
Sikkim	12.44
West Bengal	23.73
Adaman and Nicobar Island	20.03
North Eastern Region :	
Assam	38.72
Mandipur	59.55
Meghalaya	19.66
Nagaland	26.52
Tripura	26.82
Arunachal Pradesh	30.60
Mizoram	44.79
All India (Utilities)	26.45

*As reported by SEBs/Electricity Deptt. and subject to change after reconciliation of Inter-State sale of energy and are provisional.

Domestic and Foreign Investments

6493. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the domestic and foreign investment in power sector has almost come to a halt on account of non-cooperative attitude of the States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have issued instructions to the States for adopting a co-operative attitude in power sector so that domestic and foreign investment in power generation is increased; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) Though a number of foreign investors have shown interest in setting up power projects in the country, only a few could achieve financial closure. The main factors why most of

the projects have not been able to achieve financial closure are mentioned below :

- i. The poor financial health of the State Electricity Boards (SEBs) which do not have the financial capability to support more than a few projects in terms of regular reimbursement of bills, opening of letters of credit and escrow accounts.
- ii. A bankable escrow crore has been sought by almost all the lenders financing Independent Power producers (IPP). The States do not have sufficient resources to accomodate all the IPPs. In several cases, the escrow-able capacity identified by the State Governments have not been accepted by the financial institutions.
- iii. The delay in non-finalization of various contracts such as Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) and Fuel Supply Agreement (FSA) etc. acceptable to all the concerned parties.
- iv. Court cases in the form of Public Interest Petitions etc.

(c) and (d) The Government of India has been assisting, wherever required, to resolve issues coming in the way of setting up of power projects. With a view to improve the financial position of the State Electricity Boards (SEBs), the Government of India has embarked on a policy of reforms and restructuring of the power sector and has signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with many States. The MoUs are a joint commitment of the Center and the States to undertake reforms in a time bound manner. The State Governments' commitment in these MoUs include constitution/operationalisation of State Electricity Regulatory Commissions, 100% metering, energy audit, reduction of technical and commercial losses, achievement of commercial viability etc.

GOI has committed its support through additional allocation of power from Central Generating Stations and financial assistance through Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme (APDRP) for strengthening of sub-transmission and distribution as well as for renovation and modernization of thermal and hydel power plants. With a reformed and restructured power sector and setting up of regulatory commissions at the Center and States, cash flow to SEBs or successor entities, is expected to improve.

It is expected that with the reforms and restructuring of the power sector, the confidence of investors/IPP's in power sector will improve facilitating greater flow of private investment into the sector.

*[English]***Duty Protection to Refineries**

6494. SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government are planning to give duty protection to refineries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; 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) Duty protection exists for the refineries.

- (b) The existing rates of custom duty on crude oil and petroleum products are as follows :

<i>Custom duty</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Crude	10
HSD/LDO	20
MS	20
ATF	20
LPG	10
FO/LSHS-General Use	20
NAPHTHA/NGL-General Use	10
Kerosene (PDS)	10
Bitumen	20
Others	20

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

Restructuring of Officer Cadre

6495. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government are considering to restructure the officer cadre to make a career in the armed forces more attractive;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;

- (c) whether the Government are considering to lowering the average age of officers and creating more promotional avenues;

- (d) if so, the details thereof;

- (e) whether the Government are also considering to create any new posts in the Army; and

- (f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (f) A Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Special Secretary in Ministry of Defence for restructuring of the officers cadre of the Army, with the primary aim of reduction of age profile of commanders and other issues germane thereto. The Committee is yet to submit its Report.

*[Translation]***SC/ST Employees in IOCL**

6496. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

- (a) the total number of officers and employees working in Indian Oil Corporation Limited at the national level along with the number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes among them;

- (b) whether full appointments have been made against the reserved posts;

- (c) if so, the total appointments made during the last three years along with the total number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes persons out of them;

- (d) whether there is any backlog in reserved posts;

- (e) if so, whether any special drive is being made for appointments to reserved posts to clear the backlog; and

- (f) 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) Total number of officers and non-officer employees working in Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. as on 31st March 2002 and the number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes among them are as under :

	Total Employees	SCs	STs
Officer	9728	1509	522
Non-Officer	21947	4163	1575
Total	31675	5672	2097

(b) Inspite of best efforts, it has not always been possible to make full appointment against the reserved posts.

(c) Total number of recruitment made during the last 3 years is given below :

year	Officers			Non-Officers		
	Total	SCs	STs	Total	SCs	STs
1999	547	64	24	767	119	40
2000	109	14	05	530	80	22
2001	244	35	12	217	59	19

(d) The backlog of SCs/STs in recruitment at the end of the year 2001 was as under :

	SC	ST
Group A	0	3
Group C	0	4
Group D	0	20

(e) The shortfall of 20 in ST category (Group D) is at various locations spread all over the country and it would be possible to clear the backlog without any special recruitment drive.

(f) Not applicable, in view of the answer at (e) above.

[English]

Hydro-Electricity Generation during Tenth Plan

6497. SHRI ARUN KUMAR :
SHRI RAJO SINGH :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the generation of hydro-electricity has been rapidly declining during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government have fixed up any target for hydro-electricity generation during the Tenth Plan;

(d) if so, whether the Government have any proposal to set up joint ventures for their hydro electricity projects in Nepal and Bhutan;

(e) if so, whether the Government have any plan for NTPC-NHPC merger in the near future; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) During the last three years i.e. 1999-2000 to 2001-2002 details of electricity generation from hydro stations and rainfall data are given below :-

Year	Generation (MU)	% of previous year's Generation	Rainfall % of Normal
1999-2000	80637	97.5	96% (1999)
2000-2001	74481	92.4	93% (2000)
2001-2002	73992	99.3	92% (2001)

Hydel generation was low due to less South West monsoon rainfall during the last three years.

State-wise/utility-wise electricity generation from hydro stations from 1999-2000 to 2001-2002 is given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) Based on discussion with various State Electricity Boards and Central Power Sector Utilities and also keeping in view the various constraints faced by project authorities, the Working Group on Power for the 10th Plan, has assessed a feasible capacity addition of 46,939 MW during 10th Plan which includes a hydro capacity addition of 17,311 MW. The above hydro capacity addition includes benefits from 1020 MW from Tala HEP in Bhutan.

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

(e) and (f) At present there are no proposals/plans for the merger of NTPC - NHPC.

Statement

Hydro Generation for the years 1999-2000 to 2001-02

Utility/State	1999-00 (MU)	2000-01 (MU)	2001-02 (MU)
J and K SPDC	608	559	558
HPSEB	1197	1165	1144
HPGC	242	244	232
RRVUNL	1003	376	540
PSEB	3220	3141	3710
UPJVNL	1936	2088	2036
Uttaranchal	3336	3213	2911
GEB	1039	439	284
MSEB	3807	3661	3578
MPEB	2031	1587	2212
CSEB	431	233	395
APGENCO	8668	7729	6156
KPCL	11692	10536	6249
VVNL	398	237	234
KSEB	7033	6190	6735
TNEB	4467	5441	4364
BSEB	38	49	61
Jharkhand	169	95	101
OSEB	4543	4612	6459
WBSEB	396	446	548
Sikkim	11	21	35
Meghalaya	634	658	614
Tripura	61	70	68
Arunachal Pradesh	14	13	12
Nagaland			2
Sub Total	56974	52803	52238
Total All India	80637	74481	73992

Deregulation of Petroleum Sector

6498. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR :
SHRIMATI KUMUDINI PATNAIK :

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

(a) whether the Government have decided to deregulate the petroleum, gas and diesel sector in the country;

(b) if so, whether by deregulation it shall be open to companies to sell their products at a price of their whim or any floor price be fixed for any of the product;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether issue of licence to open petrol/diesel pumps and LPG agencies to individuals will be at the discretion of the company and the selection committees under the chairmanship of a retired justice for the purpose be dispensed with; 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) to (c) With the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism in the Petroleum Sector, the prices of all petroleum products, except for PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG, have become market determined with effect from 1st April 2002. However, the prices so fixed by the companies are proposed to be monitored by the Petroleum Regulatory Board which would initiate corrective measures to prevent profiteering. Provision has been made in the Petroleum Regulatory Bill 2002 which has been introduced in the Parliament.

(d) and (e) For those new dealerships/distributorships for which the advertisements have been issued in the newspapers upto 31st March 2002, selection process will be completed through the Dealers Selection Boards. Thereafter, the oil companies will set up their own selection mechanism

[Translation]

CVC Report against Guilty Officials

6499. SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH :
SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV :

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

(a) whether Central Vigilance Commission has submitted adverse report against some top officers and employees of the Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken by the Government against the said officials;

(d) whether Central Bureau of Investigation has completed investigations regarding bungling in Doordarshan/AIR Headquarters; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government against the officers found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Power Policy

6500. SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH :
SHRI A. NARENDRA :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have revised its power policy;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) whether the Government have clearly defined the areas of participation of domestic private sector and foreign collaboration in regard to setting up of new power projects;

(d) if so, whether the Government have determined the guidelines in regard to power tariff and counter guarantee; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) An Energy Policy Committee has been set up in the Planning Commission to recommend an outline of the energy policy for the next 15-20 years. The Committee is chaired by Member (Energy), Planning Commission and the other members include Secretaries to the Government of India in the Ministries of Power, Coal, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Non-Conventional Energy Sources, Environment and Forests and Department of Atomic Energy. Experts from Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Tata Energy Research Institute etc. are also associated in the Committee.

(c) Private Sector participation by both domestic and foreign investors in the power sector is allowed in the areas of generation, transmission and distribution. 100% Foreign Direct Investment is permitted in these areas on automatic approval basis, without any upper limit.

(d) and (e) A two part tariff notification has been issued by the Government of India on 30.3.1992 in exercise of powers conferred by sub-section (2) of Section 43A of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1943, which allows a return of upto 16% on equity (paid up and subscribed) at normative levels of operation i.e. 68.5% Plant Load Factor (PLF) to generating companies for power projects set up by them. For generation beyond this level, incentive at negotiated rates subject to a ceiling of 0.7% of equity (paid up and subscribed), for each percentage increase in PLF is allowed. Since 1995 projects can be developed only on the basis of competitive bidding. Wherever Regulatory Commission have been set up, tariffs will be determined by these commissions.

The Government of India counter guarantee scheme was developed as a transitory measure to boost private investment and it was decided in 1994 to extend Government of India counter guarantee to eight initial projects that had been cleared for bringing in foreign investment in the power sector. The procedure for extension of counter guarantee was revised in May, 1998 and it was, inter-alia, decided that counter guarantee will be given only for the event of termination and will be limited to the outstanding foreign debt only.

Loss Making Routes

6501. SHRI VISHNUDEO SAI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether various main and branch railway routes are incurring losses during the last three years, route-wise/year-wise;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to overcome such 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) A Statement is enclosed.

(c) Low density of traffic, short-lead and severe competition from road traffic, are some of the reasons making branch lines unviable.

(d) The Railways have taken a number of steps such as curtailment in staff, reduction in number of train services

and observance of economy in operations. Recently, Ministry of Railways have also constituted a Committee Railway Officers to analyse the data pertaining to expenditure and revenue of all 126 loss making lines to identify the reasons for losses and suggest ways and means to reduce them.

Statement

Railway Routes	(Year-wise loss in thousands of Rupees)		
	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
1	2	3	4
1. Neral-Matheran (NG-21 Kms)	54826	62939	63089
2. Karjat-Khopoli (BG-15 Kms)	11609	13603	17145
3. Gwalior-Bhind (NG-84 Kms)	35120	—	—
4. Gwalior-Shoepur-Kalan (NG-200 Kms)	104969	152628	126080
5. Dholpur-Tantpur-Sirmutra (NG-89 Kms)	32447	43435	36836
6. Ait-Konch (BG-14 Kms)	16817	20447	21916
7. Kurduwai-Miraj-Latur (NG-327 Kms)	95808	104778	72550
8. Pachora-Jamner (NG-56 Kms)	13276	13662	15541
9. Majri-Rajpur (BG-21 Kms)	5206	—	—
10. Guna-Maksi (BG-193 Kms)	43191	—	—
11. Daund-Baramati (BG-44 Kms)	12900	—	19537
12. Panvel-Uran (BG-27 Kms)	18935	(+) 1093	—
13. Bhimgarh-Palasthali (BG-27 Kms)	3204	3716	4716
14. Baraset-Hasnabad (BG-53 Kms)	28339	29633	70007
15. Santipur-Nabadwipghat (BG-27.5 Kms)	9653	11642	12379
16. Bardhaman-Katwa (NG-53 Kms)	27855	22929	23044
17. Bhagalpur-Mandarhill (BG-50 Kms)	10648	13796	18467
18. Baruiপুর-Lakshmikantpur (BG-37 Kms)	21534	24193	51299
19. Jamalpur-Monghyr (BG-10 Kms)	5587	7294	10451
20. Sonarpur-Canning (BG-29 Kms)	14659	16181	39890
21. Dildarnagar-Tarighat (BG-19 Kms)	2991	3390	4260
22. Kalyani-Kalyani Simanta (BG-4 Kms)	9063	10128	12499
23. Tinpahar-Rajmahal (BG-12 Kms)	2332	3709	11206
24. Lakshmikantapur-Kulpi (BG-10 Kms)*	58183	60705	98130
25. Sheoraphuli-Tarakeswar (BG-35 Kms)	—	3266	1292
26. Rohtak-Gohana (BG-32 Kms)	12157	—	3895

1	2	3	4
27. Gohana-Panipat (BG-39 Kms)	12217	—	—
28. Rohtak-Bhiwani (BG-49 Kms)	38217	6756	21462
29. Shamli-Saharanpur (BG-64 Kms)	44173	—	—
30. Delhi-Shahadra-Shamli (BG-87 Kms)	17393	—	—
31. Tugalkabad-Shakurbasti (BG-26.60 Kms)	29953	—	—
32. Kalka-Shimla (NG-97 Kms)	116132	119474	120708
33. Lalgarh-Srikolayat Jee (BG-46 Kms)	15500	17339	62084
34. Garhi-Harsaru-Farukhnagar (MG-11 Kms)	2816	3203	3554
35. Sardar Shahar-Ratangarh (MG-43 Kms)	9724	12052	13495
36. Dalmau-Daryapur (BG-25 Kms)	4788	5099	5593
37. Amritsar-Attari (BG-25 Kms)	11085	12785	25145
38. Phagwara-Nawan Shahar Doaba (BG-36 Kms)	31117	31169	33108
39. Batala-Quadian (BG-19 Kms)	14903	16227	18006
40. Verka-Derababa Nanak (BG-46 Kms)	73285	33468	35492
41. Amritsar-Khemkaran (BG-77 Kms)	8082	13869	48672
42. Rai Ka Bagh-Pokhran (BG-192 Kms)	21996	—	—
43. Merta Road-Merta City (BG-14.5 Kms)	3278	5836	6346
44. Raniwara-Bhildi (MG-71 Kms)	51669	65549	71109
45. Samdari-Munabao (MG-248 Kms)	83242	117391	135028
46. PTK-MDPB (BG-15 Kms)	—	5327	5698
47. JRC-HSX (BG-38 Kms)	—	9982	29588
48. #Bhatinda-Suratgarh (BG-142.33 Kms)	—	—	(+) 4991
49. Suratgarh-Anupgarh (BG-77.53 Kms)	—	—	65528
50. PTK-JDNX (BG-BG-165.92 Kms)	—	—	18280
51. Ambala-Kolka (BG-69.97 Kms)	—	—	3550
52. Pokhran-Jaisalmer (BG-107 Kms)	—	—	28364
53. Banmankhi-Bihariganj (MG-27 Kms)	19315	22771	26636
54. Sakri-Jayanagar (MG-70 Kms)	60078	87081	90199
55. Narkatiaganj-Bhikhnatori (MG-47 Kms)	15414	23650	22441
56. Salempur-Barhaj Bazar (BG-22 Kms)	7433	10706	10750
57. Indara-Dohrighat (MG-40 Kms)	14229	24420	40666
58. Mankapur-Katra (BG-30 Kms)	19367	18327	23021
59. Anandnagar-Nautanwa (MG-49 Kms)	18131	25893	35126

1	2	3	4
60. Jhanjharpur-Laukaha Bazar (MG-43 Kms)	29438	35451	39951
61. Mathura-Vrindaban (MG-13 Kms)	5196	4773	4930
62. Mandhana-Brahmavarta (MG-9 Kms)	2965	3085	3177
63. Kashipur-Ramnagar (BG-27 Kms)	23367	28296	34881
64. Rampur-New Haldwani (BG-89 Kms)*	67596	71173	87329
65. New Jalpaiguri-Darjeeling (NG-88 Kms)	43107	64525	100765
66. Katihar-Maniharighat (MG-36 Kms)	31599	52955	57352
67. Katihar-Jogbani (MG-108 Kms)	87253	103190	118068
68. Singabad-Old Malda (BG-24 Kms)	21967	35920	45515
69. Barsoi-Radhikapur (MG-53 Kms)	987	41968	43679
70. Alipurduar-Bamanhat (MG-71 Kms)	45269	61430	62118
71. Tezpur-Rangapara North (MG-27 Kms)	28815	32013	38610
72. Fakiragram-Dhubri (MG-65 Kms)	28726	59685	56172
73. Karimganj-Mahisashan (MG-10 Kms)	8632	10141	17014
74. Baraigram-Dullavchorra (MG-28 Kms)	7528	13723	31881
75. Katakhar-Lalabazar (MG-28 Kms)	8622	10541	33539
76. Chaparmukh-Silghat (MG-81 Kms) and Chaparmukh-Haibargan (BG-27 Kms)	9142	3777	12986
77. Simulguri-Naginimara (MG-14 Kms)	739	44	49
78. Mariani-Jorhat Town (MG-17 Kms)	10363	11610	19121
79. Simulguri-Moranhat (MG-54 Kms)	2047	2101	2467
80. Makum-Dangari (MG-30 Kms)*	642	48	439
81. Dharmanagar-Pancharthal-Kumarghat (MG-41 Kms)*	97892	62028	134246
82. Lalabazar-Jamira-Bhairabi (MG-45 Kms)*	49181	44359	75155
83. Silchar-Jiribam (MG-49 Kms)*	38932	41798	65516
84. Balipara-Gamai-Bhalukpong (MG-35 Kms)*	38375	48937	48085
85. Shoranur-Nilambur (BG-66 Kms)	4071	8328	14481
86. Villupuram-Pondichery (MG-38 Kms)	12432	15200	22258
87. Thiruthuraiipoondi-Kodikkarai (MG-46 Kms)	3151	3740	5825
88. Mettupalayam-Udhagamandalam (MG-46 Kms)	28843	20440	31181
89. Madurai-Bodinayakanur (MG-90 Kms)	13909	12218	12559
90. Nanjangud-Chamraj Nagar (MG-35 Kms)	19409	7206	-
91. Tirunelveli-Tiruchandur (MG-62 Kms)	17910	15838	18375
92. Sagarajambaguru-Talaguppa (MG-16 Kms)	8877	11778	3245

1	2	3	4
93. Trichur-Guruvayur (BG-24 Kms)*	5657	5960	7953
94. Chitradurg-Rayadurg (BG-99 Kms)*	19050	27079	10991
95. Bangarapet-Marikuppam (BG-16 Kms)	—	4282	8250
96. Ernakulam-Alleppey (BG-57 Kms)*	—	—	896
97. Bhimavaram-Narasapur (BG-29 Kms)	8716	3523	3134
98. Gudivada-Machilipatnam (BG-40 Kms)	12238	14828	—
99. Jankampet-Bodhan (MG-20 Kms)	2396	4805	9544
100. Mudkhed-Adilabad (MG-162 Kms)	23412	30119	32956
101. Adilabad-Pimpalkutti (BG-20 Kms)*	650	14609	18432
102. Alnawar-Ambewadi (BG-31 Kms)	—	(+) 5887	—
103. Nadikude-Macheria (BG-35 Kms)	—	—	20253
104. Khurda Road-Puri (BG-43 Kms)	52798	116452	153339
105. Nawpada-Gunupur (NG-90 Kms)	20356	19743	18803
106. Purilia-Kotshila and Ranchi-Lohardaga (NG-104 Kms)	125334	146627	130402
107. Raipur-Dhamtari (NG-89 Kms)	65722	68807	76903
108. Satpura Railways (NG-1007 Kms)	759390	716628	846237
109. Rupsa-Talbandh (NG-89 Kms)	29106	32976	35782
110. Kanhan-Ramtek (BG-24 Kms)	17455	19189	20499
111. Bondamunda-Nawgaon-Purnapani (BG-29 Kms)	252	7302	—
112. Jakhapura-Daitari (BG-33 Kms)	53926	111475	118873
113. Hatia-Nawgaon (BG-18 Kms)	39209	40652	117353
114. Bobli-Salur (BG-18 Kms)	7379	6739	13347
115. Tumsar Road-Tirodi (BG-24 Kms)	20210	18945	9968
116. Tata-Badampahar (BG-99.05 Kms)	17946	27595	44905
117. Santragachi-Baragachia (BG-24 Kms)*	46473	61351	77828
118. Tupkadih-Talgaria (BG-35 Kms)*	71647	87538	—
119. #Cuttack-Paradeep (BG-29 Kms)	—	—	(+) 1507
120. Billimora-Waghai (NG-63 Kms)	10092	13907	13897
121. Chhuchhapura-Tenkhala (NG-38 Kms)	821	938	11344
122. Choranda-Motikoral (NG-19 Kms)	1792	1988	6207
123. Samni-Dahej (NG-39 Kms)	2115	2197	12752
124. Broach-Jambusar-Kavi (NG-76 Kms)	3562	3709	23696
125. Chota Udaipur-Jambusar (NG-150 Kms)	7666	8159	45892

1	2	3	4
126. Chanded-Malsar (NG-87 Kms)	7533	8616	32384
127. Nadiad-Kapadvanj (NG-45 Kms)	2971	2102	15474
128. Nadia-Bhadran (NG-58 Kms)	1606	1620	18047
129. Gandhidham-New Kandla (MG-12 Kms)	19281	32213	30183
130. Mawli Jn.-Bari Sadri (MG-82 Kms)	63512	44314	48332
131. Pranchi Road-Kodinar (MG-26 Kms)	12206	13233	13126
132. Sihor-Palitana (MG-27 Kms)	7283	8378	8078
133. Rajula Jn.-Rajula City (MG-9 Kms)	2155	2911	2882
134. Ranuj-Patan	5125	5301	4749
135. Mehsana-Tarang Hill (MG-56 Kms)	8422	2905	6629
136. Himmatnagar-Khedrahma (MG-55 Kms)	8698	779	3437
137. Anand-Cambay (BG-51 Kms)	13221	13540	49780
138. Boriavi-Vadtal-Swaminarayn (BG-6 Kms)	2563	2811	8611
139. Gandhidham-New Bhuj (MG-57.90 Kms)	—	7003	16763
140. Talala-Delvada	—	—	1796
Grand Total	3771774	4005635	5119056
Lines	125	121	126

NB : The figures in the brackets refer to the Gauge of track and the length of the section.

#Return is less than 7%, hence treated as Uneconomic Branch Line.

*New Lines

Retrenchment of Staff in BSP

6502. SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to reduce the number of employees in the Bhilai Steel Plant;

(b) if so, whether the Government are also contemplating to absorb such employees elsewhere;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) As a part of its business and financial restructuring, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) are to achieve a manpower level of about one lakh by March, 2005. This includes reduction

in number of employees in Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP) also. Rationalisation of manpower is being attained through superannuation, voluntary retirement and restricted recruitment.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of above.

Training to Local Youths

6503. DR. ASHOK PATEL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether local youths are being imparted training by the defence personnel deputed on Indo-Pak borders to protect the people of the bordering villages in case of war between the two countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of youths given training in this regard upto now ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) No training is being imparted to the local youth by the Indian Army, along the Indo-Pak border.

[English]

Task Force for CAS – Air/DD

6504. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA :
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI :

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

(a) whether the task force set up by the Ministry for Conditional Access System (CAS) of broadcasting has finalised a multi-tier structure of delivery;

(b) if so, whether the committee has also finalised the specification of the set-top box used for conditional access;

(c) whether the committee has also decided that the free-to-air channels would be broadcast on a basic tier where the subscriber will have to pay a nominal charges as per subscriber basis; and

(d) if so, the extent to which these steps have helped the broadcasting system in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) The main recommendations of the Task Force set up to examine all aspects related to Conditional Access System (CAS) are :-

- (i) The Conditional Access System and the supportive Subscriber Management System should be mandated under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.
- (ii) The Set Top Box (STB) shall be required only for "Pay" Channels and the Basic tier of "Free-to-Air" channels shall be receivable by the subscribers in the current mode without the use of STB.
- (iii) The technical parameters of STB shall conform to the Indian standards, to be prescribed by the Bureau of Indian Standards.
- (iv) Unauthorised viewing/distribution/redistribution of the broadcast signal should be made a cognizable offence.

(v) The Government should regulate the price of 'Basic Tier' of 'Free-to-Air' channels. The Government will also make a provision for the channels of the Public Service broadcaster.

(vi) There should be no requirement for change of the receiving set, irrespective of whether the consumer chooses to watch 'Free-to-Air' channels and/or 'Pay' channels.

(d) The introduction of an addressable System for Pay channel viewing through the cable system would give choice to the consumer to pay for only those channels that he chooses to view and would bring transparency in the viewership figures.

[Translation]

Selection by DSBs on Fake Documents

6505. SHRI MANSINH PATEL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Dealer's Selection Boards have made certain selections who have submitted fake documents to meet the norms;

(b) if so, the number of such cases occurred during the last two years; and

(c) the number of persons involved in such frauds against whom the Government have taken action to award penalty ?

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) Complaints received about selection of dealers/distributors of petroleum products of the oil marketing companies, made by the Dealer Selection Boards, on the basis of fake documents submitted by the candidates, are got inquired into through the prescribed mechanism. Wherever the complaints are substantiated, action is taken against the selected candidates, who had submitted false documents. The action taken inter-alia includes non-issue of Letters of Intent (LOIs) to them, withdrawal of LOIs already issued, cancellation of the selection, etc.

[English]

Computerisation of Ordnance Depots

6506. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether an Automated Data Processing (ADP) Cell was created more than three decades back but even to date the output generated by the automated system continues to be checked manually, in the central ordnance depots at Agra, Jabalpur, Kanpur, Kirkee

(b) if so, the reasons for the computerisation not come to use;

(c) the steps taken to make the computerisation a success;

(d) the number of computers held by the defence installations as on date, its model and configuration and the individual purchase price;

(e) whether additional number of warranty was obtained at the time of purchase and warranty extended yearly thereafter;

(f) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(g) the source of purchasing the computers and whether the computers purchased from other sources than Kendriya Bhandar/NCCF/Super Bazar were priced lower of the same configuration and facilities?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) No Automated Data Processing (ADP) Cell was created three decades back. Only piecemeal automation in terms of stand-alone Personal Computers had been introduced in late 90s at some depots. Government has sanctioned a project called Computerised Inventory Control Project (CICP) for complete automation of Inventory Management in ordnance depots. Implementation of which is in progress.

(c) The following steps have been taken to make computerisation a success :-

(i) With advent of cheap microprocessors, all the Ordnance Units have been provided with at least one Personal Computer to automate inventory management functions.

(ii) Training to the work force is in progress.

(iii) The software development for CICP is complete and trials are underway.

(d) The number of computers held as on date by Ordnance Depots/Units is 779, of varied configurations which includes PC-486, Pentium I, II and III and Celeron based Personal Computers. Data regarding price of

personal computers is available at Delhi up to March, 2000. Procurement prices have varied from Rs. 72,000 in October, 1996 for PC-486 to Rs. 43,000 in November, 1998 for Pentium-III to Rs. 34,000 in January, 2000. From April, 2000 the procurement is not being done by Army Ordnance Corps for the whole Army and is now being done by different Field Formations. Hence, information regarding prices of computers purchased after April, 2000 is not available.

(e) and (f) The computers and its peripherals were purchased with a standard one year warranty. As per the policy, the maintenance of the computers at Army Headquarters and Units located near Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (EME) workshop is the responsibility of EME. In respect of Units located away from EME workshop, maintenance is done through a combination of Annual Maintenance Contract or by resorting to case-to-case repairs.

(g) The source of purchasing computers are Original Equipment Manufacture or vendors from whom computers are purchased as per the purchase policy of Defence by inviting competitive biddings or at Directorate General of Supply and Disposal (DGS and D) rate contract. The policy aims at getting maximum price advantage. Ordnance units are spread all over India and facilities of Kendriya Bhandar/NCCF/Super Bazar are not available everywhere.

Opening of CSD Canteen at Mavelikkara

6507. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any criteria to open new CSD Canteen;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to open CSD canteen at Mavelikkara in Kerala; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) As per the existing guidelines, sanction to operate Unit Run Canteen is accorded by the Brigade/Sub Area or Higher Formation Commanders subject to the unit having a strength of one hundred or more service personnel including attached personnel. As regards opening of Canteens for ex-servicemen, Command Headquarters are at liberty to open canteens for ex-servicemen, at their discretion. However, a broad guideline of a minimum strength of 10,000 ex-servicemen in an area

and the economic and administrative viability of running the canteen is kept in view by the Formation Commanders while deciding opening of canteen for ex-servicemen. Since no grant/subsidy is available from Government, the canteen must be economically viable.

The local Formation Headquarters have examined the proposal for opening a Canteen at Mavelikkara in Kerala in consultation with the local Office of the National Ex-Servicemen Co-ordination Committee and have not found the proposal to be economically and administratively viable.

Improving All India Programmes

6508. SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to improve All India Radio for the benefit of the future generations; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. All India Radio always endeavours to improve its services, Prasar Bharati has intimated that the steps taken in this regard include introduction of phone – in programmes, radio – on – demand service, news – on phone service, and expansion of FM transmission network. Radio coverage by non-terrestrial means has been enhanced through introduction of Direct – to – Home digital radio broadcasting service. All India Radio has also introduced Internet broadcasting.

Oil Sector situation in Post APM Regime

6509. SHRI Y.V. RAO : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made a review of the oil sector's situation arising in the post APM regime;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the Government are having its hold on the oil sector ?

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) APM has been dismantled with effect from 1st April 2002. The major decisions are as follows :—

- (i) The pricing of all petroleum products, except for PDS kerosene and domestic LPG has become market determined with effect from 1st April 2002.
- (ii) The subsidies on PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG will be borne by the Consolidated Fund of India from 1st April 2002. These subsidies will be on a specified flat rate basis and will be phased out in the next 3 to 5 years.
- (iii) Freight subsidy will continue to be provided for supplies of PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG to far flung areas and will be borne by the Consolidated Fund of India.
- (iv) The price of indigenous crude oil of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. and Oil India Ltd. has become market determined with effect from 1st April 2002.
- (v) The new entrants, including private sector, will be allowed to market transportation fuels namely, motor spirit, high speed diesel and aviation turbine fuel as per the guidelines contained in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Resolution dated 8th March 2002.
- (vi) Regulatory mechanism will be set up to oversee the functioning of the downstream petroleum sector. A bill on the subject has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 6th May 2002.

Ex-Storage Price of Petroleum Products in Refineries

6510. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK :
SHRI C.N. SINGH

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

(a) the wholesale ex-storage price of kerosene, diesel and LPG paid to different refineries/producers;

(b) the rates and amount of different Central and State taxes duties, etc. leading to final price build up at which these products are available to consumers in country, State-wise; and

(c) the manner in which subsidy is given to refineries/producers/consumers ?

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 provisional refinery gate price payable to refineries/producers for the said products with effect from 01.05.2002 are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(b) The details of taxes and duties are given in the enclosed Statement-II

(c) The subsidy on PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG is available to the consumers to be borne by Consolidated Fund effective 1st April 2002.

Statement-I

Provisional Transfer Price payable to refineries/producers

Refineries/ Producers	Kerosene (Domestic) Rs/KL	Diesel Rs./KL		LPG (Domestic) Rs/MT
		Less than 0.25% Sulphur	Less than 0.05% Sulphur	
Refineries				
Jamnagar	9280.16	10438.38	10909.33	11688.76
Mumbai	9382.45	10608.01	10978.98	11832.54
Mangalore	9420.00	10535.59	11006.57	12127.23
Chennai	9502.14	10630.07	11101.05	12461.47
Haldia	9950.60	11153.18	11624.15	12882.73
Kochi	9410.35	10527.70	—	12212.44
Visakha	9557.60	10689.59	—	12694.74
Koyali	9542.31	10933.03	11403.97	11945.80
Panipat	9948.57	11583.15	12054.11	13578.55
Mathura	9948.57	11583.15	12054.11	13502.60
Barauni	10211.40	11645.20	—	14055.78
NE Refs*	9950.60	11153.18	—	12882.73
Narimanam	9707.93	11018.35	—	12461.47

* North East refineries i.e. Digboi, Guwahati, BRPL and NRL

Refineries/ Producers	Kerosene (Domestic) Rs/KL	Diesel Rs./KL		LPG (Domestic) Rs./MT
		Less than 0.25% Sulphur	Less than 0.05% Sulphur	

Fractionators

Hazira	9345.83			11763.88
Uran				11832.54
Gandhar				11763.88
Ankleshwar				11763.88
Usar				11832.54
Vijaypur				11688.76
Auraiya				11688.76
Vaghodia				11763.88
Lakwa				12882.73
Daliajan				12882.73

Statement-II

States	Kerosene (% age)	Diesel (% age)	LPG (% age)
1	2	3	4
Excise Duties (All States)	16	16 + Rs. 1000/KL	16
Sales Tax Etc.			
Andhra Pradesh	8	19.33	16
Arunachal Pradesh		12	
Assam	4	12	12
Bihar	6	15	9
Chandigarh	8	11	8
Chattisgarh	2	25	12
Delhi	4	12	8
Dau/Daman	Nil	12	8
Dadra/Nagar Haveli	Nil	12	8
Goa	1	17	1
Gujarat	Nil	18	14
Haryana	10	10	10

1	2	3	4
Himachal Pradesh	8	12	8
Jammu and Kashmir	4	12	12
Jharkhand	6	15	9
Karnataka	4	17.5	12
Kerala	12	24	16
Manipur	Nil	12	8
Madhya Pradesh	Nil	25	12
Maharashtra	4	38.14	8
Greater Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane	4	40	8
Meghalaya	4	8	20
Nagaland	5	15	12
Orissa	Nil	20	12
Pondicherry	Nil	11	1
Punjab	20	8	8
Rajasthan	8	16	12
Sikkim	12	10	12
Tamilnadu	4	22	8
Tripura	5	12	12
Uttar Pradesh/Uttaranchal	10	20	10
West Bengal	4.55	12.55	17
Other Taxes			
Assam (Addl Tax on ST)	10	10	10
Bihar (Addl Tax on Gross Turnover)	1	1	1
Chandigarh (Surcharge on ST)	10	10	10
Goa (Entry Tax)	2	12	2
Gujarat (Addl Tax on ST)	Nil	20	10
Gujarat (Cess on Turnover)		3	
Jammu and Kashmir (Surcharge on ST)	5		5
Karnataka (Entry Tax)		5	
Kerala (Addl Tax on ST)	15		
Kerala (Entry Tax)	12	20	16

1	2	3	4
M.P. (Surcharge on ST)	15	15	15
M.P. (Entry Tax)		1	1
Maharashtra (TOT)	1.5		
Maharashtra (SC on ST)	10		
Meghalaya (SC on ST)	2	2	2
Orissa (SC on ST)	10	10	10
Orissa (Entry Tax)	1	1	1
Rajasthan (SC on ST)	15	15	15
Rajasthan (Entry Tax)	1	1	1
Tamilnadu (Entry Tax)		18	

[Translation]

Financial Assistance to Power Distribution

6511. SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the union Government had provided a financial assistance of Rs. 208 crore to Maharashtra for improving the Power distribution system in the State during the last year;

(b) if so, whether the Government of Maharashtra has utilized the said funds; 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 India had provided Rs. 134.44 crore under Accelerated Power Development Programme (APDP) to Maharashtra State in the Financial year 2000-2001. This includes 5 R and M schemes and 6 schemes pertaining to 5 identified distribution circles of : Solapur; Ratnagiri; Sindhudurg; Osmanabad and Jalgaon. For the financial year 2001-2002 an amount of Rs. 45 crore has been released to the Maharashtra Government under APDP for improving the sub-transmission and distribution system in the State. No R and M Scheme was received from MSEB in 2001-2002 and schemes pertaining to following distribution circles were sanctioned: Solapur; Ratnagiri; Sindhudurg; Osmanabad and Jalgaon. The MSEB had so far utilized Rs. 72.33 crore out of the funds provided under APDP scheme. The Maharashtra State Government/State Electricity Board have submitted the additional circle schemes which are proposed to be included for funding

under Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme (APDRP) in the current Financial Year in the following circles :

Circles

- (1) Nasik
- (2) Ahmadnagar
- (3) Aurangabad
- (4) Latur
- (5) Nagpur (Rural)
- (6) BEST – South Mumbai

[English]

Crude Oil Wells Explored in Gujarat

6512. SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether new crude oil wells have partly been explored in Gujarat during March, 1998 to December, 2001.

(b) if so, the location thereof and the assessment made regarding the quantity of crude oil expected to be found in those wells; and

(c) the total amount spent on exploration on these oil wells ?

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) During the period from March, 1998 to December, 2001, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has made four oil finds, namely Ankla, Akholjuni and Sadan in the district of Kheda and North Sarbhan in the district Vadodara in the State of Gujarat. Ultimate reserves of 0.85 Million Metric Tonne (MMT) of oil has been established in the above four finds as on 1.4.2001.

During the same period one exploratory well has been drilled in Bakrol field in the State of Gujarat by private/JV companies, the oil reserves of which are being assessed.

(c) A total of about Rs. 46 crores has been spent on exploratory drilling in the areas mentioned in reply to parts (a) and (b) above, during the period March, 1998 to December, 2001.

[Translation]

Promotion of Staff in Prasar Bharati

6513. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN :

SHRI JAGANNATH MALLIK :

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

(a) whether the Government have issued an ordinance regarding the Prasar Bharati which includes the clause that the promotion of employees of Prasar Bharati would be done by UPSC, like other Central Government Employees;

(b) whether the Government have excluded the said promotion clause of employees of Prasar Bharati by issuing another ordinance.

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any rules in regard to promotion of all these employees have been framed;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether these rules differ to the rules framed in regard to promotion of the Central Government employees; and

(g) if so, the steps taken by the Government to frame rules on the lines of the Central Government offices ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) to (g) Recruitment Rules for all the posts of AIR and Doordarshan are being framed keeping in view the spirit of the existing rules. These rules will govern the recruitment procedure to the posts of Prasar Bharati, after the transfer of services of the existing employees to Prasar Bharati, in accordance with the provisions of the Prasar Bharati Act.

[English]

Modernisation of Ordnance Factories

6514. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to modernise the Ordnance factories;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the number of ordnance factories modernised and expanded during the last three years;
- (d) whether there is any plan to set up new factories;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether the lapses such as fire and loss of armmunitions would be stopped in future; and
- (g) if so, the steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : Yes, Sir.

(b) Process of modernisation includes renewal and replacement of old Plant and Machinery and induction of new machines and process for improved productivity.

(c) During the last three years, modernisation activities have been taken up in twenty six Ordnance Factories.

(d) and (e) A new Ordnance Factory is being established at Nalanda (Bihar) to produce Bi-Modular Propellant Charge System for high caliber ammunition.

(f) and (g) Each case of fire accident in factories is got investigated by a board of officers who, on analysing various aspects, suggest measures for further improvement in safety procedures, which are implemented to avoid recurrence of such incidents.

[Translation]

Reservation for SCs/STs/OBCs in Defence Forces

6515.SHRI SHIVAJI MANE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to extend reservation for the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and O.B.C. for recruitments in the defence forces;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Selection and recruitment to Armed Forces are made strictly on merit and no reservation on the basis of Caste, Community, area or class is provided.

Enhancement of Striking Range of Pechora-Missiles

6516.SHRI BHUPENDRA SINH SOLANKI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to enhance the striking range of Pechora-Missiles;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken any action in this regard so far; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[English]

Water Supply Schemes Built by ONGC

6517.SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation Limited has built water supply schemes for some villages near Mumbai or in its vicinity;

(b) if so, the policy which allowed Indian Oil Corporation Limited to engage in selective development;

(c) whether Indian Oil Corporation Limited propose to undertake such public interest works in other States;

(d) if so, the guidelines in force for such matters; and

(e) the steps proposed to ensure that Indian Oil Corporation Limited also invests some capital in development of other areas ?

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. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has, on a request from the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, implemented a drinking water pipeline scheme across Manori – Creek near Mumbai during the year 2000-2001, to mitigate the acute problem of drinking water being faced by the villagers residing at Manori – Gorai Island falling under that Municipai Corporation.

(b) to (e) As approved by its Board, IOC has a policy for donations/contributions and community development activities, as a measure of discharging the Corporations social responsibility towards neighbouring community. The community development activities include, among others, projects for clean drinking water in different States. IOC undertakes various projects on the basis of proposals received from the Divisions for the community development activities in the vicinity of its refineries/installations/offices, spread all over the country.

Power Generation through Participation by Private Sector

6518. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any long term planning of the Government with regard to power generation in the country through the participation of private sector;

(b) if so, whether any policy has been laid down in this regard;

(c) if so, the salient features of the policy;

(d) whether the Government are contemplating to allow Naphtha based power projects in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A policy to encourage greater private sector participation in the Indian Power Sector was announced in October, 1991. The main objective of this policy was to bring in additionality of resources in view of the growing gap between the demand and supply and the serious resource crunch being faced by the State Electricity Boards and Central/State Sector Generating Corporations. The policy was also expected to raise levels of efficiency, productivity and competition.

The salient features of the private power policy announced in 1991 and reviewed from time to time are as under :—

- (i) Private Sector can set up power projects of any size and any type : thermal projects on conventional fuel, hydel projects or non-conventional sources such as wind/solar energy.
- (ii) Debt: equity ratio up to 4:1 allowed.

- (iii) 100% foreign equity participation allowed in generation, transmission and distribution.
- (iv) Liberalized rates of depreciation in respect of assets.
- (v) Import of equipment for power projects at concessional customs duty.
- (vi) Generating companies can sell power on the basis of a suitably structured two part tariff—one part to cover fixed costs and the other to cover variable costs at a prescribed level of performance.
- (vii) Guidelines also issued for tariff based competitive bidding (availability based tariff) for thermal power stations.
- (viii) Development of captive coal mines permitted as per guidelines of Ministry of Coal in this regard.
- (ix) Award of power projects, with a few exceptions, through International Competitive Bidding (ICB) route made mandatory from 18.2.1995 onwards.
- (x) Powers for grant of environmental clearance decentralized to the extent feasible.
- (xi) Capital cost limits exceeding which techno-economic clearance is required from the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), raised suitably.
- (xii) Automatic approval for foreign investment without any upper limit.
- (xiii) Relaxation of 40% cap on debt exposure by Indian Financial Institutions.

(d) and (e) Naphtha is one of the liquid fuels permitted for use in the generation of electricity. Allocation of naphtha to various States has been fixed at around 12,000 MW. Though a few projects have been commissioned using naphtha as a feed stock, naphtha is no longer considered a viable fuel for generation of electricity due to its high cost in the international markets and difficulty of handling.

[Translation]

NCC Battalion on Rental Building

6519. SHRI RAM SINGH KASWAN : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether many offices of National Cadet Corps (NCC) battalion are being run in rented buildings;

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

(c) the criteria fixed for the office buildings of National Cadet Corps and the minimum and covered area required by it;

(d) whether the present office buildings fulfil the said criteria;

(e) the number of offices transferred to other places after vacating rented buildings in Rajasthan during the last three years;

(f) the number of office buildings of which owners have demanded for vacating during the last three years; and

(g) the time by which the remaining buildings are likely to be vacated ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) Provision of NCC office buildings, other than State Directorate Buildings, is the responsibility of the State Government. Even though standard criterion for office accommodation are prescribed, the emphasis is on availability of buildings rather than adherence to the criterion.

(e) to (g) One building, housing the NCC Officers Mess in Udaipur, has been vacated in September, 2001. Three cases for vacation of houses in Rajasthan are pending. As the State Governments are responsible for providing building to the NCC, the question of vacating or otherwise is to be decided by the Government of Rajasthan.

[English]

Tamluk-Digha Project

6520.DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the work on Tamluk-Digha project after spectacular progress during 2000-01 came to a stop during 2001-02

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether a number of suppliers of the contractors have not been paid their dues;

(d) if so, whether the dispute arose among the three contractors and the S.E. Railways has been settled; and

(e) if so, the time by which the work on the project 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) Does not arise.

(c) This is not known to the Railways. The matter does not pertain to Railways.

(d) and (e) Due to delay in completion of the work, the contracts have been extended from time to time as per contract conditions. The request of the contractors to amend the contract conditions is not considered acceptable. Tamluk-Bajkul has already been completed. Bajkul-Kanthi section is targeted for completion during 2002-2003.

Spare Capacity for Data Transmission

6521.SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether during 1998 the Union Government authorised the Railways to lease out excess/spare capacity for data transmission to BSNL or licensees of BSNL and internet service providers to augment income;

(b) if so, whether the Railways had 1260 spare channels with an estimated potential earnings of Rs. 10.00 crores, in excess of railways administrative telecom requirements during 1998-2001; and

(c) if so, the extent to which the Railways leased out the spare capacity and the quantum of lease rental accrued therefrom ?

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) and (c) During 1998-2001, some of the Zonal Railways had spare channels on different sections in excess of Railways administrative telecom requirements. During this period Railways leased out spare capacity of 13 streams of 2 MBPS (390 channels) at a cost of about Rs. 40.88 lakhs.

More Powers to Lok Adalats

6522.SHRI SAVSHIBHAI MAKWANA :
DR. D.V.G. SHANKAR RAO :

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

(a) the total number of Lok Adalats existing/to be set up in each State;

(b) the powers to be provided to them; and

(c) the extent to which it will reduce the cases pending with the various courts in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) As per available information so far more than 1 lakh 24 thousand Lok Adalats have been organized in the country. As organizing Lok Adalats is a continuing process and the purposes of holding Lok Adalats are need based, no specific number of Lok Adalats to be set up can be indicated.

(b) At present, the Lok Adalats can settle disputes only on the basis of compromise or settlement among the parties. If the parties do not arrive at a settlement, the case is either returned to the court of law or the parties are advised to seek remedy in a court of law. To remove this drawback, it has been decided to add a new chapter in the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, which will facilitate setting up of permanent Lok Adalats for providing compulsory pre-litigative mechanism for conciliation and settlement of cases relating to public utility services such as transport (air, road, water), postal, telegraph or telephone, power, water, sanitation, hospitals and insurance. A Bill to this effect has already been introduced in the Lok Sabha. When passed by the Parliament, it will enable the National Legal Services Authority or the State Legal Services Authority, as the case may be, to establish permanent Lok Adalat at such places and in such numbers as may be expedient to enable the Lok Adalats to exercise its jurisdiction in respect of one or more public utility services as necessary from time to time. To avoid prolonged litigation it has also been proposed that the award made by the Lok Adalat shall be final, binding and shall not be questioned in any original suit, application or execution proceeding. The jurisdiction of the Lok Adalats would be limited to cases up to a monetary value of Rs. 10 lakhs. Under clause 22C of the Legal Services Authorities (Amendment) Bill, 2002, Government has power to increase the limit of ten lakh rupees in consultation with National Legal Services Authority.

(c) It is not possible to quantify the reduction in the Court cases at present.

[Translation]

Registration of Newspapers

6523. SHRI RAMSHAKAL : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the number of applications received for the registration of Hindi, English and other Indian languages newspapers and periodicals during the last three years;

(b) the number of applications pending/approved during the said period and till date, year-wise and State-wise;

(c) the time by which the remaining pending cases are likely to be disposed of; and

(d) the norms fixed for the registration of such newspapers ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Reduction in Duties on Petroleum Products

6524. SHRI RAJO SINGH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of time bound programme relating to the reduction in the duties along with the other steps to be taken with the removal of A.P.M. from the petroleum sector w.e.f. April 2002; and

(b) the differences surfaced in this regard and the action being taken by the Government to resolve such differences ?

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) There is no time bound programme to reduce duties on petroleum products.

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

[English]

Lucrative Returns by Plantation of Sag Trees

6525. SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the plantation and finance companies had assured the lucrative returns for plantation of 'sag' trees in Gujarat;

(b) if so, whether these companies are either closed or defunct; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

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

Post Based Roster

6526. SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether DOP and T has introduced 'Post Based Rosters' in place of 'Vacancy Based Rosters' for implementing the reserving system since, 1997;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether while introducing 'Post Based Rosters' in place of 'Vacancy Based Rosters' the process of identifying excess/shortages, if any in Class I, II, III and IV category of services under the Ministry of Railways and all the Autonomous/Statutory organisations, and Public Sector Undertakings was undertaken as prescribed as the DOP and T's OM No. 36012/96-Estt. (Res) dated July 2, 1997;

(d) if so, the details of excess/shortages found in all the category of services;

(e) whether 'Post Based Rosters' are introduced in place of 'Vacancy Based Rosters' without completing the process of identifying excess/shortages, if any, as prescribed under the referred OM; and

(f) if so, 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.

(b) Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Personnel and Training (DOP and T) vide its O.M. dated 2.7.1997, have introduced 'Post Based Rosters' in place of 'vacancy based rosters' with a view to bringing the policy of reservation in line with the law laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of R.K. Sabharwal Vs. State of Punjab as well as J.C. Malik Vs. Ministry of Railways.

(c) In the case of J.C. Malik where Ministry of Railways was a party, the Hon'ble Supreme Court directed Ministry of Railways to follow the principles as laid down by the Court in the case of R.K. Sabharwal which state that the vacancy based roster shall continue till the

prescribed percentage (15% for SCs, 7.5% for STs and 27% for OBCs) of reservation is not achieved. Once the same is achieved, the vacancy based rosters cease to operate and thereafter, the principles of replacement have to be followed so as to maintain the prescribed percentage. Keeping in view the above principles and the principle of 50% limit of reservation, laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, we have made a successful attempt to provide the roster in such a manner that they will be equal to the size of the cadre posts, and number of the roster points have been fixed and evenly distributed in such a manner that the prescribed percentage of reservation is achieved. In order to achieve this principle, 0.5 and above has been taken as one post and less than 0.5 has been ignored and treated as nil. By applying the above principles, the detailed instructions alongwith model rosters for Group 'C' and Group 'D' of Recruitment and Promotion categories issued vide Railway Board's letter dated 21.8.1997, have not violated Hon'ble Supreme Court's order pronounced in the case of R.K. Sabharwal.

As regards Group 'A' and Group 'B', it is stated that cadres in Group 'A' (Junior Scale) and Group 'B' in promotional categories are not maintained separately because posts in these Groups of Services are interchangeable. As such, adoption of post based rosters which are constructed with respect to cadre strength in these Groups are not feasible. The position in this regard was apprised to DOP and T in time.

However, in the case of recruitments in group 'B' and Junior Scale of Group 'A', which are being done Centrally through UPSC, the instructions and the model rosters prescribed by DOP and T vide its said O.M. dated 2.7.1997 are being followed.

(d) The overall shortages (in percentage) of employees belonging to SCs/STs with respect to total number of staff strength as on 31.3.2001 in Groups 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' are as under keeping in view the prescribed percentage of reservation i.e. 15% for SCs and 7.5% for STs :

	Group of services			
	A	B	C	D
SC	Nil	1.67%	0.63%	Nil
ST	Nil	2.38%	1.41%	0.42%

(e) and (f) The contents of DOP&T's O.M. dated 2.7.1997 as regards the identification of shortage or excess in a particular cadre for future adjustment has been

elaborated in Railway Board's letter dated 21.8.1997 for strict compliance.

Gang Staff

6527. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the gang staff patrolling and manning vulnerable spots and bridges are specially trained for this purpose;

(b) if so, whether the Railways are considering to provide the gang staff with wireless telecommunication device to monitor safety of the track constantly; and

(c) if so, the other facilities/gadgets the gang staff is provided for better efficiency ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL) :
(a) Training is provided to all gang staff as any of them may be required to carry out patrolling and manning of vulnerable locations.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Apart from providing the equipments to gang staff that are needed for identification/apprehension of dangerous condition of track and protection of track in case of danger the following other facilities/gadgets are provided :

(i) Additional patrolmen are provided in areas where there is apprehension of personal danger, so that patrolmen move in pairs.

(ii) Protective clothings, torch lights etc. are provided.

SC Recent Judgement to Mechanism for a Second Review

6528. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Supreme Court in a recent judgment/order laid down a mechanism for a second review if the aggrieved party establishes violation of the principles of natural justice;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to bring up a legislation to amend the CPC and CPPC to provide for this additional window for seeking justice on such grounds of violation of natural justice; and

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

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Distance from North to South

6529. SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to reduce the rail distance from North to South and East to West in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any survey has been conducted by the Government in this regard;

(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) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Reduction in Arms Production and Defence Expenditure

6530. SHRIMATI KUMUDINI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to reduce arms production and Defence expenditure as a economy measures in view of the Budgetary deficit, loan burden and serious fiscal problems of the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

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

Pak Ship in Indian Waters

6531. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned 'Pak Ship in Indian Waters?' appearing in the 'Hindu' dated April 16, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) According to Intelligence reports received, the vessel 'Ibrahmi' was bound for a destination between Vengurla (Maharashtra) and Goa after 30.3.2002. The Navy and Coast Guard mounted surveillance measures. However, no such vessel could be located.

(c) and (d) The Navy and Coast Guard have enhanced surveillance along the West Coast.

Vacant Posts of SCs/STs in BSP

6532. SHRI THOMAS HANSDA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of posts of Khalasis reserved for SC/ST candidates lying vacant in Bokaro Steel Plant at present;

(b) whether the posts of the said categories to be filled up during 1992 have so far not been filled up;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which the said vacancies likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) In Bokaro Steel Plant, as per post based roster as on 1.1.2002, the shortfall of SC/ST in direct recruitment for the post of Khalasi was 89 for SC and nil for ST category.

(b) As per records, there was a backlog of only 2 posts against SC category as on 1.1.1992. These posts were filled up in the subsequent months of that year itself.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Whenever recruitment takes place against requirement, if any, the reservation requirements of SC/ST category, as per directive, are being taken care of.

Tatkal Service in Andhra Pradesh Express

6533. SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE :
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is no provision for Tatkal service in Andhra Pradesh Express and other south bound trains;

(b) whether the Government will consider to release berths in Andhra Pradesh Express on humanitarian ground such as illness, death etc.; and

(c) 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) Tatkal reservation facility is available in the following South bound trains which are originating from various parts of the country :-

1. 1013 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus – Coimbatore Express
2. 1063 Dadar-Chennai Express
3. 2622 New Delhi-Chennai Tamil Nadu Express
4. 2841 Howrah-Chennai Coromandal Express
5. 6003 Howrah-Chennai Mail
6. 6045 Ahmedabad-Chennai Navjeevan Express
7. 6345 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus – Trivandrum Netravati Express
8. 6509 Ajmer-Bangalore Express
9. 7001 Mumbai CSTM-Hyderabad Hussainsagar Express
10. 7031 Mumbai CSTM-Hyderabad Express

However, this facility is not available in 2723/2724 Andhra Pradesh Express train.

(b) and (c) A limited number of berths/seats have been earmarked as Emergency Quota in 2723/2724 Andhra Pradesh Express to meet the emergent travel requirement of High Official Requisition (HOR) holders, Ministers, MPs/ MLAs, VIPs and other emergent demands. The requests of the passengers required to travel on account of circumstances like bereavement in the family, sickness etc. are also duly considered for allotment of emergency quota.

Import of Crude Oil by Oil Companies

6534. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether after dismantling of APM from April, 2002 the public sector oil companies will be forced to import their own crude and under such a free market dispensation BPCL, HPCL and IOCL will no longer be bound to the Shipping Corporation of India for carrying their cargo; and

(b) if so, 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) and (b) Import of crude oil has been made free with effect from 1st April, 2001. In partial modification in the extant policy, Government have decided in May, 2001 to allow public sector oil companies to exercise the option to import their crude oil requirement themselves under the actual user licensing policy or through IOCL. Accordingly, individual public sector oil companies, are to make their own arrangements for sourcing of crude oil. As per present policy, import contracts for crude oil are finalised on FOB/FAS basis and shipping arrangements through the chartering wing of Ministry of Shipping.

Training to Pilots

6535. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Air Force has been facing a problem in training its fighter pilots in the absence of an Advanced Jet Trainer;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering to send its pilots to England every year for a certain period to get training there; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard including the training of MIG-21, Royal Air Force Hawks or Iskra or Kiran trainer Stage II etc. ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) The IAF is using various kinds of aircraft to impart training to its fighter pilots. Many of these aircrafts are completing their total technical life in the near future. Hence, Government is planning to procure an Advanced Jet Trainer.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) IAF is utilising Iskra and Kiran aircraft as lead in fighter training aircraft before training on MIG-21.

Purchase Agreement with KELTRON

6536. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the DRDO has made any purchase agreement with KELTRON, a Government of Kerala Public Sector Undertaking; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Two laboratories of DRDO namely Electronics and Radar Development Establishment (LRDE), Bangalore and Defence Research and Development Establishment (DRDE), Gwalior are having agreement with KELTRON. LRDE has a maintenance contract agreement of Rs. 45,000 plus taxes on Computer-Systems while DRDE has a supply order of one hundred crystals costing Rs. 95,000.

[Translation]

Tender for hiring ONGC Vehicles

6537. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the terms and conditions mentioned in the tender for hiring ONGC vehicles;

(b) whether there is uniformity in these terms and conditions throughout the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether because of these terms and conditions, general public could not participate in tender in Jodhpur and the tender was submitted by one person only;

(e) whether the Government propose to amend the terms and conditions of the tender in the public interest; and

(f) 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) to (c) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has informed that the terms and conditions incorporated in the tenders for

hiring vehicles by it are broadly based on the guidelines and instructions contained in the ONGC Manual for hiring of transport vehicles/equipments, ONGC has also informed that in addition, instructions issued on the subject by the headquarter agencies are also incorporated in such tenders, from time to time, and that there is uniformity in terms and conditions and instructions thereupon, thus. The aforesaid Manual contains guidelines and instructions on important aspects of tenders such as the method of Award, the advertisement of Notice Inviting Tender in newspaper, the earnest Money Deposit/Bid Bond, the instructions to tenderers for filling the tender, the general terms and conditions of tenders, the bid Evaluation Criteria and evaluation of tenders, the scope of contract, the period of contract, the operating terms and conditions, the security deposit and the statutory obligations.

(d) ONGC has reported that tenders were invited in Jodhpur as per its stipulated terms and conditions. Of the four parties who applied for the tender, only one party submitted the tender in time and the remaining three applied after the expiry of the tender closing time.

(e) and (f) Under the Navaratna status, ONGC has been delegated functional and financial powers and hence such tendering matters are being decided by it.

[English]

CNG Stations in Maharashtra

6538. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any steps to minimize the waiting at CNG filling stations in Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai due to shortage of outlet;

(b) if so, whether the Bandra Kurla Complex and other area both in Central and Suburban Mumbai have been surveyed and requirement evaluation conducted;

(c) if so, the number of filling stations and locations on which it is proposed to set up;

(d) the target fixed for its completion; and

(e) the catering capacity of each filling station ?

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) Mahanagar Gas Limited has doubled the compression capacity at the outlet.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) MGL is setting up a total of 45 CNG outlets progressively by June 2003 of, which about 21 would be in city and balance would be in suburbs.

(e) Each CNG outlets caters to about 1000 vehicles of different categories.

Use of Homeopathy and Alternative System of Medicines

6539. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences has recommended the use of homeopathy and alternative system of medicine to combat high altitude injuries like frost bite;

(b) if so, whether the Government have examined this recommendation;

(c) if so, whether this suggestion has been implemented by the Government;

(d) if so, the manner in which the Government propose to procure pure homeopathic medicines for the soldiers; and

(e) the steps taken to ensure that high quality medicines are used by the medical authorities in such instances ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

Military Ties with South Korea

6540. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK :
DR. ASHOK PATEL :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to establish military ties with South Korea;

(b) if so, whether both the countries have formulated any plan for the purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) Government propose to maintain

and enhance defence cooperation with South Korea in various areas such as exchange of high level visits, regular visits by Naval Vessels and mutual access to Training establishments in each others' countries.

CNC Chucker Machines

6541. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether CNC Chucker machines purchased at a cost of Rs. 1.15 crore in November, 1989, March and June 1990 and commissioned in February and August 1991 respectively remained unproductive as has been reported by CAG in its Report No. 9 of 1998 on page 141;

(b) if so, whether the Railway Board has looked into the genuineness of the causes and taken any action against the persons concerned for purchasing the machines;

(c) whether Flash Off Booth and Infra red Drying Oven was purchased at a cost of 0.35 crore without definite proven performance;

(d) if so, the reasons for purchasing the same and the action taken by the Government against the persons responsible therefor;

(e) whether there have been lot of corruption in the purchase of store items in Eastern Railway during the last three to five years; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken in the matter ?

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. The CAG in his report pertaining to 1996-97 observed that 3 CNC Chucker Machines had become defective about 4 to 5 years after being commissioned. These Machines had been productively utilised during the period they were in working order. However the period of breakdown was considerable, mainly due to defect in Electronic Control System, the repair of which was beyond the control of Railways. It required repairs to be arranged through the original equipment manufacturer, which took some time. Chief Workshop Managers were subsequently delegated adequate financial powers to get the machines repaired with the help of original equipment manufacturers.

(b) In view of remarks at (a) above, no action was warranted against the persons responsible for purchase of equipment.

(c) The Flash off Booth and Infra-red Drying Oven was to be custom built and hence it was not necessary that an identical plant should have been earlier built by the supplier. Reference of similar plants i.e. those requiring similar engineering had to be supplied by the firm, details of which the supplier had submitted to the Railways. Eight of these plants had been in operation for 3 years at the time of finalisation of the tender. CAG was apprised of these facts in the Action Taken Note prepared by the Ministry of Railways, which was accepted as satisfactory by the CAG.

(d) In view of reply at (c) above, no such action is warranted.

(e) and (f) No, Sir. However, regular checks are conducted from time to time in the area of purchase of stores and suitable action wherever necessary is taken against officials/staff responsible for irregularities/lapses.

Powers of Anti-Adulteration Cell

6542. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the names and sections under which the Anti-Adulteration Cell has been empowered to conduct raids;

(b) whether this cell has been created to conduct raids and inspection of Depots, Dealers, distributors and Oil Selection Boards against the respective companies only;

(c) if so, whether the officers have to record their movement to maintain transparency and to avoid the legal complaints; 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) and (b) The Anti Adulteration Cell is empowered to conduct raids under the following Control Orders issued by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in exercise of powers vested under the Essential Commodities Act :

(i) Naphtha (Acquisition, Sale, Storage and Prevention of Use in Automobiles) Order, 2000.

(ii) Solvent, Raffinate and Slop (Acquisition, Sale, Storage and Prevention of Use in Automobiles) Order, 2000

- (iii) Petroleum Products (Maintenance of Production, Storage and Supply) Order, 1999
- (iv) Motor Spirit and High Speed Diesel (Regulation of Supply and Distribution and Prevention of malpractices) Order, 1998
- (v) Kerosene (Restriction on Use and Fixation of Ceiling Price) Order, 1993
- (vi) Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000
- (vii) Lubricating Oils and Greases (Processing Supply and Distribution Regulation) Order, 1987

The powers include search and seizure, inspection of vehicles, places and premises being made use of or suspected to be made use of in the business of (1) Naphtha (2) Solvent Raffinate and Slop (3) Motor Spirit (MS)/High Speed Diesel (HSD) (4) Kerosene (5) LPG (6) Lubricating Oils and Greases (7) Crude Oil and Petroleum products, with respect to which there is reason to believe that the provisions of above mentioned control orders have been/ are being or are about to be contravened.

(c) and (d) The investigating Officers of the Anti Adulteration Cell have to keep the Director General or Regional Directors apprised of their movement. However, to avoid possible leakage of information and to ensure surprise element in the inspection, formal recording of movement is not insisted upon. The investigating officers are empowered under the above mentioned control orders to act on their own. Therefore, question of illegality does not arise.

Levy on Indian Steel by US

6543. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

- (a) whether US has finally decided to levy duty on Indian steel;
- (b) if so, whether Indian delegations that had lobbied against the move have failed;
- (c) if so, the extent to which the US decision to levy duty on Indian steel will affect the Indian steel exporters;
- (d) whether this decision will force the Indian steel companies to have a production cut;
- (e) if so, the extent to which the production will be reduced;

(f) whether any alternative is being considered; and

(g) if so, the steps, the Union Government proposed to take to help the steel companies not to cut the output ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) to (c) India has been excluded from the scope of safeguard measures announced by the US President against import of various categories of steel except in the category of carbon flanges. The exclusion has been possible mainly due to the efforts of the High Level Indian Delegation, which visited USA in January, 2002. The delegation was able to convince the US authorities that exports from India did not constitute more than 3% of the US market share and cumulatively, the exports from the developing countries did not constitute more than 9% of the US market share. Therefore the Indian delegation appealed for exclusion of Indian exports from the scope of safeguard measures as per article 9.1 of the WTO Agreement on Safeguards. The extent of our exports of carbon flanges to the US is not very significant. Therefore, the US decision to levy duty will have a negligible effect on Indian steel exporters.

(d) to (g) Do not arise in view of above.

Audio-Visual Treaties with Foreign Countries

6544. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government are considering to sign audio-visual treaties with foreign countries to further boost the animation business in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of countries being considered for this purpose;
- (c) the terms and conditions being considered for the treaties; and
- (d) the progress made in signing of treaties with the said countries ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has received a proposal to enter into an Audio-Visual Co-production agreement with the Government of Canada, which is at present at draft stage.

Procedure for Approval of TV Serials

6545. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN :

SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK :

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

(a) the details of norms adopted for giving approval of TV serials;

(b) whether some irregularities have been noticed in the procedure adopted for giving approval to TV serials;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government against the guilty persons/officials; and

(d) the efforts being made by the Government to simplify the procedure regarding approval of TV serials ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Prasar Bharati has informed that there are separate guidelines for processing of proposals of TV serials telecast on Doordarshan under sponsored and commissioned categories. The proposals for sponsored serials are first considered by the Evaluation Committee which examines the proposal in details. The serials recommended by the Evaluation Committee are then put to the Selection Committee for approval which consists of senior officials of Doordarshan and outside experts from various fields.

The proposals of commissioned serials are first evaluated by Evaluation Committee which consists of senior officials of Doordarshan and outside experts from various fields. Thereafter, the shortlisted programmes are put up to the Costing Committee for final decision.

(b) and (c) Prasar Bharati has intimated that the guidelines are strictly followed by Doordarshan Programme matters of Doordarshan including selection of serials, come under the purview of Prasar Bharati, which is competent to take decision in this regard. Irregularities, as and when brought to the notice of this Ministry, either directly or through the observations of the C and AG, are brought to the notice of Prasar Bharati, for appropriate action.

(d) The guidelines for selection of programmes are also periodically reviewed and modified by Prasar Bharati according to the changing requirements and to simplify the procedure for selection/approval of programmes/serials in a transparent manner.

Inter-State Dispute

6546. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that most of Hydro-Electric projects get delayed due to Inter-State disputes;

(b) if so, whether this delay adversely affect the implementation of the Hydro Electric Projects and Hydro-Thermal mix;

(c) if so, the details of the accelerated cost of generation of Hydro Electric Plants as compared to the Thermal Projects;

(d) whether the Government have received any proposal from the Government of Rajasthan to constitute a Tribunal for setting Inter-State disputes for sharing of Hydro-Electric Power; and

(e) if so, the status of the proposal and the time by which such a Tribunal is likely to be constituted ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Inter-State disputes have held up the development of some attractive and viable hydro electric projects.

(c) The cost of generation from power projects particularly hydro power projects is projects specific. There is no concept of accelerated cost of generation.

(d) and (e) In an agreement signed between the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Haryana and Governor of Punjab and Government of India on 10.5.1984 regarding the supply of cooling water for Ropar Thermal Power Station, it had inter-alia been decided to make a reference to the Supreme Court on the claims of Haryana and Rajasthan to a share in the power generation by five projects namely Anandpur Sahib, Mukerian, Thein Dam (Ranjit Sagar), Upper Bari Doab Canal (UBDC) Stage-II and Shahpurkandi. The reference to the Supreme Court has not been made. The subject was discussed in the meetings of the Northern Zonal Council held in October, 1997 and February, 1999. An official level preparatory meeting for a meeting of the Chief Ministers has been held thereafter.

Grievances of Defence Personnel

6547. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether he had appointed a Committee in July last year to go into the grievances and demands of personnel of armed forces/ex-servicemen;

(b) if so, the terms of reference of the said Committee;

(c) whether the report was to be submitted in three months' time;

(d) if so, the reasons for not submitting the report so far; and

(e) the action taken, if any, to redress the grievances of the Indian soldier ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (e) A Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Raksha Mantri with Chief Ministers of six States i.e. West Bengal, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Union Finance Minister as Members, on 3rd August 1999.

The terms of reference of the said Committee are to evolve a uniform Policy for Welfare of Jawans and Ex-servicemen.

The Committee was required to submit its report in three months time. However, this could not be done due to a number of unforeseen developments like change in incumbency, etc.

The demands of ex-servicemen as and when made by the Ex-servicemen Associations are considered in consultation with the Service Headquarters and other concerned Departments and suitable steps, as are administratively and financially feasible, are taken to redress the grievances.

Welfare Scheme for Wounded Soldiers

6548. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "Healing Touch' heals what even time can not" appearing in the *Hindustan Times* dated February 18, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the details of the scheme formulated for welfare of wounded soldiers;

(d) the steps taken by the Government to popularise the said scheme; and

(e) the number of schemes running by the Government for the welfare of wounded soldiers at present along with the number of wounded soldiers benefited therefrom ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (e) News item titled "Healing Touch" published in the *Hindustan Times* on 18.2.2002 is about a scheme under which wounded and retired soldiers residing in villages will be made dealers/agents/marketing coordinator for the products for various private companies. Government is not directly involved with this scheme.

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, which is the nodal Ministry for the welfare of persons with disabilities, is having a number of welfare programmes and schemes for all persons with disabilities including ex-Servicemen. Besides, those Defence Personnel who are disabled in war or peace time due to causes attributable to military service and are fit for civil jobs, are eligible on priority-I or employment against Group 'C' and 'D' posts, for which recruitment is made through the Directorate General of Employment and Training.

Ministry of Defence is also having schemes for the welfare and resettlement for disabled ex-Servicemen. The disabled soldiers are provided artificial limbs by the Artificial Limb Centres. They can avail the benefit of loan assistance on liberalised terms under Self-employment (SEMEX) schemes to set up tiny/small scale industries, small scale service enterprises, undertake agricultural and allied activity, set up Khadi and village industries in rural areas. Besides, Queen Mary Technical Institute, Pune, a private charitable institution, conducts ITI recognised vocational trades training course for disabled ex-Servicemen to facilitate their rehabilitation. In addition, paraplegic homes at Kirkee and Mohali are being run for rehabilitation of paraplegic and tetraplegic ex-servicemen.

Information about the number of wounded soldiers who have been benefited from the various schemes is not centrally monitored.

[Translation]

Bomb Explosion in Ferozpur-Dhanbad Express

6549. SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a bomb exploded on March 14, 2002 in one compartment of the Ferozpur-Dhanbad Express near Doraha Station on the Ludhiana-Ambala route;

(b) if so, the number of persons died and injured in the incident; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to further strengthen the safety of trains ?

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. On 13.3.2002, and not on 14.3.2002, an explosion took place in coach No. ERGS 92414 of 3808 Down Ganga Satluj Express train near Railway Station Dohara between Ambala-Ludhiana section.

(b) 3 persons were killed and 27 were injured in this incident.

(c) Though maintenance of law and order and control of crime on Railways including running trains is the responsibility of the State Governments, the Railway Administration has taken the following steps to supplement the efforts of the State Governments :-

1. Anti-social elements are removed from Railway premises and trains by RPF.
2. Announcement through Public Address system and CCTV at important Railway Stations to alert the travelling passengers.
3. Co-ordination meetings are held between Railways managers, RPF officers and State Police officers at the Zonal and Divisional level. Meeting is also being held at the level of Railway Board.
4. RPF Officers are holding regular co-ordination meetings with their counter-parts on the GRP and Civil Police.
5. Sharing of Special Intelligence and Crime Intelligence between RPF and GRP is being done at all levels.
6. Joint Strategies for dealing with anti-social elements operating on Railways have been chalked out by the GRP and RPF.
7. RPF Sniffer dogs, wherever available, are being deployed at Railway platforms, yards etc. to sniff out explosive substances. RPF men are being trained in the identification and detection of explosive devices.

150 Years of Railways

6550. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL :
SHRIMATI KAILASHO DEVI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether functions are being organised in Delhi, Mumbai and other parts of the country to celebrate the completion of 150 years of the Indian Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of rail users, general public and press thereto;

(d) the achievements of the Indian Railways during these 150 years;

(e) whether the Government propose to provide new facilities on this occasion; and

(f) 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) On 16th April, 2002, Railways in India entered its 150th Year of service to the nation. This is an occasion to rejoice and share the pride with all segments of rail users all over the country. Ministry of Railways, therefore decided to take up various activities all over Indian Railways during the year.

(b) On the eve of 150th Year, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India released a Mascot and special Logo designed for the celebrations, besides flagging off a special run of the Fairy Queen in a function held in New Delhi on 15th April 2002. In the functions held in Mumbai on 16th April 2002, first Jan Shatabdi Train was flagged off, a Commemorative Stamp was released and to mark the first run of the Railways in India, a special "Steam Run" of a vintage train (between Mumbai and Thane) was flagged off. Besides these, second Rail Museum was also opened to the public on the same day at Chennai. On 17th April 2002, "Rani Rudhrama" steam heritage run Medchal was flagged off a Bolaram railway station near Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh). Besides the above, several other activities, such as, organising Railway Torch Runs, World Railway Games, Seminar on Railway Vision 2025, an "Exhibition on Wheels Train", etc. have been planned to be taken up.

(c) So far, the response has been overwhelming.

(d) Starting from a stretch of only 21 miles in April, 1853 the rail network is now extended upto 63,028 route Km. connecting the nook and corner of the country with 6853 railway stations. The steam era has since given way to faster electric and diesel traction. Railways are, at present running 14322 trains, carrying 13.3 million passengers and 1.38 million tonne of freight every day. With the transfer of technological know-how, Railways have since

achieved self-sufficiency in manufacture of various components – right from the rails to coaches and locomotives – within the country. These illustrations are themselves indicative of the achievements of Indian Railways.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) The details of activities planned to be undertaken are – introduction of new 16 inter-city services (Jan Shatabdi Express); Pilot Project for computer based Unreserved Ticketing System; PRS centres to cover all district head quarters; setting up of plants to package drinking water under brand name 'Rail Neer'; commissioning of 50 food plazas at various stations; introduction of 25 additional express trains; increase in frequency of 14 pairs of trains; extension of 16 services; etc.

[English]

Geothermal Energy Potential

6551. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether any survey/study has been conducted to ascertain the geothermal energy potential in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which this potential is likely to be exploited ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) and (b) Studies have been carried out by the Ministry through different organizations viz. Geological Survey of India, National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad, Oil and Natural Gas Commission, Central Electricity Authority etc. to ascertain geothermal potential at different sites in the country. Some 340 hot springs have been identified in different parts of the country. Out of these hot springs, Tattapani Geothermal Field, Chhattisgarh and Puga Geothermal Field, Jammu and Kashmir have the potential for power generation. The other geothermal sites have potential for thermal applications.

(c) The use of geothermal energy has been demonstrated by the Ministry for thermal applications and power generation in Manikaran (H.P.) and Loh and Ladakh. The Ministry is taking up the development of Tattapani Geothermal Field in Chhattisgarh and the Puga Geothermal Field in Jammu and Kashmir for power generation in the Tenth Plan Period.

Sick SEBs Hamper Power Plants

6552. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH :
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY :
DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Sick SEBs hamper power plants" appearing in the Hindu dated March 13, 2002;

(b) if so, whether due to poor financial health of SEBs, the pollution at various power plants have increased manifold;

(c) if so, whether the Union Government in consultation with the State Governments propose to formulate a strategy to check pollution in power plants; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The equipment required for improving the environmental conditions by controlling the dust emission level and effluents from thermal power plants through installation/augmentation of ESPs and ash handling systems and other measures is required to be properly maintained by the station authorities along with other plant and equipment for which adequate finances are required to be made available to them.

During the implementation of Phase-II R and M programme during the 8th Plan about Rs. 280 crores was spent on environmental control measures. The environmental related works were also taken up along with other R and M works during the 9th Plan period.

Central Electricity Authority (CEA) have identified 141 thermal units (16853 MW) for taking up R and M/Life Extension works during the 10th Plan. While formulating the R and M schemes by State Electricity Boards (SEBs)/ Power Utilities, it is being ensured that the activities relating to installation/augmentation of ESPs, ash handling system and other pollution control measures are included in the schemes so as to meet the latest pollution control norms. The Government of India has attached high priority of the R and M programme for thermal power stations including the environmental related works. The Power Finance Corporation (PFC) is providing financial assistance at

concessional interest rates to SEBs/Power utilities for implementation of R and M schemes.

Refinery of Reliance Petroleum

6553. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN SHARAN SINGH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Refinery of M/s Reliance Petro is in operation;

(b) if so, the time by when it became operational;

(c) the names of the products produced by it with quantity and value, year-wise since it started production;

(d) whether M/s Reliance was allotted the huge quota of Naphtha; and

(e) if so, the quantity of the quota released to them during the last three years, year-wise and volume-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) Yes, Sir.

(b) The refinery was commissioned in July, 1999.

(c) The information, as furnished by the Company, is given in the enclosed Statement.

(d) Presently there is no quota system for allocation of naphtha.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement

Details of production of petroleum products by Refinery of M/s Reliance Petroleum Limited

Products	1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002	
	Qty (MMT)	Value (Rs. crore)	Qty (MMT)	Value (Rs. crore)	Qty (MMT)	Value (Rs. crore)
Liquefied Petroleum Gas	0.7	946.0	1.9	3,297.9	2.4	3,421.4
Naptha	2.0	2,596.2	3.9	5,201.9	3.0	3,190.3
Motor Spirit	0.5	686.2	1.8	2,662.4	3.0	3,738.1
Kerosene	0.7	725.9	2.0	2,610.2	2.8	3,130.2
Aviation Turbine Fuel	—	—	0.2	264.1	0.3	264.4
High Speed Diesel	4.3	5,035.9	9.7	13,358.4	10.6	12,199.4
Light Diesel Oil	—	—	Neg.	0.6	0.4	524.6
Furnace Oil/Carbon Black Feed Stock	—	—	Neg.	14.1	Neg.	36.2
Petroleum Coke	Neg.	5.8	2.3	245.1	2.6	297.5
Others	0.3	712.9	1.7	3,589.2	2.5	5,514.7
Total	8.5	10,708.9	23.5	31,243.9	27.6	32,316.8

MMT — million metric tonnes

Neg. — Negligible

Catering Services of Indian Railways

6554. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether catering services for the Indian railways are proposed to be handed over to the Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation;

(b) if so, the parameters being adopted for awarding the contract for major static catering units and the pantry cars on long distance trains;

(c) the number of holdings which can be awarded to an individual contractor or a firm;

(d) whether the Government are aware that certain contractors and their associates are holding monopolies with hundreds of contracts under them; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken to prevent monopolies in Railway Catering business?

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) Contracts are being awarded under a two-packet system which comprises a pre-qualifying technical criteria and financial bids.

(c) There is no ceiling limit to the number of holdings by a licensee at present.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Doordarshan Channels to Remote Areas

6555. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI :
DR. N. VENKATASWAMY :

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

(a) whether food and fertilizer subsidy are being phased out due to resources crunch, the Government proposed to set aside Rs. 600 crore to take the bouquet of 20 Doordarshan channels to remote areas as drawn to the report captioned "Government plans Rs. 600 crore subsidy to increase Doordarshan reach" appearing in *Hindustan Times* dated April 4, 2002;

(b) if so, whether this is being done by providing 50 per cent subsidy on KU band decoders;

(c) whether this plan has been discussed by Steering Group on Information Technology in the Planning Commission; and

(d) if so, the extent to which the rural people are likely to be benefited by this decision of the Government?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (d) A Sub-Group on 'Carriage and Technology' set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in connection with the finalisation of the 10th Five Year Plan had estimated that for extending Doordarshan coverage to 100 per cent population in terrestrial mode, an expenditure of about Rs. 3456 crores would be required. Through an alternative technology, coverage could be extended to uncovered areas in Ku Band by using direct satellite reception for free to air channels of Doordarshan either directly to Households or through a cable network. Cost of this technology option is estimated to be about Rs. 638 crores.

Take Over of IPCL

6556. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether some public sector oil companies are taking over the Indian Petrochemicals Limited (IPCL);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the process has since been started in handing over the management of IPCL to these Oil Companies; 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) to (d) The process of disinvestment of 26% Government equity stake in IPCL through Strategic Sale is currently on. Bidding was open to both public sector and private sector companies. The Strategic partner would be selected and management transferred on completion of the process.

Strike by Employees of Ordnance Factories

6557. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether over five lakh civilian employees working in ordnance factories went on a two day strike from April 23, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the demands of these employees working in defence factories;

- (d) the reaction of the Government thereto; and
 (e) the steps taken by the Government to meet their demands ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

- (b) to (e) Does not arise.

Power Projects in Maharashtra

6558. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL :
 SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR :
 SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :

Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

- (a) the number of power projects established in Maharashtra and Karnataka with the help of the Union Government for generation of power from waste;
 (b) the quantum of energy generated by these power projects;
 (c) whether the State Governments have sent some more proposals for generation of power from waste in the State;

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

- (e) the assistance given by the Union Government to the States for generation of power from waste during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) Two projects, one each in the States of Maharashtra and Karnataka, have been installed for generation of power from biogas produced from distillery wastewater.

- (b) A total of about 4.00 million and about 0.9 million units of electricity has so far been generated from these power projects in the States of Maharashtra and Karnataka, respectively.

- (c) and (d) Proposals for setting up projects for power generation from wastes received from the State of Maharashtra and Karnataka and their status are given in the enclosed Statement.

- (e) Central assistance provided for the projects for generation of power from wastes in the States of Maharashtra and Karnataka during last three years is Rs. 548.00 lakh and Rs. 39.97 lakh, respectively.

Statement

Proposals for setting up projects for power generation from wastes received from the States of Maharashtra and Karnataka and their status :

S. No.	Name of the project	Capacity	Status	Steps taken by MNES
1.	Installation of project for power generation from 1000 tonnes per day of Municipal Solid Waste at Denoar, Mumbai, Maharashtra by M/s MSW Power (India)	12 MW	Detailed Project Report has been received in the Ministry.	Promoter has been advised for power purchase agreement and obtaining necessary statutory clearances.
2.	Installation of 200 KVA power generation project for Patalganga Rasayani Industries Association Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra.	200 KVA	Detailed Project Report has been received in the Ministry.	Details of biomethanation (energy recovery) component have been solicited from the State Government as it is a small part of the whole project.
3.	Installation of 6 MW power generation plant based on poultry waste by M/s Rajabhaskar Power Generation Ltd., in Bellary Distt., Karnataka	6 MW	Only a preliminary proposal has been received in the Ministry	State Government has been requested to arrange the submission of Detailed Project Report.

Facing out of DCA Penalty

6559. SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI :
SHRI MANSINH PATEL :
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE :

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

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "100 foreign companies of face DCA penalty" appearing in *Economic Times* dated 15.4.2002 at page No. 6;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by when they have not filed their annual returns, balance sheet and other documents to the registrar of companies; and

(d) the reasons for the delay in taking action against these companies under Section 611 of the Companies Act 1956 ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) to (d) Some foreign companies applied for condonation of delay in filing of statutory documents [annual returns, balance sheets and other documents] with the Registrar of Companies. The delay varies from some days to a few years. Section 611 of Companies Act, 1956 does not apply to foreign Companies.

[Translation]

**Offer of Sophisticated Aircraft for
Training by Russia**

6560. DR. ASHOK PATEL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Russia has offered to give its most sophisticated MIG-80 aircraft so as to impart training to the Indian pilots;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government of India thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) The Indian Air Force has evaluated MIG-AT but this has not met some of the essential parameters laid down by Indian Air Force for the AJT.

[English]

**Capital Expenditure Programme
by GAIL**

6561. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Limited has embarked on a major capital expenditure programme involving Rs. 3500 crore over the next three years;

(b) if so, whether any detailed programme in this regard has been worked out;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether GAIL has agreed to spent Rs. 2568 crore on expansion of the HBJ pipeline; and

(e) if so, the time by which this pipeline is likely to be completed ?

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) and (c) The details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(d) and (e) Gas Authority of India Limited plans to upgrade the Hazira-Bijaipur-Jagdishpur (HBJ) pipeline at an estimated cost of Rs. 2936 crore envisaging mechanical completion by June, 2004 and commissioning of the project by September, 2004 for transportation of regassified liquefied natural gas from Dahej to Vijaipur.

Statement

Pipeline Projects of Gas Authority of India Limited under Execution

S. No.	Project Description	Details	Project Cost (In Rs. crore)
1	2	3	4
I. Natural Gas/Regassified LNG Pipelines			
1.	HBJ upgradation-Pipeline from Dahej to Vijaipur	42" x 610 Km	2936.00

1	2	3	4
2.	Kalol-Ramol (N. Gujarat)	12" x 44 Km	49.75
3.	Tatipaka-K. Chevuru Junction Point (KG Basin)	18" x 45 Km	85.40
4.	Endamaru-Oduru Junction Point (KG Basin)	8" x 6 Km	5.70
5.	K. Cheruvu Junction Point to Kakinada Junction Point (KG Basin)	18' x 10.3 Km and 20" x 19.8 Km	46.47
6.	SV3 – Konaseema Power Plant (KG Basin)	10" x 27 Km	26.90
7.	Kesnapalle (W) – Ponnamanda (KG Basin)	14" x 4.5 Km	6.17
8.	Adavipalem – Kadali (KG Basin)	10" x 10.5 Km	9.26
9.	Kadali – Tatipaka (KG Basin)	16" x 5 Km	7.71
10.	Pipeline to PPN Power Plant (Cauvery Basin)	18" x 36 Km	48.51
11.	Small pipelines in Cauvery Basin	4" to 12" x 35 Km	19.37
12.	Agra/Firozabad City Gas Distribution Network Upgradation	2" to 8" x 30 Km	37.70
13.	Agartala City Gas Distribution Pipeline	4" x 5 Km	2.00
14.	Pipeline to Haryana Sheets (S. Gujarat)	4" x 15 Km	4.27
15.	Pipeline to Naharcolor and chemicals (S. Gujarat)	4" x 1 Km	0.47
16.	Pipeline to Krishna Paper Mills (Delhi region)	3" x 1 Km	0.70
Sub total (I)			3286.39
II. LPG Pipelines			
1.	Vizag-Secunderabad	12"/10" x 585 Km	490.65
2.	Kandla-Samakhiali	8" x 63 Km	70.00
Sub Total (II)			560.65
Total (I + II)			3847.04

**Procurement of Special Purpose
Helicopter**

6562. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA :
SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Naval Headquarters had purchased nine special purpose helicopter "X" from a foreign manufacturer at a cost of Rs. 894.82 crore with 18 years old radar technology and incomplete trial evaluation;

(b) if so, whether the price paid by NHQ was 56 per cent higher than NHQ estimation;

(c) if so, the reasons for procuring helicopters with obsolete technology and incurring wasteful expenditure;

(d) whether the procurement of helicopters is in contravention of the procurement procedure prescribed by the Ministry in 1992;

(e) if so, whether this purchase was referred to CVC for detailed investigation; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (f) The Government have signed two contracts with a Russian firm for the acquisition of 9 (nine) special purpose helicopters to equip the Navy with the Airborne Early Warning (AEW) capability. These helicopters were evaluated by a Naval Team in 1996 and were found to meet the Naval Staff Qualitative Requirements (NSQRs). The Radar has contemporary features. The price and other

terms and conditions were negotiated by the duly constituted price Negotiation Committees (PNCs) before the contracts were signed.

The case has been examined by the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). While making certain observations in regard to the procedure followed, CVC has decided not to pursue the case further.

Tidal Power Potential

6563. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA :
SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB :
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

- (a) the details of tidal power potential in the country, State-wise;
- (b) the installed capacity thereof;
- (c) the capacity of power generated from tidal turbines, especially in Kerala and West Bengal;
- (d) the steps proposed to be taken to step up the use of tidal power; and
- (e) the total amount spent for these purposes in the States ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) Gulf of Kutch with nearly 3000 MW and Gulf of Cambay with nearly 12,000 MW in Gujarat and Delta of Ganga in Sundarban area of West Bengal with nearly 25 MW tidal power potential are three potential sites in the country for tidal power generation.

(b) and (c) No tidal power plant has been installed in the country so far.

(d) and (e) The Ministry, after carrying out a Feasibility Study, have got prepared a Detailed Project Report through West Bengal Renewable Energy Development Agency, Kolkata for a 3 MW capacity Tidal Power Plant proposed to be set up at Durgaduani Creek in Sundarban area of West Bengal. An amount of Rs. 98.00 lakh has been spent on the activities at this site. Based on the recommendations of the Detailed Project Report, the proposal for the country's first tidal power plant is being processed by the Ministry. The experience gained in this project would be utilized in developing other potential sites for tidal power generation in the country.

[Translation]

Change in Rules regarding Surrender of Tickets and Claims for Refund of Fares

6564. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the rules relating to surrender of tickets and claim for refund of fares have been changed recently;
- (b) if so, the existing rules regarding surrendering of tickets and refund of fares thereof;
- (c) whether the fare of surrendered ticket is refunded as per the existing rules;
- (d) if so, the number of claims regarding claim for refund for such fare and number of cases disposed off during the last six months and till date; and
- (e) the effective steps taken by the Government for facilitating the process relating to quick refund of fares of surrendered tickets ?

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) Yes, Sir.

(d) The details of approximate number of cases received and disposed off during the six month period from 1.10.2001 to 31.3.2002 are as under :

Opening Balance as on 1.10.2001	0.10 lakhs
Fresh Cases received	1.52 lakhs
No. of cases reopened	0.05 lakhs
Total number of cases for disposal	1.67 lakhs
No. of cases disposed	1.61 lakhs

(e) Refund is generally granted on the spot from the computerised system. Apart from that, the Station Managers of important stations have been delegated special discretionary powers to grant refund.

Exploration of Non Conventional Energy Sources

6565. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme to explore various sources of non-conventional energy;

(b) if so, the works carried out under the scheme till date; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Non Conventional Energy Sources has been implementing wide

ranging programmes based on major sources such as solar, wind, small hydro power and biomass for development and promotion of non-conventional energy throughout the country. The details of estimated potential and achievements made under various non-conventional energy programmes as on 31st March, 2002, are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) The exploration of non-conventional energy is an ongoing and continuous process depending on the available financial resources both public and private and technical feasibility and economic viability of available technologies.

Statement

Renewable Energy Potential and achievements under various programmes of Non-conventional energy sources as on 31st March 2002

Source/System	Approximate Potential	Achievement (as on 31.03.2002)
1	2	3
A. Power from Renewables		
1. Solar Photovoltaic Power	—	1.90 MW
2. Wind Power	45,000 MW	1617 MW
3. Small Hydro Power (upto 25 MW)	15,000 MW	1437.47 MW
4. Biomass Cogeneration Power	19,500 MW*	381.3 MW
5. Biomass Gasifier	—	51.3 MW
6. Energy Recovery from wastes	1,700 MW	21.98 MW
Power from Renewables (total)	81,200 MW	3510.95 MW
B. Decentralized Energy Systems		
7. Family-size Biogas Plants	120 lakh	33.14 lakhs
8. CBP/IBP/NBP Plants	—	3790 Nos.
9. Improved Chulha	12 crores	349.8 lakhs
10. Solar Photovoltaic Systems	20 MW/sq. km.	
i. Solar Street Lighting Systems	—	41403 Nos.
ii. Home Lighting Systems	—	187000 Nos.
iii. Solar Lanterns	—	396000 Nos.
iv. SPV Power Plants	—	1188 kWp
11. Solar Water Heating Systems	30 million sq. m Collector area	0.60 million sq. m Collector area

1	2	3
12. Solar Cooking System		
i. Box-type Solar Cookers	—	5,18,000 Nos.
ii. Concentrating-type/Community Cookers	—	175 Nos.
13. Solar PV Pumps	—	4500 Nos.
14. Wind Pumps	—	793 Nos.
15. Hybrid Systems	—	127.5 Nos.

Sq. kms. = Square Kilometer Sq.m. = Square meter MW = Mega-watt KW= Kilo watt kWp = Kilo watt peak

*including Biomass Gasifier

[English]

Racket of HSD Unearthed by CBI

6566. SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA :

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH :

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH :

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

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to a news item captioned "High-speed diesel scam may touch Rs. 1,000 crores mark" as reported in the 'Times of India' dated November 26, 2001;

(b) if so, whether the matter have been investigated by the Union Government; and

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

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) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Level of Platforms

6567. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether all railway coaches and engines are of standard height in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons for the discrepancy between the height of the platform and the railway coach remains abnormally high;

(c) whether the Government propose to raise the level of platforms at all the 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) to (e) All the railway coaches and engines are of standard height and Railways have standardized three levels for platforms, i.e. Rail level, Low level and High level.

Passenger Amenities, including the level of platforms, are provided at stations as per the laid down norms based on the volume of passenger traffic and earnings therefrom. It is Railways' constant endeavour to provide the amenities as per the laid down norms. Norms for deciding the level of platform are as under :

S. No.	Cate- gory	Criteria for Categorisation	Level of Platform Required
1	2	3	4
1.	A	Non suburban stations with annual passenger earnings of Rs. 6 crore and above	High Level
2.	B.	Non suburban stations with annual passenger earnings between Rs. 3 and 6 crore; and stations of tourist importance, or an important junction (to be decided by General Manager)	Low Level
3.	C	All suburban stations	High Level

1	2	3	4
4.	D	Non suburban stations with annual passenger earnings between 1 and 3 crore	Low Level
5.	E	Non suburban stations with annual passenger earnings less than 1 crore	Rail Level
6.	F	Halts	Rail Level

Every year Railways are raising level of platforms at some stations for the convenience of passengers. This is a continuous process and undertaken on the basis of need and availability of funds.

[Translation]

Foreign Investment in Steel Sector

6568. SHRI JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have permitted hundred percent investment in steel sector;

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

(c) the likely impact of the said decision on the public sector steel companies ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) to (c) The Government have permitted 100% Foreign Direct Investment in steel sector to complement and supplement domestic investment. Foreign Direct Investment for all iron and steel items can be brought in through the Automatic Route under the powers delegated to the Reserve Bank of India. Units in public and private sectors are expected to take benefit of this facility of meet their requirements of funds.

[English]

Retired Judges Offer to dispose of Pending Cases

6569. DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a group of retired judges of Patna High Court has offered to return to the bench to assist the court for disposing of over 100,000 pending cases; and

(b) if so, the response of the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) and (b) The Bihar Retired High Court Judges Society, in their meeting held on 20.1.2002, resolved to offer assistance in early disposal of pending cases in the Patna High Court. A copy of this resolution has been forwarded to the Union Government as well as the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India and the Hon'ble Chief Justice of the Patna High Court. It is for the Patna High Court to take a view in the matter.

As per the available figures, the number of cases pending in the Patna High Court was 80,956 as on 31.12.2001.

The Judge strength of each High Court is reviewed, every 3 years, taking into account certain parameters including the institution and the backlog of cases. The last such review was done in 1999 and the next review in respect of all High Courts, including Patna High Court, is due during the current year.

Prices of Steel

6570. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the prices of steel for consumption in the domestic market;

(b) if so, the extent of the price proposed to be increased along with its reasons therefor; and

(c) the extent to which the increased prices will neutralise the losses suffered by the steel industry ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) to (c) The Government does not fix prices for iron and steel. The prices are determined by the respective steel plants depending on the prevailing market conditions and other related factors.

FDI in DTH Broadcasting

6571. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are planning to relax the 20 per cent of foreign direct investment (FDI) in direct-to-home satellite broadcasting; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Some suggestions/recommendations, including removal of the 20% equity restriction, have been received from various quarters. In this regard, the recommendations of the Working Group on I and B Sector (which was set up by the Planning Commission for the formulation of the 10th Five Year Plan) are under consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

**Outstanding dues of Coal Companies
against NTPC**

6572. SHRI RAJO SINGH : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a sum of rupees three thousand crore is outstanding against the Thermal Power Plants as coal transportation charges;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) The outstanding dues recoverable from State Electricity Boards/Power Houses on account of freight charges till the end of February, 2002 work out to Rs. 1507 crores as information given by the Ministry of Railways. The details are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) The following actions are being taken by the Government/Ministry of Railways to recover dues and prevent further accretion :

- (i) The scheme for pre-payment of freight for carriage of coal to Power houses/State Electricity Boards
- (ii) The outstanding dues from State Electricity Boards and Power Houses as on 31.12.1992 being adjusted from the Central Plan Assistance of the State Governments subject to certain limits.
- (iii) Close monitoring of recovery of outstanding dues from State Electricity Boards by holding regular meetings with representatives of State Electricity Boards/Power Houses etc.
- (iv) Letters for clearing the outstanding dues have also been addressed to concerned Chief Ministers.

(v) Adjustment of outstanding dues against traction bills of respective State Electricity Boards is also being carried out.

Statement

*Dues (Freight only) Recoverable from State
Electricity Boards/Power Houses to
end of February, 2002.*

(Figures in Crores of Rs.)

S. No.	Name of the State Electricity Board/Power Houses	End of February, 2002
1.	Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board	0.82
2.	Assam State Electricity Board	2.03
3.	Bihar State Electricity Board	2.46
4.	Delhi Vidut Board	159.43
5.	Gujarat State Electricity Board	13.05
6.	Haryana State Electricity Board	7.10
7.	Karnataka State Electricity Board	0.00
8.	Maharashtra State Electricity Board	9.34
9.	Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board	7.76
10.	Punjab State Electricity Board	123.69
11.	Rajasthan State Electricity Board	34.15
12.	Tamilnadu State Electricity Board	0.41
13.	Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board	68.61
14.	West Bengal State Electricity Board	26.95
15.	Badarpur Thermal Power Station	1001.24
16.	National Thermal Power Station	48.84
17.	Damodar Valley Corporation	0.45
18.	Private Power House-Sabarmati	0.87
Total		1507.20

[English]

**World Bank Assistance for Power
Projects**

6573. SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of power projects under construction in the country with the assistance from the World Bank, State-wise;

(b) the amount allocated for each of the projects by the World Bank; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) to (c) The allocation of World Bank assistance and also likely dates of completion for various ongoing power projects is as under :

Project-wise Allocation of World Bank assistance during 2001-02

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Executing Agency/State	Funding Agency	Loan Amount (US\$ in million)	Date of completion
1.	3024-A-IN Nathpa Jhakri HEP	NJPC/H.P.	IBRD	437.00	April 2004
2.	4603-IN Power Sector Development Project II	POWERGRID/Multistates	IBRD	450.00	June 2006
3.	4441-IN-AP Power Sector Restr. Project	APTRANSCO/A.P.	IBRD	210.00	February 2003
4.	4014-IN Orissa Power Sector Restr.	Orissa	IBRD	350.00	December 2003
5.	4545-IN U.P. Power Sector Restr. Project	UPPCL/U.P.	IBRD	150.00	December 2004
6.	4594-IN Rajasthan Power Sector Restr. Project.	Rajasthan	IBRD	180.00	June 2005

Setting Up of Water Mills

6574. SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to instal Water Mills in the States other than the Himalayan States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) to (c) Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources is implementing a scheme for the Development and Up-gradation of Water mills. The scheme is applicable for the entire country. As part of this scheme, a promotional incentive of up to Rs. 30,000 for water mills with mechanical output and up to Rs. 60,000 for water mills with electrical output or both mechanical and electrical outputs is being provided. A target of installing/upgrading 200 water mills has been fixed for the year 2002-03.

Passengers Revenue

6575. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the passengers revenue in terms of earnings per passenger kilometre remained static as compared to previous year for Suburban (all classes) and Sleeper Class (Mail/Express Trains);

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the earnings in terms of earning per passenger kilometer on all classes both in Mail/Express and Ordinary trains ?

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. It is correct that average earning per passenger per kilometre remained same for Suburban (all classes) as well as Sleeper Class (Mail/Express) during the years 1999-2000 and 2000-01.

(b) Normally, average earning per passenger per kilometre for a class increases with increase in fares. Since, the passenger fares were not increased in the year 2000-01, the average earning per passenger per kilometre remained static.

(c) As per the Railway Budget 2002-03, fare structures for both Mail/Express and ordinary trains including suburban services have been rationalised w.e.f. 1.4.2002 which may improve the earnings per passenger per kilometre.

*[Translation]***Installed Capacity of Power Houses**

6576. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the details of installed capacity of power houses of Damodar Valley Corporation;

(b) the share of the Jharkhand State and others in the electricity generated by the Corporation, separately; and

(c) the steps being taken to meet the increasing demand of electricity of Jharkhand State ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) The installed capacity of the power houses of Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) is 2871.50 MW as on March, 2002. Some of the units are, however, derated due to ageing and so, the effective capacity is 2769 MW, the details of which are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) DVC is responsible for the supply of power within its valley area, to the consumers of that area getting power at 33 KV and above, spread over the States of West Bengal and Jharkhand depending on demand growth. There is no demarcation/commitment in respect of quantity of power supply within the geographical boundary of the States.

(c) DVC has taken up network strengthening/expansion work both in upper and lower valley areas to make DVC power available to the consumers.

Statement

Type	Power Station	Installed Capacity (MW)	Effective Capacity (MW)
1	2	3	4
THERMAL	Bokaro 'A'	247.50	175.00
	Bokaro 'B'	630.00	630.00
	Chandrapura	780.00	750.00
	Durgapur	350.00	350.00
	Mejia	630.00	630.00
Total		2637.50	2535.00

1	2	3	4
HYDRO	Maithon	60.00	60.00
	Panchet	80.00	80.00
	Tilaya	4.00	4.00
Total		144.00	144.0
GT	Maithon	90.00	90.00
	Total DVC	2871.50	2769.00

*[English]***Dues against Accredited Agencies**

6577. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH :
SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA :
SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI :

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

(a) whether a sum of Rs. 363.51 crore were lying unrealized from accredited agencies, out of which Rs. 334.45 crore was recoverable from 45 agencies;

(b) if so, the reasons for not realizing the dues from the accredited agencies;

(c) whether another sum of Rs. 157.94 crore has become due as interest of the outstanding dues as on August, 2001;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Doordarshan failed to cancel accreditation of the defaulting agencies even after their failure to make payment by due dates;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(g) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to recover the outstanding dues including interest ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has intimated that Rs. 169.28 crores is outstanding as on date against the accredited agencies. All possible efforts are being made to recover the dues.

(c) and (d) Prasar Bharati has intimated that the interest component of outstanding dues is Rs. 20.03 crores, the details of which are as under :

1997-1998	Rs. 1.99 crores
1998-1999	Rs. 6.39 crores
1999-2000	Rs. 5.48 crores
2000-2001	Rs. 6.17 crores

(e) to (g) Prasar Bharati has informed that for recovery of its dues, Doordashan has initiated steps against the concerned producers/defaulting agencies which includes legal action, encashment of bank guarantees, stoppages of programmes and suspension/withdrawal of accreditation status. Because of the failure on the part of the companies to make payment of dues, accreditation status of 9 (nine) companies has been suspended and they have been put on advance payment for current business. Accreditation status of 40 (forty) companies has been withdrawn. Other steps taken for recovery of outstanding amounts includes :-

- (i) Monthly monitoring is done and regular reminders are sent to clear outstanding dues.
- (ii) No fresh programmes/extension of programmes is given to any defaulting agency/producer unless they agree to give advance payment and commit to abide by an agreed payment plan.
- (iii) If the defaulting agencies do not adhere to the payment plan, then the programmes are taken off the air and their accreditation status is cancelled/withdrawn.
- (iv) On cancellation/withdrawal of accreditation status, bank guarantee of agencies are en-cashed.
- (v) To secure Doordarshan's revenue and to cover the credit period, the bank guarantee amount has been enhanced; and
- (vi) Legal Proceedings have also been launched to recover the outstandings in some cases.

BOXN Wagons

6578. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry had issued instructions in June 1996 that all unloadable BOXN wagons should be segregated and sent for repairs and made fit for coal loading;

(b) whether a large number of unloadable BOXN empties had been passed on along with loadable wagons;

(c) whether the Railway Administration suffered a loss of Rs. 2.80 crores on account of cost of empty haulage;

(d) whether loadable BOXN wagons were not loaded by the collieries led to further loss of Rs. 0.97 crores on account of cost of empty haulage from collieries to destination as brought in Paragraph 2.41(b) of the CAG Report No. 9 of 2002 (Railways);

(e) whether the reply has been sent by the Railway in this regard;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps/measures taken by the Government to check such loss of revenue resulting into increase in the freight and passenger fares ?

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. All the BOXN wagons are examined in empty condition in nominated yards before being sent to the collieries for loading. Sometimes a small percentage of unloadable BOXN wagons might have been supplied without detaching them from the empty rakes sent for loading to collieries. It has also been observed that some wagons do get damaged during loading and become unloadable when heavy lumps of coal shale/stone are dropped from the loading gantry in the collieries.

(c) and (d) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has also made similar observations in his report No. 9 of 2002 (Railways). The report is however, under examination in consultation with the concerned zonal railways.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

(g) Instructions already exist for the railways to detach unloadable wagons at the time of train examination and the same have been reiterated recently. However, at times the effort and time involved in detachment of unloadable wagons from the empty rake, which results in detaining the entire rake from getting loaded is counter productive. The relative economics will therefore have to be worked out taking all factors into consideration.

Hydel Potential in Karnataka

6579. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the tremendous Hydel potential in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the steps taken to exploit the hydel potential in that State;

(c) the details of the hydel projects presently under execution in that State; and

(d) the Central assistance or assistance from any other source provided to Karnataka for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) The Central Electricity Authority (CEA) had identified 47 schemes with an estimated hydro power potential of 6602 MW in Karnataka from studies carried out during 1978-87.

(b) Hydro power projects with an installed capacity of 2909 MW have already been developed and a hydro project of 12 MW installed capacity is under development.

(c) Brindavan HEP (12 MW) is presently under execution. Almatti HEP (290 MW) has been cleared by CEA for execution in Karnataka.

(d) National Hydro-electric Power Corporation has with the consent of the Governments of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu taken up the work of Survey and investigation and preparation of Detailed Project Report of four hydro-electric projects in Cauvery Basin.

[Translation]

Manufacturing of Weapon Locating Radar

6580. SHRI C.N. SINGH :

SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India has succeeded in manufacturing weapons locating Radar that locates the weapons of the enemy, as mentioned in the news published in 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated April 13, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the main features of this Radar;

(c) the time by which the said radar is expected to be manufactured and the time by which it would be inducted in Indian Army;

(d) whether the Government are also considering to export this Radar; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir. However, project for development of an indigenous Weapon Locating Radar has been taken up in April 2002. It would be a joint development by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

(b) The development of this vehicle mounted radar is based on the technologies developed for phased array 'Rajendra' radar. The cost of the project is Rs. 30 crore.

(c) The probable date of completion (PDC) of the project is 40 months. Induction into the Army may take time of another about 12 months.

(d) The stage has not yet reached to take a decision on it.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Diversion of Public Finance Companies

6581. SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE :

SHRI AMBAREESHA :

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

(a) whether the Government have been inquiring into the cases of diversion of Public Financial Institutions' money in many sister companies by many business houses including Reliance Petroleum Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken by the Government against these companies?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) to (c) Inspection under Section 209A of the Companies Act, 1956 are ordered on the basis of complaints received in the Department, references received from various other Government Departments/Institutions, suggestions received from field offices on the basis of scrutiny of documents filed by the companies etc. If a company under inspection reveals utilization of money in violation of Companies Act, 1956, appropriate action under the law is taken against the company.

[Translation]

**Selection/Nomination of Officers
for Training**

6582. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government select/nominate officers for training in prestigious foreign institutions to improve their educational, managerial, technical and administrative abilities in the various fields and disciplines where in some cases under bilateral international agreement the cost of such training is borne by the organizing countries/agencies;

(b) if so, the number of officers of his Ministry sent for such short/long term training during the last three years;

(c) the number and percentage of the officers out of them who belong to SC, ST and other Backward Classes;

(d) the special provisions made in Article 46 of the Constitution to ensure proper representation of SC/ST and other Backward Classes because in the absence of which they cannot make progress in the field of education for a long time, they would remain backward socially due to which they cannot, exploit the opportunities; and

(e) the reasons for violating the constitutional directions ?

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) This Ministry has not nominated any officer for training abroad by itself. However, nominations are sent to the Department of Personnel and Training against their circulars, as and when received, inviting nominating for training abroad.

(b) During the last three years, four officers from this Ministry were sent for training abroad.

(c) Nil.

(d) and (e) Department of Personnel and Training, while making nominations of officers falling under its zone, for various training programmes abroad, endeavours to give adequate representation to SC/ST officers subject of course to availability of applications/nominations from such categories, and fulfillment of prescribed eligibility criteria by such applicants.

[English]

**New Railway Station between Yogeshwar
and Goregaon in Mumbai**

6583. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to construct a new railway station between Yogeshwar and Goregaon in Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon and the sources from which it is likely to be met; and

(d) the time by which the said station project 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) There is no railway station called Yogeshwar in Mumbai area. There is, however, a suburban railway station called Jogeshwari in Mumbai area. It is proposed to construct a new suburban railway station at Oshiwara between Jogeshwari and Goregaon.

(b) This work has been proposed as a part of the consolidated estimate for Mumbai Urban Transport Project and is being processed for sanction.

(c) The work of construction of a new station at Oshiwara has been proposed at a cost of Rs. 6 crores. The cost will be shared between Government of Maharashtra and Indian Railways on 50:50 basis.

(d) The said station project is likely to be completed by March, 2006, subject to availability of funds.

Dealer's Commission

6584. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to Unstarred Question No. 1046 dated March 7, 2002 and state :

(a) the details of operations of Coco pumps who have invested the working capital for running such pumps as the Oil PSUs have not provided the same;

(b) whether such operators/contractors shall be compensated by way of giving them the cost of such capital;

(c) if so, whether such cost has been calculated while deciding the dealers commission; and

(d) if so, the time by which the decision is likely to be taken ?

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) A Company Owned Company Operated (COCO) retail outlet is operated under the overall supervision of the company officer with the assistance of labour contractor, who provides manpower for running the outlet.

The remuneration paid to the labour contractor does not include the cost of working capital as he is not required to make any investment towards working capital.

Negligence of Doctors

6585. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that because of cutting a nerve on the leg of girl aged 6 years old then by a railway doctor on June 26, 1969 in Howrah's Eastern Railway Orthopaedic Hospital, the girl is still languishing in the hospital for 34 years as has been brought out in the news captioned "Girl languishes in hospital for 34 years" appearing in the *Hindustan Times* dated April 13, 2002;

(b) if so, whether the matter has been enquired into and taken any steps to restore her life and punish the guilty;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the compensation paid to the family of the girl to ensure that the girl and the family gets proper monetary relief ?

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) A girl aged approximately 6 years was operated for an abscess in her hip under general anaesthesia on 29.6.69 (not on 26.6.69 as mentioned in the question). As because, she was a child, general anaesthesia was preferred to make her still during the operation. Unfortunately she developed cardiac arrest during anaesthesia.

A valiant effort was made by doctors and staff to revive her. Her life could be saved but unfortunately she developed irreversible brain damage due to non supply of oxygen to brain during the vital period of cardiac arrest leading to some complications i.e. mental retardation, weakness of all four limbs and slurred speech.

The complication she developed was not due to cutting of nerves by the surgeon as alleged but a complication of anaesthesia. There was no negligence on the part of the surgeon or the anaesthetist. Both the surgeon and the anaesthetist were qualified and experienced in their respective fields. This is a rare but known complication of general anaesthesia.

The girl has been in the hospital ever since and is being looked after by the hospital authorities with sympathy and compassion. Rehabilitation measures were initiated but there was no significant improvement. Efforts were made to send her to National Institute of Orthopaedically Handicapped, Bonhooghly, Kolkata, for further management however the relatives were against such a move.

The matter was enquired into and it was found that as a complication of general anaesthesia, the child developed cardiac arrest which is a rare but a known complication. There was no negligence on the part of the surgeon or the anaesthetist and no nerve was cut as alleged.

Steps have been taken to rehabilitate her but there was no significant improvement in her condition

As there was no negligence, no action was taken against the surgeon or the anaesthetist. Unfortunately both of them have since passed away.

No monetary compensation has been made to the family nor any such claim preferred. The patient is still admitted to the hospital and getting all possible care and attention from the hospital authorities.

Projects in Kerala

6586. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of new/on-going/pending rail projects survey in Kerala, project-wise;

(b) the amount allocated to each of the project along with the expenditure incurred thereon, so far;

(c) whether there is a considerable increase in expenditure for such projects;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government for completion of those projects along with the target date fixed for their completion, project-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) Details of ongoing and new Railway projects included in the Budget 2002-03 in Kerala, including Budget Outlay for 2002-03 and expected expenditure incurred till March, 2002 are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

The details of ongoing surveys in Kerala are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(c) and (d) Cost over runs in some of the projects particularly under New Lines and Gauge Conversion plan heads have taken place primarily due to thin spread of resources over a large number of ongoing projects.

(e) Target Date of Completion of projects, wherever fixed, is given in the status of the projects in Statement-I. Projects are being progressed as per availability of resources.

Statement

Ongoing Railway Projects in Kerala

(Amount in Crores of Rupees)

S. No.	Name of Project	Rly.	Latest Anticipated Cost	Outlay expected to end of 2001-02	Budget Outlay for 2002-03	Status
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Doubling						
1.	Calicut-Mangalore	S.R.	471.10	446.99	20.00	165 Km out of 221 Km have been completed, 50 km is expected to be completed in 2002-2003.
2.	Ernakulam-Ernakulam mar. yard.	S.R.	6.42	2.74	0.10	Civil Engineering work completed. Signalling arrangements are in final stages.
3.	Ernakulam-Mulanturutti	S.R.	58.93	1.00	3.68	Detailed estimate is under process of sanction.
4.	Kuttipuram-Calicut	S.R.	177.19	49.82	45.00	The doubling of Kuttipuram to Shoranur (30 km) is being done as a material modification of the Calicut-Mangalore doubling work. The work of bridges and earthwork is in progress.
5.	Quilon-Trivandrum	S.R.	156.64	145.18	0.01	Completed and commissioned.
Gauge Conversion						
6.	Quilon-Tirunelveli-Trichendur and Tenkasi-Virudhnagar	S.R.	462.61	26.12	25.00	In Virudunagar-Tenkasi and Tirunelveli-Tiruchchendur, bridge work and earthwork has been taken up. Final location survey in the ghat section between Senkottai and Punalur (50 km) to ease gradient and curves to suit BG have been recently completed.
New Lines						
7.	Angamali-Sabarimala	S.R.	550.0	1.21	10.00	Final location survey is in progress. Part estimate has been processed for Angamali Perumbavoor (18 km). Land acquisition has been processed.
8.	Kottayam-Erumeli	S.R.	200.00	0.04	0.01	Clearances have been received recently. Final Location Survey is being taken up.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	Kuttipuram-Guruvayur	S.R.	100.00	0.69	0.01	Work will be taken up after obtaining the requisite clearances.
Railway Electrification						
10.	Ernakulam-Trivandrum	S.R.	161.76	20.58	15.00	Work is in progress and is targeted for completion by March, 2004.
11.	Erode-Palghat- Ernakulam	S.R.	220-10	220-09	0-01	The work has been completed. Residual jobs in hand.

Statement-II*Railway Surveys in Progress in Kerala*

S. No.	Name of the Project	Plan head	Railway
1.	Punalur to Erumeli	New lines	Southern
2.	Ernakulam-Punalur-Trivandrum	New lines	Southern
3.	Madurai-Kottayam	New lines	Southern
4.	Vaikam-Vaikam Road	New lines	Southern
5.	Nilambur Road-Nanjangud	New lines	Southern
6.	Vallarpadam terminal	Traffic Facilities	Southern

Mobilisation of Funds for Rail Projects

6587. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways need 70,000 crore rupees for taking up all the projects including giving a facelift to the Railways as suggested by Rakesh Mohan Committee;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the manner in which the amount is likely to be mobilised; and

(d) the proposed contribution of the Government towards this fund ?

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) The Rakesh Mohan Committee Report has suggested that Indian Railways, in order to pursue a strategic high growth programme, requires an annual investment of about Rs. 14,000 to 15,000 crore per year from 2002 to 2006, about Rs. 12,500 crore per year from

2007 to 2011 and about Rs. 13,500 crore per year from 2012 to 2016. In five year tranches, this investment programme amounts to Rs. 70,000 crore from 2002 to 2006, Rs. 62,500 crore from 2007-2011, and Rs. 67,500 crore from 2012-2016, making for a total of about Rs. 200,000 crore over 15 years. However, the business as usual low growth scenario envisages an investment programme of about Rs. 1,30,000 crores over next fifteen years (at 2000-2001 prices). The business as usual medium growth scenario envisages an investment programme of about Rs. 1,60,000 crores over the same period.

The resources for Railways' Plan expenditure are mainly sourced from budgetary support, internal generation and market borrowings. Contribution from the Government is decided on Five Year Plan basis in general and for annual plan in particular. Source-wise investment plan for the X Five Year Plan is under finalisation.

Oil Exploration In Rajasthan

6588. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the places where oil exploratory drilling is in progress in Thar Desert area of Rajasthan and names of the companies engaged for the purpose;

(b) the total amount spent by these companies on survey and exploratory drilling work during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government have analysed the inflow of information from the exploratory work during the said period;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action proposed to be taken thereon ?

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, no exploratory well is under drilling in the Thar desert area of Rajasthan, either by National Oil Companies (NOCs) or by Private/JV companies. A total amount of about Rs. 37 crores has been spent in this area by NOCs on survey and exploratory drilling work in their nomination areas during the last three years. Additionally, about Rs. 137 crores has been spent by Private/JV companies on exploration works in their blocks during the same period.

(c) to (e) In the overall area of Thar desert, the following development have taken place :-

- (i) 2-D seismic data acquired by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) during the period 1999-2002 has led to generation of one prospect in Miajalar area while data in other area has been processed and is under interpretation.
- (ii) Two exploratory wells have been drilled by Oil India Ltd. (OIL) during the last three years out of which gas has been struck in one well and another well was found dry.
- (iii) Exploration work by Private/JV companies in block RJ-ON-90/1 has resulted in oil discovery in two wells in the block. The presence of oil has also been established in one well in block RJ-ON/5. The exploration work in block RJ ON/6 has also started recently.

ONGC plans to take up identified prospects in Miajalar area for drilling during 2002-03 subject to environmental clearance. OIL is carrying out a detailed basin modelling study incorporating the past exploratory/development inputs so far obtained in its operational areas in Rajasthan for prospect identification and based on the study results, future exploratory work will be decided.

The contractors have planned to further explore their areas and appraise the discoveries for commercial production in so far as Private/JV companies are concerned.

Political Support for Appointment, Promotion and Transfer

6589. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH :
SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI :
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR :
SHRI J.S. BRAR :
SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether several high ranking officials in the Defence Forces are lobbying for political support for appointment, promotions and transfers etc.;

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

(c) whether there is no transparency in selection of officers for promotions and transfers in Defence Forces;

(d) if so, whether the influence of politicians and money are playing major role in providing promotions and transfers in Defence forces; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by the Government to prevent interference of politicians and money in promotion, appointments and transfers in Defence Forces ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) No instances of lobbying by senior officers of the Defence Forces for political support for any appointment, promotion and transfers, have come to notice except the case of Air Marshal M S Sekhon in the Indian Air Force. Subsequent to the report published in the media regarding Air Marshal M S Sekhon having approached the then Chief Minister of Punjab seeking political influence for a favourable posting, which has been admitted by the Air Officer, he was asked to put in his papers and the officer has complied. This case of seeking political help by a service officer has been viewed seriously and exemplary action has been taken by the Government for such a misconduct.

(c) to (e) Promotions and transfers in the Defence Forces are done with the requisite level of transparency commensurate to organisational interests.

Cost of Production of Crude

6590. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY :
SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA :

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

(a) whether all off shore installations of the ONGC and other oil exploration companies engaged in offshore explorations are to be treated as part of domestic tariff area (DTA) as a result of the recent Government decision to bring the entire exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf under the jurisdiction of the Customs Act, 1962;

(b) if so, the extent to which it will affect the cost structure of the crude production of ONGC and other engaged in offshore exploration companies; and

(c) the manner in which cost of production of crude by them would compare with international crude production ?

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. The Government has issued a Notification No. 157 on 7.2.02 under clause (a) of Sub-section (6) of Section 6 and clause (a) of sub-section (7) of Section 7 of the Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and other Maritime Zones Act, 1976 (80 of 1976) extending the Customs Act, 1962 and Customs Tariff Act, 1975 to the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone of India with effect from the date of publication of the notification in the Official Gazette i.e. 11.2.2002.

(b) and (c) The cost of production of crude oil and natural gas depends amongst other factors on the fiscal regime, comprising royalty, customs duty etc. In the offshore areas, while Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) is liable to pay the applicable customs duty on procurements for its areas allotted on nomination basis, no customs duty is payable on procurements by the Contractors under the Production Sharing Contracts for exploration blocks and discovered fields. Customs duty is a dynamic factor and its impact on ONGC's costing can not be assessed in advance. The operating cost of producing crude oil and natural gas by Indian companies, including ONGC, is comparable with international cost in this regard.

Appointment of Judges

6591. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI :
SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL :
SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA :
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR :
DR. N. VENKATASWAMY :

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

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Appoint more judges, SC to States" appearing in *Hindustan Times* dated 8.4.2002;

(b) whether the Supreme Court has asked the States to undertake large-scale appointment of judges before March 31, 2003;

(c) if so, whether serious concerns have been shown by the Supreme Court in which it has been pointed

out that nearly two crore cases are pending in the country's subordinate courts on account of shortage of judges;

(d) whether both the Union Government and States have been asked to implement this directive and appoint more judges both in the Union Territories and States to cope up this rush;

(e) whether the Government has implemented the recommendations of Justice Shetty Commission Report; and

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

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Supreme Court, vide its judgement dated 21.3.2002, in All India Judges' Association and Others Vs. Union of India and Others, has directed that the existing vacancies in the Subordinate Courts at all levels should be filled, if possible latest by 31st March, 2003, in all the States. The Hon'ble Court has also directed that an increase in the judge strength from the existing ratio of 10.5 or 13 per 10 lakhs people to 50 judges per 10 lakh people should be affected and implemented within a period of five years.

(c) The Supreme Court have shown concern over the pendency of cases in Subordinate courts on account of inadequate number of Judges.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) and (f) The Government has implemented the recommendations of the Shetty Commission in respect of Union Territories vide implementation orders dated 11.10.2001 and 11.3.2002. However, the Supreme Court's judgment of 21st March, 2002, inter-alia, contains directions at variance with the decision taken by the Government. The directions of the Apex Court are to be complied with both by the Central Government and the State Governments before the 30th September, 2002.

LPG and Petrol PUMP Terminals

6592. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN :
SHRI C.N. SINGH :

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

(a) the details of LPG and Petrol pump terminals in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal to set up more LPG and Petrol Pump terminals in the country during the current year;

- (c) if so, the details thereof; 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) As on 1.10.2001, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) were operating 6837 LPG distributorships and 18401 Retail Outlets in different States of the country.

(b) to (d) Allotment of LPG distributorships and Retail Outlets is a continuous process and it is not possible to indicate a fixed target for the fresh allotment of LPG distributorships and Retail Outlets during a particular year. However, OMCs have the plan to set up more LPG distributorships and Retail Outlets under various Marketing plans in the different States of the country.

Derailment of Howrah – Chennai Express

6593. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Howrah-Chennai Coramandal Express de-railed at Nellore in Andhra Pradesh on March 15, 2002;

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

(c) whether de-railments are too common on this section of rail track; and

(d) if so, the reasons for such frequent accidents on this stretch of rail track?

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. On 15.03.2002 at about 14.11 hours 12 Coaches of 2841 Up Howrah – Chennai Coromandal Express train derailed, while on run between Kodavaluru and Padugupadu stations of Vijayawada – Gudur section of Vijayawada division on South Central Railway. In this accident 14 passengers suffered injuries including one grievously injured. As per preliminary report submitted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety, South Central Circle, this accident occurred due to 'rail fracture' occurring due to lateral displacement of rail.

(c) No, Sir. There were only 8 derailments on Vijayawada – Gudur – Vijayawada section during the last 3 years.

(d) Does not arise.

Improvement in Services by Railways

6594. SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Railways have any policy to provide a high volume of services accompanied by an improvement in quality of service;

(b) whether Railways focus on improved reliability of transits, scheduled delivery of goods, improved handling and passengers safety;

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to bring credible improvement in the said four operational areas along with funds earmarked during the current year and the amount utilised so far in this regard;

(d) whether any target has been set up to ensure that there is periodic improvement in the services provided by the Railways; 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) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Indian Railways is running scheduled time container goods trains (CONTRACK) with target transit time. To improve reliability of transit, scheduled delivery of goods, improved handling and passenger safety, Indian Railways has taken the following steps :

- (i) induction of better type of rolling stock, both for freight and coaching
- (ii) induction of high horse power locomotives
- (iii) modernisation of signaling and communication systems
- (iv) strengthening and improvement in track structure by induction of concrete sleepers, heavy rails and mechanised maintenance etc.
- (v) introduction of FOIS (Freight Operation Information System), a computer based network
- (vi) strengthening of terminals
- (vii) mechanisation of handling of consignments

During the current Financial Year, total allocation under rolling stock is Rs. 3919 Crores and approximately Rs. 20

crores have been allocated for works costing more than 50 lakhs connected with improvement of freight terminals Rs. 5304.72 Crores has been earmarked for safety related plans. Expenditure during the year can be known after the accounts are finalised.

(d) and (e) Every year targets in respect of key performance and efficiency indices such as Operating Ratio, Earnings, Wagon Turn Round, Punctuality, etc. are set for each Zonal Railway for periodical review of their performance improvements. This is a continuous process.

[Translation]

Express Trains on various Routes in the Country

6595. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Rajdhani Express trains running on profit/loss;

(b) whether the Government evaluated the profit and losses on account of operation of these trains; and

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there is any proposal to run these trains on profit earning routes only; 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) to (c) Train wise figures of profitability, earnings and expenditure are not maintained. However, on overall basis, Railways are making losses on passenger operations including other coaching services. The losses incurred on this account during last three years are as under :

Year	Losses (Rs. in crores)
1998-99	4165.50
1999-2000	4582.71
2000-01	4875.54

Constant efforts are made to cut down expenditure. Some rationalisation of passenger fares have been proposed in the current budget.

(d) and (e) Rajdhani Express trains are only run between State Capitals and the National Capital where a Rail link is available. There is a demand for fast, high quality

service between these points. 17 pairs of Rajdhani Express trains are running at present.

Enactment of Laws to Deal with Economic Offences

6596. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN :
YOGI ADITYA NATH :

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

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to enact adequate laws and set up special tribunals to deal with the economic offences in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the time by which the Government are likely to take a decision in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) to (c) A number of provisions exist under various laws to deal with economic offences. However, review of laws is a continuous process and Government takes, from time to time, adequate steps to deal with any situation. Tribunals, namely, Income-tax Appellate Tribunal, Appellate Tribunal for Forfeited Property and the Customs, Excise and Gold (Control) Appellate Tribunal, already exist for dealing with economic offences.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Renovation of Rourkela Steel Plant

6597. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount spent on the renovation of Rourkela Steel Plant since 1998-1999 till date, year-wise;

(b) whether the entire amount has not been properly utilised;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the specific details of the renovation work undertaken in that Steel Plant during the said period ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : (a) The total amount spent on Rourkela Steel Plant modernisation since 1998-99 till date, year-wise is indicated below :

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Amount Spent
1998-99	279
1999-00	170
2000-01	66
2001-02	41 @

@ : Provisional

- (b) The amount spent has been properly utilised.
- (c) Does not arise.
- (d) During the above period, modification of Hot Strip Mill, Reheating Furnaces No. 5 and 6 have been completed.

Huge loans at low rate to Directors of the Companies

6598. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have curbed the tendency of Directors in private limited companies to draw huge loans at low rates of interest for their own benefits;

(b) if so, whether there are any guidelines to limit the loans which are being given to Directors;

(c) whether the Government are aware that many companies have given huge loans to their Directors;

(d) if so, the steps being proposed to ensure that such loans are paid back immediately; and

(e) the other steps proposed by the Government to ensure that shareholders are not duped by their Directors ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) to (e) Loans given to Directors of private limited companies unless they are subsidiaries of public companies are exempt from the approval of the Central Government and, therefore, guidelines issued for regulating loans given by a public limited company to its Directors are not applicable.

Debts to World Bank and ADB of ONGC

6599. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has mooted a proposal with the Ministry of Finance to repay its Rs. 3000 crore debts to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government has considered their request;

(c) if so, whether all dues have cleared; and

(d) if so, the total amount ONGC borrowed from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank ?

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) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) had sought the approval of the Government in October 2001 for prepayment of the outstanding amount of loans of the World Bank (IBRD Loan No. 3364-IN) and the Asian Development Bank (Loan No. 1222-IND), aggregating to US\$ 563.5 million (equivalent to about Rs. 2704 crore). The Government has accorded approval for prepayment of these two loans. ONGC plans to prepay the entire outstanding amount of the World Bank loan and the Asian Development Bank loan by May 2002 and July 2002, respectively. The aggregate amount of the two loans availed from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank by ONGC during mid nineties was US\$ 450 million and US\$ 241.03 million, respectively.

[Translation]

Rail Projects in Madhya Pradesh

6600. SHRI JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA :
SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL :
SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of new/on-going/pending rail projects and surveys in Madhya Pradesh, project-wise;

(b) the amount allocated to each of the project and the expenditure incurred so far thereon;

(c) the target date fixed for their completion, project-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for timely completion of those projects ?

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) The details of all on-going Railway projects in Madhya Pradesh, including outlay proposed for 2002-03 and expenditure expected to end of March 2002, for each project, is given in the enclosed Statement-I. Target Date of Completion of projects, wherever fixed, is given in the

status of the project. Projects are being progressed as per availability of resources.

The details of surveys in Madhya Pradesh in the enclosed Statement-II.

Statement-I

Ongoing Railway Projects in Madhya Pradesh

(Amount in Crores of Rupees)

S. No.	Name of Project	Rly.	Latest Anticipated Cost	Outlay expected to end of 2001-02	Budget Outlay for 2002-03	Status
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Doubling						
1	Bolai-Kalisindh, Kalisindh-Kisoni, Kisoni-Bercha and Maksi-Pirumrod	WR	49.29	45.31	0.90	Completed and commissioned.
2.	Kalapipat-Phanda/ Maksi-Bhopal	WR	53.00	0.01	31.00	The work priority is being reassessed.
Gauge Conversion						
3.	Jabalpur-Gondia including Balaghat-Katangi	SER	510.53	26.29	44.00	Final location survey has been completed. In Ph I, work has been taken up on Gondia-Balaghat (42 km) section. Earthwork on available stretches upto formation level and bridges has been completed. Bridge on Bagh river (7×60') is in progress. On Ph II between Jabalpur-Balaghat section, land acquisition in 12 Km stretch for detoured alignment near Jabalpur have been processed.
4.	Neemuch-Ratlam	WR	116.74	14.57	25.00	Work on long lead items like bridges have been taken up. The work will be progressed and completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.
New Lines						
5.	Guna-Etawah via Shivpur-Gwalior-Bhind	CR	400.00	293.95	40.00	Guna-Gwalior and Gwalior-Bhind sections have already been completed. The work on last phase from Bhind to Etawah new line is in progress. The involves construction of 3 major bridges on the rivers Chambal (9×76.2 mts), Kuwari (6×45.75 + 76.2 mts) and Yamuna (10×61 mts). On Yamuna bridge, work is in progress. Tenders for construction of substructure of Chambal and Kuwari Bridge have been processed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	Lalitpur-Satna and Rewa-Singrauli	CR	925.00	5.27	30.00	Final location survey has been completed. Land acquisition has been taken up.
7.	Godhra-Indore Dewas-Maksi	WR	597.00	48.73	22.10	This work is planned for execution in phases. The first phase work between Dewas and Maksi has been completed.
8.	Ramganj Mandi-Bhopal	WR	425.00	0.25	20.00	Final location survey is in progress.

Statement-II*Railway Surveys in Progress in Madhya Pradesh*

S.No.	Name of the Project	Plan head	Railway
1.	Bhind-Orai-Harpalpur	New Lines	Central
2.	Khandwa to Nardana via Khargone, Sendhwa	New Lines	Central
3.	Shirpur-Mhow	New Lines	Central
4.	Katangi to Tirodi	New Lines	South Eastern
5.	Bisrampur to Jabalpur	New Lines	South Eastern
6.	Rajnandgaon-Jabalpur	New Lines	South Eastern
7.	Bilaspur to Jabalpur	New Lines	South Eastern
8.	Ramtek to Gotegaon via Khawasa, Seoni and Dhuma	New Lines	South Eastern
9.	Pendra Rd-Korba/Gerva Rd	New Lines	South Eastern
10.	Dungarpur to Ratlam via Banswara	New Lines	Western
11.	Pulgaon-Arvi GC with extn. to Amla	Gauge Conversion	Central
12.	Chhindwara-Nagpur	Gauge Conversion	South Eastern
13.	Chhindwara-Nainpur	Gauge Conversion	South Eastern
14.	Ujjain-Indore	Doubling	Western

[English]

**Installed Capacity of Power in
Eastern Region**

6601. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR :
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the installed capacity of power in the Eastern region is more than their requirement;

(b) if so, the surplus power available in the Eastern region and the way in which the same is being utilized;

(c) whether the surplus power is being transmitted to the deficient States;

(d) if so, the rates at which the power is supplied to these States;

(e) whether the amount of arrears due to the States to whom the power has been supplied from the Eastern region; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) and (b) The installed capacity of power in the Eastern Region is more

than the requirement at present. The surplus power available in Eastern Region is about 1500 MW in peak hours and 3000 MW in off-peak hours as intimated by Central Electricity Authority. Surplus power to the tune of about 1300 MW is being exported to neighbouring regions.

(c) and (d) The surplus power of NTPC stations in Eastern Region is transmitted to deficit States of the neighbouring regions. NTPC power is supplied to the States out side the Eastern Region at the existing tariff of power supply from NTPC stations to beneficiaries of Eastern Region. The station-wise tariff of NTPC stations in Eastern Region in the month of March, 2002 is as under :

- i. Farakka STPS - 166.91 paise/kwh
- ii. Kahalgaon STPS - 216.89 paise/kwh
- iii. Talcher STPS - 156.88 paise/kwh

GRIDCO, Orissa also supplies power to APTRANSCO, Andhra Pradesh at a bilaterally negotiated rate (Presently Rs. 2.37/kwh inclusive of all). Power Trading Corporation of India Ltd. has also facilitated export of power from West Bengal Power Development Corporation Ltd. in Eastern Region to Delhi and Haryana in Northern Region @ Rs. 1.85/kwh (excluding transmission charges of Eastern and Northern Region).

(e) and (f) State-wise outstanding dues including power supply from Eastern Region as on 31st March, 2002 in respect of NTPC stations is given in the enclosed Statement. According to Power Trading Corporation of India Ltd., there are no arrears for the power traded through them.

Statement

State-wise total Outstanding dues Payable to NTPC including Power Supply from Eastern Region as on 31.03.2002

(Figures in Rs. Crores)

SEB	Outstanding as on Date	Surcharge Due	Total Outstanding
1	2	3	4
Uttar Pradesh	3006.79	1155.55	4162.34
Rajasthan	282.74	50.09	332.83
Haryana	345.74	322.80	668.54
Himachal Pradesh	23.61	24.38	47.99
Jammu and Kashmir	139.89	17.96	157.85

1	2	3	4
Chandigarh	0.35	-	0.35
Madhya Pradesh	1466.68	529.33	1996.01
Maharashtra	448.98	343.64	792.62
Gujarat	385.66	47.34	433.00
Andhra Pradesh	76.43	19.49	95.92
Tamil Nadu	371.27	233.35	604.62
Karnataka	176.89	140.06	316.95
Kerala	935.20	228.63	1163.83
Pondicherry	2.86	19.86	22.72
Assam	54.12	29.41	83.53

MOU Signed by HPCL with Libyan Government

6602. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has signed a memorandum of understanding with Libyan Government for crude oil recently; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which it is likely to meet the need for crude oil in the country ?

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) Out of the estimated total crude processing requirement of 115.661 MMT in Indian refineries for the year 2002-2003, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited has signed a term contract with the National Oil Company of Libya for import of 0.81 MMT of crude oil.

Unreserved Passengers Entry into Reserved Coaches

6603. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have conducted intensive surprise checks during the last three years to ensure that unreserved passengers are not allowed entry into the reserved coaches in the mail and express trains in all the railways zones in the country;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) the number of passengers travelling without reservations who were apprehended on each occasion and the amount of money realised from them as fine, zone-wise; and

(d) the action taken against the conductors/TTEs of these coaches for allowing the unreserved passengers in reserved coaches ?

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) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Proposal to bring the Tourism and Catering Services under IRCTC

6604. SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to bring the Tourism and Catering Services under IRCTC;

(b) if so, the details thereof with its salient features and its headquarters;

(c) whether the Government have in possession the required land, building and manpower machineries to carry out the IRCTC;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the alternate steps made by the Government to carry out the IRCTC smoothly until then ?

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) At the time of formation of IRCTC, Government has taken a decision that all catering activity will be hived off to the new Corporation and Railways will divest its role from these services. The headquarters of IRCTC has been set up at New Delhi.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The existing facilities available at stations and in mobile units will be handed over to IRCTC.

(e) Does not arise.

Efficiency In Operation of Wagons

6605. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Efficiency Indices for 2000-01 in operating efficiency, indicate only a marginal increase in Wagon Turn Around over the previous year;

(b) whether the percentage of loaded to total wagon kilometers has decreased during 2000-01 over the previous year;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken to improve efficiency in operation of wagons/freight cars ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL) :
(a) During 2000-01, BG Wagon turn round has reduced to 7.5 days against 7.7 days in 1999-2000 registering an improvement of about 2.6%.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Reasons for reduction in percentage of loaded to total wagon Kilometers in 2000-01 over the previous year are given as below :

- (i) Induction of commodity specific wagons, like BOBR (bottom discharge wagons) which are otherwise efficient in unloading operations etc., has increased empty return ratio;
- (ii) Increase in loading of coal, minerals including iron ore which are being loaded in open wagons having high empty return ratio;
- (iii) Increase in loading for North East Frontier Railway leading to increase in empty return ratio;
- (iv) Better availability of covered wagons which are generally preferred by customers for loading bagged consignments. This resulted in reduced loading of bagged consignments in open wagons in return direction, thereby causing increase in empty return ratio.

(d) Wagons utilization on Indian Railways has improved significantly which is evident from increase in wagon Km per wagon day and Net Tonne kilometer per wagon (NTKM) per day etc. Following steps have been/are being taken to further improve efficiency in operation of wagons :

- (i) Strengthening of terminals and routes.
- (ii) Monitoring of freight trains through Freight Operations Information System (FOIS), a computer based network.

- (iii) Introduction of engine on load concept to reduce terminal detentions.
- (iv) Introduction of close circuit rake with periodical maintenance examination.
- (v) Introduction of high horse power electric and diesel locomotive for increasing average speed of the train.

[Translation]

**Implementation of Recommendation of
First Judicial Pay Commission**

6606. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL :
SHRI G.J. JAVIYA :

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

(a) whether the Government have received a letter and memorandum for implementation of recommendation of first National Judicial Pay Commission of November 1999 from All India Judges Association (Regd.), Hyderabad;

(b) if so, the details of the said memorandum and recommendations;

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

(d) whether all posts of judges in Gujarat and other High Courts of the country have not been filled up and some posts are still lying vacant; ,

(e) if so, by when these vacant post would be filled up;

(f) the number of cases pending in different High Courts and Supreme Court of the country for ten, five, two and one year;

(g) by when, these cases would be disposed; and

(h) the concrete action proposed to be taken by the Government for early disposal of these cases ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government have received the letter dated 7.6.2001 addressed to the Prime Minister from the All India Judges' Association (Regd.), Hyderabad containing a memorandum for implementation of the recommendations of the First National Judicial Pay Commission (FNJPC). The memorandum urges the Government to implement forthwith all the recommendations. The recommendations of FNJPC,

Statement

Age-wise pendency of cases in the

Supreme Court

Less than 5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years
19024	2475	257

Age-wise pendency of cases in

Sl. No.	Name of the High Court	Pending as on	Case type	Less than 1 year	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-4 yrs
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Allahabad	31-12-2000	Main	103354	68686	41324	41058
			Misc.	42072	24819	16246	14693
			Total	145426	93505	57570	55751
2.	Andhra Pradesh	31-12-2000	Main	143918	15867	4740	5775
			Misc.	11323	3705	45	17
			Total	155241	19572	4785	5792
3.	Bombay	30-09-2000	Main	59619	27093	20202	16149
			Misc.	30626	12547	9310	8035
			Total	90245	39640	29512	24184

inter alia, include uniform pay scales and other service conditions of Judicial Officers in all States and Union Territories.

(c) The Government has implemented the recommendations of the First National Judicial Pay Commission in respect of Union Territories vide implementation orders dated 11.10.2001 and 11.3.2002. However, the Supreme Court's judgment of 21st March, 2002, inter-alia, contains directions varying the decision taken by the Government, which are to be complied with both by the Central Government and the State Governments by 30th September, 2002.

(d) and (e) As on May 2, 2002, against the approved Judge strength of 647 (including 43 new posts) of the High Courts, there were 492 Judges in position leaving 155 posts vacant. After the Supreme Court's Judgement of October 6, 1993 in the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record and Anr. Vs. Union of India, read with the Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998, the entire process of initiation of proposal for appointment of a Judge of a High Court lies with the Chief Justice of that High Court. The Government has, however, been requesting the Chief Justices of the High Courts, Chief Ministers and the Governors of the States, from time to time, to initiate proposals for filling up of the

present and anticipated vacancies. They were requested last on March 15, 2002 to make recommendations for filling up the vacancies expeditiously.

(f) A Statement is enclosed.

(g) No time frame can be fixed.

(h) The Government has endeavoured constantly to bring about improvements in the functioning of courts with a view to simplifying procedures and delivering cost effective and speedy justice. The Government has also been constantly reviewing the accumulation of arrears in courts. Besides increasing the Judge strength from time to time, the Government has also set up/encouraged alternative modes of disposal including conciliation, mediation and arbitration. Special tribunals like Central Administrative Tribunal, State Administrative Tribunals, Income Tax Appellate Tribunals, Labour Courts, Consumer Courts, etc. have been set up to expedite disposal of cases. Information technology is being used in courts and for generation of cause lists, providing information to the litigants/Advocates etc. for speedy disposal of cases. Various steps have also been taken by the courts, viz. grouping of cases involving common questions of law, constitution of specialised benches and organising Lok Adalats at regular intervals, etc.

Supreme Court and High Courts

Total (As on 01.11.2001)
21995

High Courts (As on 31.12.2000)

4-5 yrs	5-6 yrs	6-7 yrs	7-8 yrs	8-9 yrs	9-10 yrs	More than 10 years	Total
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
40483	30571	30434	33138	33938	28301	172535	623813
14781	11924	12426	11573	10797	17070	51925	228326
55264	42495	42860	44702	44735	45371	224460	852139
160871	0	12194	0	0	0	0	147591
14	6	0	0	0	0	0	15110
160885	6	12194	0	0	0	0	162701
15218	13299	11298	9621	8695	7097	29374	217665
6025	3057	2049	1463	1148	847	1421	76528
21243	16356	13347	11084	9843	7944	30795	294193

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4.	Kolkatta	30-06-2000	Main	23270	21360	19429	12527
			Misc.	549	235	156	184
			Total	23819	21595	19585	12711
5.	Delhi	31-12-2000	Main	17246	9554	9614	6559
			Misc.	22301	15270	9728	7210
			Total	39547	24828	19342	13769
6.	Gauhati	30-09-1999	Main	9355	8518	5719	3600
			Misc.	3105	2598	1835	1853
			Total	12460	11116	7554	5453
7.	Gujarat	31-03-2000	Main	23698	12043	8668	8912
			Misc.	11722	5534	3701	4192
			Total	35420	17577	12369	13104
8.	Himachal Pradesh	30-09-2000	Main	3808	2026	1333	1322
			Misc.	1882	679	175	99
			Total	5690	2705	1508	1421
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	31-12-2000	Main	4786	3270	2248	1976
			Misc.	5047	3620	2767	1880
			Total	9833	6690	5015	3856
10.	Karnataka	31-12-2000	Main	39265	21927	8116	6667
			Misc.	0	0	0	0
			Total	39265	21927	8116	6667
11.	Kerala	31-12-2000	Main	47600	26073	13738	7548
			Misc.	105625	54633	30383	14348
			Total	153225	80706	44121	21896
12.	Madhya Pradesh	31-12-2000	Main	32315	17409	13067	9607
			Misc.	3266	741	92	7
			Total	35581	18150	13139	9614
13.	Madras	30-09-2000	Main	54632	24209	15990	9923
			Misc.	101384	46871	27246	12995
			Total	156016	71080	43266	22918
14.	Orissa	31-12-2000	Main	16033	11800	11960	8900
			Misc.	16568	9981	9931	9705
			Total	32601	21781	21891	18605
15.	Patna	31-12-2000	Main	34260	6412	4888	3813
			Misc.	5344	812	459	242
			Total	39604	7244	5347	4055

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
15147	11229	15840	11777	10360	15267	144257	300463
250	331	666	392	445	189	1379	4776
15397	11560	16506	12169	10805	15456	145636	305239
5485	4825	4511	4822	4834	3661	29817	100928
4917	2441	2230	2415	2197	2316	6048	77073
10402	7266	6741	7237	7031	5977	35865	178001
2195	950	481	198	97	49	59	31221
0	227	2	1	20	3	59	9703
2195	1177	483	199	117	52	118	40924
7929	10188	6265	3354	3340	2902	17310	104609
3936	2844	1234	2073	361	356	936	36889
11865	13032	7499	6057	3701	3258	18246	141498
1071	631	777	464	86	26	35	11579
61	12	36	15	11	3	1	2004
1132	643	813	479	97	29	36	13483
1651	1205	704	481	395	553	1508	18777
1447	1113	500	320	256	254	833	18017
3098	2318	1204	801	651	807	2341	36794
2221	1303	814	2118	214	181	900	83726
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
2223	1303	814	2118	214	181	900	83728
4916	3355	2943	1941	1932	867	481	111394
9131	5498	5623	2319	1182	339	236	229317
14047	8853	8566	4260	3114	1206	717	340711
7414	5558	4329	3156	2426	2355	5938	103574
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4106
7414	5558	4329	3156	2426	2355	5938	107680
8845	7320	592	5242	3846	3987	7869	147784
9277	6148	2842	1773	798	453	301	210088
18122	13468	3434	7015	4644	4410	8170	357872
6331	3548	2759	2009	1502	745	4055	69642
598	439	282	161	102	86	25	47951
6929	3987	3041	2170	1604	831	4080	117693
2961	1705	1563	1898	1696	1070	5844	66110
160	0	0	0	0	0	0	7017
3121	1705	1563	1898	1696	1070	5844	73127

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
16.	Punjab and Haryana	30-09-2000	Main	34874	24874	21019	17436
			Misc.	16329	162	53	43
			Total	51203	25036	21072	17479
17.	Rajasthan	30-09-2000	Main	15446	17505	13180	9888
			Misc.	9187	9860	8010	4892
			Total	246333	27365	21190	14780
18.	Sikkim	31-12-2000	Main	70	14	17	2
			Misc.	33	13	0	0
			Total	103	27	17	2

Insolvent Companies

6607. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the names of investment companies having the capital of more than Rs. 10 crore became insolvent during the last three years;

(b) the rate at which the funds would be returned to individual investors by these companies; and

(c) the names of the Chartered Accountants who had given certificate of the status of these companies and the action proposed to be taken by the Government against them for this illegal act ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) Department of Company Affairs does not maintain such information.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Decline in Oil Production

6608. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL :
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR :

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

(a) whether the energy specialist estimates that Oil production likely to decline within the next 10 to 15 years as the economical viable reserves start to run out.

(b) if so, whether the Governments across the world are urgently seeking ways of switching from conventional

energy sources to hydrogen gas as the ultimate clean fuel; and

(c) if so, 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) and (b) As reported in the "Hindu" dated 15.4.2002, Energy specialists estimate that oil production will start to decline within the next 10 to 15 years, as the economically viable reserves start to run out.

The report also indicates that Government across the world are urgently seeking ways of switching from conventional energy sources such as coal, gas and nuclear power to cleaner and safer alternatives, including hydrogen gas, known to be the ultimate clean fuel.

(c) Government of India has been according due priority to non-conventional energy sources, including hydrogen gas. Research and Development projects on various aspects of hydrogen energy, including production, storage and use of hydrogen as a fuel, have been taken up at Government level as well as by independent agencies and institutions.

Budgetary Provision for Investors Education and Protection Fund

6609. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the funds allocated for Investors Education and Protection Fund during 2001-2002 has remained unutilized;

(b) if so, the funds marked for the said period;

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
15417	12815	12167	9703	9588	9152	48497	215542
7	1	1	0	0	0	0	16592
15424	12816	12168	9703	9588	9152	48497	232134
6950	5331	4677	4338	2965	2010	7359	89649
3094	2085	1344	542	196	55	89	39354
10044	7416	6021	4880	3161	2065	7448	129003
2	0	0	0	0	0	2	107
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	46
2	0	0	0	0	0	2	153

(c) the budgetary provision for Investors Education and Protection Fund during 2002-2003; and

(d) the manner in which the funds is likely to be utilised ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) and (b) An amount of Rs. 3.00 lakhs was allocated for the Investor Education and Protection Fund during the year 2001-2002 out of which an amount of approximately Rs. 2.4 lakhs remained unutilized.

(c) and (d) For the year 2002-2003 a budget provision of Rs. 3.02 crores has been made for the Investor Education and Protection Fund. The Fund will be utilised for investor education and awareness, and related activities.

Kota Thermal Power Plant

6610.COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government of Rajasthan propose to Install 1×195 MW Unit-VI as an extension at Kota Thermal Power Station under State-IV;

(b) if so, whether during Standing Project Appraisal Committee meeting in CEA held on October 23, 2001 it was desired that long term coal linkage for the project and other financial tie-ups be furnished;

(c) if so, whether the power Finance Corporation loan amounting to Rs. 255 crores has been finalised and necessary approval for coal linkage has also been obtained; and

(d) if so, the time by which the Techno-economic clearance is likely to be given ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) On the basis of the deliberations held in Standing Project Appraisal Committee (SPAC) of Central Electricity Authority (CEA) held in October, 2001, the CEA had advised Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd. (RRVUNL) to furnish details regarding ratification of coal linkage (Long-term) and financial tie-up for further processing of the proposal. Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has since issued a letter of comfort in December, 2001 to provide financial assistance of Rs. 445.00 crores. The Techno-Economic Clearance (TEC) for the project could be considered by Central Electricity Authority on receipt confirmation of the ratification of coal linkage by Standing linkage Committee (Long-term) of the Ministry of Coal.

Filling Expeditious Judges Vacancies

6611.SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH :
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY :
SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY :
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE :
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI :

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

(a) whether attention of the Union Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned, "Fill judges vacancies at the earliest, says Centre" appearing in the Hindu dated April 17, 2002;

(b) if so, whether delay on the part of CJs and the concerned State Governments have created backlog in filling up the vacancies in High Courts;

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

(d) whether the Union Government propose to adopt some new method so that the vacancies of judges are filled much in advance likely to be occurred; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government in its letter of March 15, 2002, has requested the Chief Justices of High Courts, Chief Ministers and Governors of States to make recommendation for filling up the existing as well as anticipated vacancies of Judges in the High Court expeditiously. As on May 08, 2002, against the approved Judge strength of 647 (including 43 new posts) of the High Courts, there were 492 Judges in position leaving 155 posts vacant. The Government has received 50 proposals from the Chief Justices of the High Courts for filling up existing vacancies in the respective High Courts.

(d) and (e) After the Supreme Court Judgement of October 6, 1993 in the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record and Anr. Vs. Union of India, read with the Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998, the entire process of initiation of proposal for appointment of a Judge of a High Court lies with the Chief Justice of that High Court. The Government has, however, been requesting the Chief Justices of the High Courts, Chief Ministers and the Governors of the States, from time to time, to initiate proposals for fillings up of the present and anticipated vacancies. They were requested last on March 15, 2002 to make recommendation for filling up the vacancies expeditiously.

One of the items of the National Agenda for Governance is to set up a National Judicial Commission to make recommendations for judicial appointments in the Supreme Court and the High Courts and draw up a Code of Ethics. The Government is committed to the idea of setting up the Commission to deal with these matters.

There is already a broad national consensus about the setting up of the National Judicial Commission. However, there are some matters which have to be discussed for arriving at a broad consensus, particularly, with regard to its composition. The National Commission set up to review the working of the Constitution, which conducted a debate all over the country, has also given some recommendation which is being examined. The setting up of the National Judicial Commission would require an amendment to the Constitution of India.

Revenue Earnings

6612. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN :
SHRI ARUN KUMAR :
SHRI JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA :
SHRI C.N. SINGH :
SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the target fixed and actual earnings made by the Railways from freight and passenger traffic respectively during each of the last three years and till date, division-wise;

(b) whether the Railways not only missed by freight target but also coaching earnings was lower than the target during the said period;

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

(d) the steps taken by the Government to boost the Railways earnings from all sources; and

(e) the target fixed by the Government for freight and coaching for 2002-2003 ?

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) Traffic earnings of the Railways are not maintained division-wise. However, targets of freight and passenger earnings fixed for each zone vis-a-vis the actuals are given below :

(Rs. in crores)

Railway Zone		1999-2000		2000-01		2001-02		2002-03
		Target	Actuals	Target	Actuals	Target	Approx.	Target
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Central	Passenger	1916.24	1941.82	2053.80	2129.43	2268.79	2288.24	2719.34
	Goods	3247.44	3228.48	3491.86	3363.14	3704.53	3961.88	4199.11

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Eastern	Passenger	942.83	920.02	1002.38	991.68	1073.99	1080.45	1272.97
	Goods	2668.13	2589.92	2745.25	2674.98	2894.88	2685.00	2766.42
Northern	Passenger	1834.08	1906.05	1966.29	2075.67	2319.81	2155.35	2643.18
	Goods	3615.74	3951.10	3907.40	3884.57	4094.15	3872.38	4020.07
North	Passenger	539.25	549.73	604.70	590.48	645.86	616.01	712.31
Eastern	Goods	343.69	417.19	453.74	490.20	535.75	542.52	597.47
Northeast	Passenger	179.44	185.00	198.24	201.58	227.52	215.28	262.75
Frontier	Goods	362.38	432.27	434.85	512.66	516.80	632.40	620.21
Southern	Passenger	959.69	945.15	999.50	1057.15	1107.75	1151.30	1320.98
	Goods	1196.13	1186.35	1279.78	1317.31	1433.39	1219.36	1302.58
South	Passenger	841.06	871.11	902.83	1012.82	1063.83	1095.01	1362.85
Central	Goods	2366.09	2241.91	2464.39	2492.56	2738.20	2550.11	2783.57
South	Passenger	602.30	628.35	663.27	674.05	747.41	730.85	888.59
Eastern	Goods	5313.09	5214.03	5627.75	5784.77	6202.12	6248.44	6520.71
Western	Passenger	1608.18	1608.39	1731.43	1750.31	1899.04	1809.94	2230.70
	Goods	3228.31	2799.74	3202.98	2784.91	3115.18	3050.01	3307.86
Metro	Passenger	25.93	25.45	25.56	31.90	33.00	34.25	36.33
	Goods	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Indian	Passenger	9449.00	9581.07	10148.00	10515.07	11387.00	11176.68	13450.00
Railways	Goods	22341.00	22060.99	23608.00	23305.10	25235.00	24762.10	26118.00

While Goods earnings have been below the target in all three years, in the case of Passenger earnings of the Railways there is a shortfall only in 2001-02 which is attributable to disruption of traffic due to development in Ayodhya and Gujarat in the recent months. Government's decision to suspend the 'Leave Travel Concession' to Government employees also adversely affected the Passenger earnings of the Railways. Freight earnings have been lower than the target because of lesser traffic offered by the core and non-core sectors due to recessionary trend in the economy.

Railways, with a view to augment earnings, are making vigorous marketing efforts including various discount schemes to capture additional freight traffic. Steps like augmentation of coaches and running of special trains, increasing PRS in 150 locations, introduction of Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) and drive against ticket-less travelling are also being taken to enhance the

Passenger earnings. Power Houses and other rail users are being pursued for clearance of outstanding dues. Besides, resource mobilization through commercial exploitation of railway land and air space, publicity rights at railway stations and on the rolling stock etc. are also resorted to.

ONGC Negotiations with Refineries Companies

6613. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether ONGC is holding negotiations with refinery companies including private sector companies to consider paying higher price for high quality crude;

(b) if so, whether ONGC charges average price for the crude oil from oil companies and refineries;

(c) if so, the circumstances which have inspired ONGC to make this new demand;

(d) whether crude supplied from ONGC wells is of higher quality than imported crude; and

(e) if so, the details of differential prices expected by ONGC?

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) As per the Government Resolution dated 28.3.2002 on dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) in the hydrocarbon sector, the price of indigenous crude oil of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) will be market determined with effect from 1.4.2002. However, for a period of two years, these companies are required to supply crude oil to the refineries, based on allocation made for 2001-02 by the erstwhile Oil Coordination Committee (OCC). During the initial two years period, the prices of crude oil will be mutually decided between ONGC and OIL and the refineries, based on international crude oil prices, considering factors like the quality of crude oil and the prevailing fiscal levies, on imported and indigenous crude oil.

[Translation]

Recruitment of Gangmen

6614. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN :
YOGI ADITYA NATH :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Gangmen working under the Railways for the maintenance of railway tracks;

(b) whether there is shortage of Gangmen in the Railways at present in comparison to the requirement;

(c) if so, whether the Government are contemplating to recruit more Gangmen;

(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) 1.88 Lakh.

(b) to (e) For calculating the required gang strength for track maintenance work, there is a definite formula. It

is also reviewed from time to time to fall in line with changes in methods of track maintenance, track structure and other socio-economic factors. Gang strength is maintained as per the formula in each unit of work. The requirement of gangmen is reviewed every year to suit the yearly changes in structure due to modernization, gauge conversion, additions and alteration in yards etc. If there is shortage in gang strength on any Zonal Railway, the same is made good after a rigorous check at different levels. This is a continuous process.

[English]

Scrapping of Palace on Wheels Trains

6615. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal to scrap the Palace on Wheels due to high and recurring loss to the Railways;

(b) if so, the losses suffered by the Railways during the last three years;

(c) the number of passengers carried by the Railways on the Palace on Wheels trains;

(d) whether any proposal to study the ways to reduce the losses; and

(e) if so, the details of the financial implications of running this train?

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) A total no. of 13658 tourists have so far traveled on the Broad Gauge Palace on wheels during the period 1995-96 to 2000-01.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Violation of Journalistic Ethics in Electronic and Print Media

6616. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI :
SHRI BRAHMANAND MANDAL :

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

(a) the details of basic principles of journalism;

(b) whether journalistic ethics have been violated by the electronic and print media in the name of extensive coverage of violence and riots which wreck havoc in Gujarat;

(c) whether the Chairman, Press Council of India has issued a strong statement against the said media coverage;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps, the Union Government, propose to take against the media and the press in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Press Council of India has informed that they have formulated the "Norms of Journalistic Conduct". Similarly guidelines for News Policy of Prasar Bharati have been drawn up on recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Official Media attached to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, headed by Shri G. Parthasarthi. In addition, the Programme and Advertising Codes of Prasar Bharati are applicable to the All India Radio, Doordarshan and the contents carried by Cable Network.

(b) to (e) In such situation involving communal flare up, there are always diverse opinions on the impact of media reporting. However, the Chairman of the Press Council of India, has issued appeals on 4th March and 3rd and 8th April, 2002, exhorting the media to ensure that their reporting, particularly in Gujarat, is in accordance with the ethical norms of reporting communal matters and did not add, in any manner, to the flaring up of communal passions and aggravate the existing situation in Gujarat.

[English]

Alcohol Level in Petrol

6617. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI :

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 captioned "Increase alcohol level in petrol" appearing in the 'Hindu' dated April 17, 2002.

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that selling petrol blended with ethanol will reduce pollution and benefit industry as well as farmers in the country; and

(c) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

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 decided to supply 5% ethanol-doped-petrol in the country in two phases. The major sugar growing States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh would be covered during phase I and rest of the States/Union Territories during phase-II.

Restoration of Branch Railway Line

6618. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government's injudicious restoration of the Branch Railway line between New Mal Bazar to Changrabandha via Domohoni on the NF Railway caused an avoidable loss of Rs. 26.00 crores to the Railways, during 2000-01;

(b) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has adversely commented upon the lapse in his report for the year ending March 2001; and

(c) if so, the response of the Government thereto?

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) Restoration was carried out to fulfil an International commitment to SAARC. Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in his report for 2002 received recently has commented on this work. Response to this CAG report is under consideration.

Additional Allocation for Railway Projects in Orissa

6619. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Orissa has made any demand for the additional allocation of funds for the various railway project in Orissa;

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

(c) the funds sanctioned for the said projects so far; and

(d) the time by which these projects are 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 demand has been received from Government of

Orissa in the current year for additional allocation of funds for the railway projects in Orissa.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Details of projects in Orissa including their cost, anticipated expenditure upto March, 2002, and outlay for 2002-03, along with the status of each work is given in the enclosed Statement. Target dates of completion whenever fixed are included in the status of the projects.

Statement

Ongoing Railway Projects in Madhya Pradesh

(Amount in Crores of rupees)

S. No.	Name of Project	Rly.	Latest Anticipated Cost	Outlay expected to end of 2001-02	Budget Outlay for 2002-03	Status
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Doubling						
1.	Jharsuguda bye-pass	SER	19.62	0.00	0.50	New work included in Budget 2002-03 and is being taken up.
2.	Khurda Road-Puri Phase-I (Khurda Road-Delang)	SER	47.29	6.80	5.00	Contract for earthwork and minor bridges for section I covering 6.5 km from Khurda Road and major bridge no. 17 awarded and work is in progress.
3.	Nergundi-Cuttack-Raghunathpur	SER	112.86	61.72	10.00	Detailed estimate for this work has been sanctioned. Earthwork and bridges are in progress on Nergundi-Kendrapara Road section and Raghunathpur-Cuttack section. Nergundi-Kendrapara is planned for completion during 2002-03.
4.	Raghunathpur-Rahama	SER	67.99	65.19	0.68	Completed and commissioned.
5.	Rahama-Paradeep	SER	40.95	24.06	10.00	Detailed estimate has been sanctioned. Land acquisition in 27 villages has been taken over. Earthwork and minor bridges are in progress.
6.	Rajatgarh-Barang	SER	166.16	0.05	5.00	Requisite clearances have been obtained. Final location survey completed from Radhakrishneshpur to Barang.
7.	Rajatgarh-Nargundi	SER	82.86	75.66	3.50	The section from Rajatgarh to Salegaon has been completed. The balance section from Salegaon to Nergundi (6 km) is targeted for completion during 2002-03.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	Sambalpur-Rengali	SER	48.50	0.00	0.50	New work included in Budget 2002-03 and is being taken up.
9.	Talcher-Cuttack-Paradeep (2nd Bridges on Mahanadi and Birupa)	SER	104.26	5.33	20.00	2nd Bridge on Birupa River :- Soil investigation and detailed design has been completed. The tender for bridge has been processed. 2nd bridge on Mahanadi River : Consultant has submitted the design and drawings. Tenders for bridge will be invited once design is finalised.
10.	Titlagarh-Lanjigarh	SER	100.05	46.90	15.00	Earthwork and Bridges are in progress. Kesinga - Norla Road (23 km) is targeted for completion during 2002-03.
Gauge Conversion						
11.	Naupada-Gunupur	SER	66.35	0.04	10.00	Work will be taken up after obtaining the requisite clearances.
12.	Rupsa-Bangariposi	SER	78.94	11.90	5.00	In Ph-I, gauge conversion of Rupsa-Baripada section (52 km) is planned. Earthwork and bridges are in progress.
New Lines						
13.	Angul-Sukinda Road	SER	245.58	0.68	1.00	Final Location Survey has been completed. Soil exploration for all 17 major bridges has been completed.
14.	Daitari-Banspani	SER	537.74	345.77	40.00	The Line from Banspani to Joruli (11 km) has been completed. In the remaining portion, earthwork, bridgework and other works are in progress. Section from Joruli to Keonjhar is targeted for completion during 2002-03.
15.	Haridaspur-Paradeep	SER	301.64	16.17	5.00	Final location survey has been completed. Land acquisition plans and papers have been submitted to State Government. Work would be progressed as per availability of resources.
16.	Khurda Road-Bolangir	SER	700.00	14.16	5.00	The work of final location survey is in progress. Land acquisition papers for 26 villages from Khurda end submitted to State Government. The work in first 2.5 km of length from Khurda Road end has commenced where land has been handed over by State Government Rs. 3.66 crore has so far been deposited with the State Government for land acquisition.
17.	Koraput-Rayagada	SER	479.45	479.44	0.01	The work has been completed and commissioned.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh	SER	100.05	16.93	2.00	In phase-I, work has been taken up from Lanjigarh to Bhawanipatna (31 Km). Earthwork and bridge works are in progress.
19.	Talcher-Sambalpur	SER	478.51	455.01	0.01	Completed and commissioned.
Railway Electrification						
20.	Bhubaneshwar-Kottavalasa	SER	319.64	275.45	30.00	The entire section energised and electric traction introduced. Electrification of Khurda Road-Puri section (44 RKM) as an extension of this project has been taken up which is likely to be completed by March, 03.
21.	Bokarao Steel City Muri-Hatia-Bondamunda-Bimlagarh-Kiriburu/Barsuan Incl. Purulia-Kotshila	SER	269.81	265.24	4.57	Entire section energised till March, 2002. Residual works are in hand. The project has been delayed due to bad law and order problem and failure of OHE contractor and delay in release of 132 KV supply by DVC/BSEB.
22.	Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar including Talcher-Paradeep	SER	317.36	192.45	21.57	110 RKM energised till March, 2002. The work is in progress and targeted for completion by March, 2003.

Arms Deal with US

6620. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL :
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been invited to the newsitem captioned "India seals major arms deal with US" appearing in the 'Hindu' dated April 19, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the time by which the contracted weapons are likely to be procured along with the terms and reference thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government has taken a decision to acquire some Weapon Locating Radars from the US Government, and an agreement has been signed to that effect. The Radars will be acquired in due course.

Incentive to Foreign Investors

6621. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item appeared in 'Business Standard' on April 18, 2002 regarding encourage to foreign investment;

(b) whether the Department is proposing any change in Section 78 of the Companies Act;

(c) whether it will take care of ownership of Indian industries;

(d) if so, whether proper care has been taken to safeguard the Indian investors;

(e) if so, the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard; and

(f) the time by when it is likely to be implemented ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) to (f) A proposal

to amend Section 78 of the Companies Act, 1956 is under consideration.

Cylinder Blast

6622. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the LPG cylinder blast accident which occurred in Bangalore on April 3, 2002 as reported in Deccan Herald dated April 4, 2002 published from Bangalore;

(b) if so, the names of the oil company which supplied this cylinder;

(c) whether any responsible officer from the oil company enquired into this serious accident;

(d) if so, the findings thereof;

(e) whether defective cylinders are being supplied to the public; and

(f) if so, the steps proposed to fix responsibility for this careless attitude on the part of the oil company ?

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 (f) It is learnt that the cylinder involved in LPG accident which occurred in Bangalore on April 3, 2002, belongs to a parallel marketeer. State Governments are empowered to take action against parallel marketeers.

Sharing Agreement with Rajasthan Tourism Corporation

6623. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have not been able to work out a mutually acceptable revenue-sharing agreement with Rajasthan Tourism Corporation;

(b) if so, the reasons for not working out an agreement in time by the Railways;

(c) the steps taken to reach an agreement shortly;

(d) the reasons for not holding meetings on time to resolve such issues by the Railways;

(e) whether the Railways have neglected other tourism sectors due to the Palace on Wheels in Rajasthan; and

(f) the steps being proposed by the Railways to take a country-wide view of tourism potential ?

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) No, Sir. It has been mutually decided to share the revenue in the ratio of 56:44 between the Indian Railways and the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation. The Agreement incorporating the above revenue sharing ratio will be effective from 1.4.2001.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Railways have taken steps for promoting tourism by running special trains/coaches for common passengers and luxury trains like Palace on Wheels, Royal Orient Express, and providing Indrail Passes, reservation quota, facilitation centres for the foreign tourists. A new company, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. (IRCTC), has also been set up for providing value added tourism packages.

Requirement of Wagons

6624. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways projected a requirement of 3,00,000 wagons during the last two plan periods but could procure only 44,600 wagons through budgetary sources;

(b) whether to meet the shortfall in wagon requirement the Railways had to borrow from market through IRFC and had to resort to schemes like OYWS and BOLT; and

(c) if so, the extent to which OYWS and BOLT have helped the Railways in achieving the wagon acquisition target as on March 31, 2002 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL) : (a) The total number of wagons projected for procurement at the beginning of the Eighth and Ninth Five year plans was 1,20,000 and 1,36,000 wagons respectively in terms of four wheeler units. The total procurement during Eighth Plan was 96,488 in terms of four wheeler units and in the Ninth Plan is 99,962.5 in terms of four wheeler units. The procurement of 44,600 wagons (in terms of four wheeler units) was funded from Budgetary Support from the General Exchequer, during these last two 5 year plan periods. The balance quantity was funded from Internal Resources and Market Borrowings.

(b) The requirement of wagons is assessed at the beginning of the five year plans and is fine tuned on an annual basis, to assess the requirements of each of the years of the five years period. The annual requirements are based on the freight traffic projected to be moved annually, expected productivity of wagons etc. Being based on more contemporary performance, the annual projections are taken as the basis for procurement of wagons annually and may vary from the assessment done at the inception of a five-year plan period. Corresponding funding is provided for the planned procurement of wagons in the annual budgets and not against any shortfall of wagons.

The distribution of funds for wagon procurement depends on the total funds available from various sources of fund and the priorities for providing funds for investments in various activities, including procurement of wagons. The funds for procurement of wagons for the last two five year plan periods have been provided from Budgetary Support, Market Borrowings through IRFC, BOLT and OYW schemes as also from Internal Resources.

(c) The total no. of wagons procured through OYWS and BOLT are as below, for the last two 5 years plans :—

Figures in four wheeler units

	No. of wagons procured during 8th Five year Plan	No. of wagons procured during 9th Five year Plan
OYWS	9297.5	7827.5
BOLT	Nil	3000

Tax Concessions In LNG Policy

6625. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Finance Ministry has proposed the tax concessions embodied in the proposed integrated liquified natural gas policy;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry is in favour of providing a ten year tax holiday for all LNG importers since heavy capital investment is required for these projects;

(c) if so, whether his Ministry has also proposed a tonnage tax of zero to one per cent on LNG shipping in place of the existing corporate tax regime; 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) to (d) On consideration of the recommendations of Group of Officers, the Committee of Secretaries in its meeting held on October 11, 2000 recommended formulation of an Integrated Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) policy covering various aspects including Regulation, LNG shipping and fiscal regime. A proposal in this behalf is under active consideration of the Government.

Quota for Disabled Persons

6626. SHRI ARUN KUMAR : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any quota for recruitment of disabled persons;

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

(c) whether there is any backlog under the quota;

(d) if so, the details thereof, category-wise; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to fill up these vacancies ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In terms of existing instructions issued by Department of Personnel and Training in regard to quota for disabled persons in Government jobs, three per cent of the vacancies are required to be reserved for persons or class of persons with disabilities in the identified posts for which 1% each shall be reserved for persons suffering from :

(i) Visually handicapped,

(ii) Hearing handicapped, and

(iii) Orthopaedically handicapped.

Reservation for disabled persons is available for :

(i) Direct recruitment to Group C and D posts.

(ii) Promotion within Group C to D.

(iii) Promotion from Group D to C.

(iv) Direct recruitment to the identified posts in Group A and B.

(c) and (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(e) All the Media Units in and under the administrative control of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have been requested to take appropriate action to ensure that the policy relating to three per cent reservation for persons with disabilities should be implemented in right earnest and a certificate to the effect that the said policy has been taken care of should be given while sending requisitions to the Union Public Service Commission/Staff Selection Commission.

Setting Up of Bio-Mass Plants

6627. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Bio-mass plants set up in the country the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the details of the size of the plants and the total capacity of power generation of these plants;

(c) the subsidy component involved in setting up of each of these power plants; and

(d) the total amount earmarked, sanctioned and spent under the scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) 37 biomass power/co-generation projects and 128 biomass gasifier systems were installed in the country during the last three years. The State-wise break-up is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) Biomass power/cogeneration projects are grid connected and individual projects of upto 19 MW surplus power have been installed. Biomass gasifier systems of upto 500 KW unit size have been installed mainly in the stand-alone mode. A total capacity of 231 MW of biomass projects has been installed during the last three years.

(c) and (d) Central Financial Assistance in the form of capital subsidy or interest subsidy is provided for different sizes and types of projects and for different categories of end-users. Promotional incentives are also available for preparation of Detailed Project Reports, capacity building, awareness creation, etc. The entire budgetary provision of Rs. 68.90 crore was spent under the schemes during the last three years.

Statement

State-wise number of Biomass Gasifier Systems and Biomass Power/Co-Generation Projects Installed during the last three years

S. No.	State	No. of biomass gasifier systems	No. of biomass power/co-generation projects
1.	Andhra Pradesh	38	19
2.	Chattisgarh	—	1
3.	Gujarat	35	—
4.	Karnataka	3	11
5.	Kerala	2	—
6.	Madhya Pradesh	4	—
7.	Maharashtra	2	2
8.	Punjab	2	1
9.	Tamilnadu	15	1
10.	Tripura	4	—
11.	Uttar Pradesh	9	2
12.	West Bengal	14	—
Total		128	37

Popularisation of Solar Water Heaters

6628. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are trying to popularise solar water heaters;

(b) if so, the details of the subsidy given for such heaters;

(c) the way in which the Government propose to improve the technology and also make easy the installation and other details of such solar water heaters;

(d) the details of steps proposed to re-design such equipment to save conventional forms of energy;

(e) whether the Government propose to instal such water heaters in any State during the current year against payment.

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to popularise solar water heaters, the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources is implementing a soft plan programme with interest subsidy through the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) and designated public sector banks. The interest rates at which the end users of different categories can get loans under the scheme are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) and (d) The Ministry supports R and D projects to improve the technology, design and reliability of solar thermal systems. National Standards have been established for solar collectors used in water heaters by the Bureau of Indian Standards. These standards are reviewed and updated taking into account improvements in designs and materials. Six Regional Test Centres have been set up in

different parts of the country for testing and providing technical back up services of manufacturers and users. Training programmes in the installation and maintenance of solar water heating systems are also supported.

(e) and (f) A target of 50000 sq.m. of collector area of solar water heaters has been fixed for the current financial year under the interest subsidy scheme. A model regulation/bye-law for mandatory installation of solar assisted water heating systems in functional buildings has already been drafted and circulated to the State Governments with the request to incorporate the same in the building bye-laws. A few State Governments have made installation of solar water heaters mandatory in Government functional buildings. The Ministry is also implementing a special demonstration scheme for supporting the installation of solar water heating systems in the North-Eastern States, islands and Jammu and Kashmir.

(g) Does not arise.

Statement

Solar Thermal Energy Programme Rates of Interest under the Interest Subsidy Scheme

Technology	Implementing Organization	Category of enduser	Rate of Interest
Solar water heating system (upto 2000 litres capacity)	Banks	Individual, institution, association, small business establishment	5%* (to end user)
Solar water heating system (upto 2000 litres capacity)	IREDA (through financial intermediaries). IREDA provides loans to financial intermediaries @ 2.5% rate of interest	Individual, institution, association, small business establishment	5%* (to end user)
Solar water heating system (any capacity). Solar air heating system, solar desalination system, solar swimming pool	IREDA (direct or through financial intermediaries)**	Institutions, trusts, charitable organizations etc. (non-profit organizations)	5%*
Solar water heating system (any capacity), solar air heating system, solar desalination system, solar swimming pool	IREDA (direct or through financial intermediaries)**	Industry, hotels and other commercial organizations (profit making)	8.3%

* End-users (other than individuals) will have to give an undertaking that no depreciation allowance will be claimed under income tax rules.

** The financial intermediaries may charge a spread up to 4% over the rate charged from them by IREDA.

[English]

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK) : Sir, on behalf of Shri George Fernandes, I beg to lay on the Table—

1. (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001, along with Audited Accounts.
- (ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.
2. Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5639/2002]

3. A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions)—

- (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Bharat Electronics Limited and the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, Ministry of Defence for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5640/2002]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited and the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, Ministry of Defence for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5641/2002]

- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Bharat Earth Movers Limited and the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, Ministry of Defence for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5642/2002]

- (iv) Memorandum of Understanding between the Bharat Dynamics Limited and the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, Ministry of Defence for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5643/2002]

- (v) Memorandum of Understanding between the Goa Shipyard Limited and the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, Ministry of Defence for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5644/2002]

- (vi) Memorandum of Understanding between the Mazagon Dock Limited and the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, Ministry of Defence for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5645/2002]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : Sir, on behalf of Shri Nitish Kumar, I beg to lay on the Table—

Copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Indian Railway Finance Corporation and the Ministry of Railways for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5646/2002]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN) : Sir, on behalf of Shri Yashwant Sinha, I beg to lay on the Table—

1. Statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding modification of the Award given by the Board

of Arbitration (BOA) (under CA reference No. 8 of 1993) in terms of Compulsory Arbitration under the scheme of Joint Consultative Machinery (JCM) for the Central Government Employees.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5647/2002]

2. Statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding modification of the Award given by the Board of Arbitration (BOA) (under CA reference No. 9 of 1993) in terms of Compulsory Arbitration under the scheme of Joint Consultative Machinery (JCM) for the Central Government Employees.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5648/2002]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

1. Memorandum of Understanding between the Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited and the Ministry of Steel for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5649/2002]

2. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ferro Scrap Nigam Limited and the Ministry of Steel for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5650/2002]

3. Memorandum of Understanding between the MSTC Limited and the Ministry of Steel for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5651/2002]

4. Memorandum of Understanding between the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited and the Ministry of Steel for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5652/2002]

[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) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

1. A copy of the Notification No. S.O. 417(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 12th April, 2002 regarding exemption of duty of excise on crude oil Production from the fields under the production Sharing Contracts to the extent of Rs. 900 per tonne against the rate of duty of excise of Rs. 1800 per tonne, under sub-section (4) of section 15 of the Oil Industry (Development) Act, 1974.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5653/2002]

2. A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Indian Oil Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 5654/2002]

[English]

12.00 hrs.

MESSAGES FROM RAJYA SABHA

AND

BILL AS PASSED BY RAJYA SABHA—Laid

SECRETARY-GENERAL : Sir, I have to report the following messages received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha :-

- (i) 'In accordance with the provisions of rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th May, 2002 agreed to the following amendments made by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th March, 2002, in the National Institute of Pharmaceutical

Education and Research (Amendment) Bill,
2001 :-

ENACTING FORMULA

1. That at page 1, line 1,—

for "Fifty-second" substitute "Fifty-third"

CLAUSE 1

2. That at page 1, line 4,—

for "2001" substitute "2002"

- (ii) 'In accordance with the provisions of rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th May, 2002 agreed to the following amendments made by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 3rd May, 2002, in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (Amendment) Bill, 2001 :-

ENACTING FORMULA

1. That at page 1, line 1,—

for "Fifty-second" substitute "Fifty-third"

CLAUSE 1

2. That at page 1, line 4,—

for "2001" substitute "2002"

- (iii) 'In accordance with the provisions of rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th May, 2002 agreed to the following amendments made by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 3rd May, 2002, in the St. John Ambulance Association (India) Transfer of Funds (Repeal) Bill, 2001 :-

ENACTING FORMULA

1. That at page 1, line 1,—

for "Fifty-second" substitute "Fifty-third"

CLAUSE 1

2. That at page 1, line 4,—

for "2001" substitute "2002"

(iv) 'In accordance with the provisions of rule 111 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to enclose a copy of the Haj Committee, Bill, 2002 which has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th May, 2002."

2. Sir, I lay on the Table the Haj Committee Bill, 2002, as passed by the Rajya Sabha on the 8th May, 2002.

[English]

12.03 hrs.

JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON THE FUNCTIONING OF WAKF BOARDS

Third Report

SHRI ALI MOHD. NAIK (Anantnag) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy (Hindi and English Versions) of the Third Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Functioning of Wakf Boards, on Dadra and Nagar Haveli Wakf Board.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we shall take up item No. 9 — Calling Attention.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Madam, before the Calling Attention is taken up, I would like to say that I have given a privilege notice against Shri George Fernandes...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Madam, I have given a notice of privilege...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I can hear one person at a time.
I shall call you one by one. Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Madam, I have given a privilege notice against the hon. Prime Minister, who is the Leader of the House, who misled deliberately by wrongly quoting his speech delivered at Goa, inside the House on 1st of May while he was making his speech...*(Interruptions)* I have given a privilege notice....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA (Mumbai North East) : Madam, I am on a point of order. Has the Deputy-Speaker admitted it?...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI BRAHMA NAND MANDAL (Monghyr) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Dalits are being massacred in Bihar
(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are not allowing your Minister to speak

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : I have with me the speech which the Prime Minister had delivered in Goa and the verbatim of the Prime Minister's speech made inside the House...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : This matter is under consideration of the Speaker. He will give a decision on it.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please take your seats. I want to know whether you want to take up the Calling Attention which has been listed or you want to go to the 'Zero Hour'. It is for you to decide.

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Zero Hour.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Madam, under Rule 222, I have given a privilege notice against Shri George Fernandes regarding the Kargil martyrs...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR (Faizabad) : Madam chairperson, I would like to know that if I raise the same issue daily in the House...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please, let him speak. I have to decide, not you. Let us hear him.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : He has stated inside the House and outside the House that the price of the coffins which were purchased from a U.S. firm was not on the higher side....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Basu Deb Acharia, it is under consideration of the Speaker.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The matter is under the consideration of the Speaker. He will give a decision.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Madam, I have given a privilege notice against the hon. Minister of Defence, Shri George Fernandes. The purchase of 'coffins for Kargil victims was on the harsh side. ...*(Interruptions)* This has appeared in the *Times of India* dated 8th May. ...*(Interruptions)* It says : "The Defence Supplies Centre, Philadelphia, a US Defence procurement agency, buys aluminium caskets with the identical specifications for around 1,200 dollars."...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : I am ready for discussion on this subject
...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Basu Deb Acharia, please take your seat. Please listen to me.

(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Madam, let me mention the subject. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, the Speaker will come and give his decision. It is under his consideration. You have given a notice. It is being considered and he will let you know.

(Interruptions)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Madam, I am prepared for a discussion on this subject. I am prepared for a full-scale debate. Hon. Member and former Prime Minister Shri H.D. Deve Gowda has given a Calling Attention notice which I have accepted. I shall be most happy to discuss this issue in the House and reply to each and every question that is raised. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Madam, how can he accept or not accept? It is for the Chair to decide. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Madam, it is a privilege matter. It should be referred to the Privileges Committee. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Madam, what does the hon. Minister think of himself? How can he decide? ...*(Interruptions)* Shri George Fernandes is entitled to give a reply when his name is cleared by the Justice Venkataswami Commission and not before. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You give a notice for discussion.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please, let one hon. Member speak at a time. All of you are just shouting and nothing is clear.

(Interruptions)

12.07 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have given a privilege notice. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Acharia, your privilege notice is already under my consideration. Please resume your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI BRAHMA NAND MANDAL : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, people are being killed in Bihar...*(Interruptions)* The discussion should be held on Bihar and Bengal ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Brahmanand Mandal, I told him. You do not take the floor on your own. Please go to your seat.

Let us now go to the 'Zero hour'. Some notices are here.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. SANJAY PASWAN (Nawada) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, with in one month 50 persons have been killed in Bihar....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Dr. Sanjay Paswan, please go to your seat now. We will go through the list. Some 30 hon. Members have given notices. Please cooperate. Shri P. Mohan to speak now.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I will give you the floor. Notices have been given by the hon. Members. Please go to your seat. Please do not disturb now.

(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Notices given by hon. Members are here. Shri P. Mohan to speak now.

[Translation]

SHRI KIRTI JHA AZAD (Darbhanga) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, even today seven persons have been killed in Bihar. ...*(Interruptions)* Yesterday six persons were killed. There the people belonging to scheduled castes and tribes are being butchered. In spite of that nothing is being discussed here. ...*(Interruptions)* Dr. Sanjay Paswan Ji has given notice in this regard....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Kirti Azad, I am telling you. Everyone will get a chance. All those hon. Members who have given notices want to speak. All of you will get time one after the other. Please go to your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Dr. Sanjay Paswan, please go to your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, Shri P. Mohan.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Azad, please resume your seat.

*SHRI P. MOHAN (Madurai) : Hon. Deputy-Speaker Sir, we are living in a modern era where we have communication technology that has revolutionised our town. Use of telephone is not a luxury it has become some thing essential even to ordinary citizens. That is why we find the rural people and even poor agriculturists go in for using this telephone facility.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have called Shri Mohan.

SHRI P. MOHAN : Hon Deputy Speaker Sir, we are living in a modern era where we have communication

*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

technology that has revolutionised our town. Use of telephone is not luxury it has become some thing essential even to ordinary citizens. That is why we find the rural people and even poor agriculturists go in for using this telephone facility.

But the telecommunication policy of the Union Government seriously hampers the growing trend. Especially when it comes to the rentals charged on subscribed telephones, it is at variance with one another even within a telephone circle. In my Madurai constituency we have the headquarters of the Madurai telephone circle which consists of three revenue districts Madurai, Theni and Dindigul. There are different rental tariffs for these three towns and adjoining rural areas. In Madurai the rental charge is Rs 500. In Theni the rental collected is Rs. 360. In Dindigul the rental charge remains to be Rs. 240. These rentals are applicable even to villages adjoining these towns. Why should there be a disparity in these rentals collected within the same circle. Madurai city as a commercial town has people who can afford these rental charges. But it is not fair to impose it on the poor rural masses adjoining cities and towns.

At a time when Government talks about rural telephony there are many remote villages that have not been connected with telephone. There is also declining trend in the use of telephones in the rural areas. Particularly in Madurai Telecom District alone about 1000 telephones have been surrendered. At least 30% of the people who have sought disconnection blame it on the irrational rental charges. At a time when the rural people and poor masses are to be encouraged to use telephone which has become an ordinary requirement the policy of the telecom management discourages people and force them to go for disconnection. The collection of rent, as I have been informed, is only applicable to Madurai but it is there in all the BSNL covered areas all over the country.

Hence I urge upon the Union Government to rationalise and streamline the rental tariff exchange wise as it was there all these years.

With this I conclude, thank you.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.

[Translation]

SHRI SAIDUZZAMA (Muzaffarnagar) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, please listen to me also....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I will give you chance to speak.

(Interruptions)

DR. SANJAY PASWAN : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, you will have to listen about Bihar. How will it work. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have called him.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL (Balaghat) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to very important subject... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have already called Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI BRAHMA NAND MANDAL : The people are being killed continuously in Bihar. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Mandal, please resume your seat. Do not shout like this. Everybody will get a chance.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : On several occasions I have raised my voice against PWG, PGA and MCC

in the House. If one sees newspaper of last week he will find that whether it is Andhra Pradesh or, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh or Madhya Pradesh massacre is going on throughout the week.... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please maintain silence, all of you will be given chance.

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : However the House should pay attention to the point that I want to emphasize. Through you I would like to submit to the Government that Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are such States where there were never any organised crime. However, Naxal incidents have created such a situation that in Surguja district the office bearers of the Bhartiya Janata Party are being threatened to quit the post or they will be killed. Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the discussions on Naxal movement might have been held many times in the House, however such warnings were never issued against any office bearers of the political parties so far as my memory goes it is the first such incident that has happened in Warangal. Through you I would like to submit to the Government and the House that no one raise voice against Naxals simply because he will be killed. In several State Governments this issue is discussed on the basis of party ideology. I would like to submit to the House that if we accept the democracy then discussion should be held on increasing Naxal incidents in the House and it should also be considered as to what is the solution to this problem. We cannot ignore this problem by saying that it is State Governments responsibility or the State Government say that they are depending on the centre in this regard. It will not work rather, both the State Governments and the Central Government will have to sit together and ponder over it. The incident of Jharkhand is proof to this that more than 100 police personals have been killed there. Yesterday, day before yesterday once again people have been killed in Bihar. I would like to submit to Government that the situation in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh is different. Where there was no organised crime but now people are afraid to collectively oppose it. Even today the people's representatives do not dare to speak against them as they know that they will be assassinated. I would like to inform that I had visited that area for ten days where they have their camps. IG and SP had also accompanied

[Shri Prahlad Singh Patel]

me. It was on account of the threatening of Naxalites that not a single people's representatives accompanied us. I am sorry to inform you I had visited with IG and SP, I had visited with them, they did not visit with me, however, they were transferred. It will further embolden the naxals and certainly it will be difficult for government to check naxals. I would like to submit that there may be difference of opinion among different political parties who have faith in democracy but they should unite together to stand against the activities of Naxals which are spreading in the entire country. This is my request.
...(Interruptions)

SHRI KIRTI JHA AZAD : I too have given notice about Bihar.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You will also get a chance. Justice will be done with everybody. You too would be called.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention towards the fact that the Home Minister has delivered such a statement about Gujarat in this House...
(Interruptions)

[English]

He has no right to say that, sir

[Translation]

This matter is related to Gujarat and related to my constituency....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Would you not allow the zero hour to take place?

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : This matter is related to my constituency, what does he know about Gujarat...
(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Katiya, please resume your seat. Will you please resume your seat now? This is 'Zero Hour'

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR : What is this going on....
(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : This is zero hour, would you not let the zero hour take place? What are you doing? You too will get chance in Zero Hour.

SHRI KIRTI JHA AZAD : I too want to speak about Bihar...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Azad you will also get a chance.

[Translation]

You too will get chance to speak about Bihar. Azadji, I will call you also. I will give you chance to speak about Bihar...(Interruptions)

SHRI KIRTI JHA AZAD : The chance to speak about Bihar is not given. The condition is bad over there....
(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We will adjourn after listening about Bihar.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : Today, 40 thousand people are living in camps in Gujarat...(Interruptions)

SHRI KIRTI JHA AZAD : 50 Dalits have been killed in Bihar during last 7 days....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, it is very difficult for me to handle them.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : It is a very important matter. Let the House be in order. People are being killed, and the camps are being closed.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : When hon. Home Minister was speaking in this House on 5th day of the last month he said during the debate that he had no such

information that camps are being closed. I have got letter from collector of Dohad...(Interruptions) Who has written letter to everybody...(Interruptions) You may please sit down. According to the information given by the Gujarat Government, all camps of Dohad and Bhimkhera have been closed. Not only this, I have got information that they...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You will get the chance later. Nothing will go on record, except the submission of Shri Mistry.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : I am speaking it on the basis of record, I am not speaking without...(Interruptions) You may please resume. I would like to say that Gujarat Government wants that all the people living in camps should go back and no facility for them should remain far in the camps. Government is trying to tell that situation is normal there. Not only this, I would like to tell that on the basis of records that the Home Minister has given wrong information about Gujarat in the House...(Interruptions) People are being compelled to vacate the camps in Gujarat. There is no such village over there where you can find good atmosphere. The people living in camps are not being provided ration and drinking water. Home Minister...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Will you please resume your seat?

(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, the Home Minister must come to the House. ...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Will you please resume your seats? I will take serious view of this. I am calling each one, whose name is in the list. Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have given the floor to him. Why have all of you got up? I seek your co-operation. How can the House be run in this way? This is totally wrong.

(Interruptions)

12.20 hrs.

At this stage, Shri Sundar Lal Tiwari and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please go back to your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please go back to your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The hon. Member wants to say something. Now the Members of the Treasury Benches are quiet. Why do you not go back to your seats?

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Member from your own party wants to say something. I have given the floor to him. Please go to your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Let him say. You please go to your seats. I have given the floor to him. Please go back to your seats.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : That is why. I have given a chance.

[English]

You resume your seats. Please go back to your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Earlier the Members from the Treasury Benches were standing and now you have come here. Please go to your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please go to your seats. Why do you not go back to your seats? I will give you chance.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2 P.M.

12.23 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till
Fourteen of the Clock.*

14.02 hrs.

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

[SHRI P.H. PANDIAN in the Chair]

RE: NEED FOR DECLARATION OF RABINDRA NATH TAGORE'S BIRTHDAY AS NATIONAL HOLIDAY

[English]

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want only one minute from you to say something

The country is celebrating Rabindranath Tagore's birthday today. Tagore is the only poet in the world who has written two national anthems—*Amar Sonar Bangla* of Bangladesh, and our *Jana Gana Mana Adhi Nayaka Jayahe*. He is a poet who fought against the British imperialism. During his time he worked for the unity of the country. At the time when the country is passing through a crisis, more importance should be given to Rabindranath Tagore. He belongs not to Bengal only, he belongs to the whole world. I would request that from next year his birthday be declared a national holiday. I think the whole

House supports me in this. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is here. He may convince the Government.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperumbudur) : Sir, we associate with Kumari Mamata Banerjee on this issue.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Sir, we all support this demand. From the next calendar year, Rabindranath Tagore's birthday should be declared a national holiday.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister may convey the mood, the sense, and the feelings of the House to the Government and see that holiday is declared from next year.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, in the past also we demanded for this.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, I think the Government has accepted this.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Please accept this!

MR. CHAIRMAN : Kumari Banerjee, why did you not raise it in the morning? Was Tagore born after lunch?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : It should be declared a national holiday from next year.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have permitted Kumari Mamata Banerjee as a special case.

[Translation]

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY (Buxar) : It should be declared a holiday.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Whenever we sing National Anthem, we remember Rabindranath Tagore.

[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) : Sir, the whole House is unanimous about it and the Chair has also given

its opinion about it. I understand that this is appropriate. The concerned Minister will be informed about doing the needful in this regard, and there will be no two opinions about it.

14.05 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Non-revival of IISCO (Indian Iron and Steel Company)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the House shall take up item no. 9—Calling Attention by Shri Basudeb Acharia.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I call the attention of the hon. Minister of Steel to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon :

"Situation arising out of non-revival of Indian Iron and Steel Company by the Central Government."

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Basudeb Acharia, the hon. Member of Parliament, has called the attention of the House on the situation arising out of non-revival of IISCO by Government. I would like to make the following statement of facts before the House:

The Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO), a wholly owned subsidiary of Steel Authority of Limited (SAIL) was incorporated in 1918. After a series of mergers in 1952, IISCO became a vertically integrated steel company with its steel making unit at Burnpur, captive iron ore mines at Gua and Chiria, coal mines at Chasnalla, Jitpur and Ramnagore, a captive foundry and pipe making plant at Kulti and a marketing set up. The Government of India took over the management of the company in 1972, followed by taking over of IISCO shares in 1976. In 1978-79, the shares of IISCO were transferred to SAIL and IISCO became a wholly owned subsidiary of SAIL.

IISCO has continued to make losses over the years due to technological obsolescence, ageing of plant and equipment, outmoded technology, lack of necessary capital inputs etc. Although several proposals were drawn up for modernisation of IISCO, none of the schemes could be taken up for implementation for want of funds.

With the amendment of Sick Industrial Companies Act (SICA), IISCO was referred to Board of Industrial and Financial Restructuring (BIFR) in June 1994 and was declared a sick industrial company in August 1994. Several schemes for revival of IISCO were envisaged but none could fructify.

During the last meeting held on 1st April, 2002, BIFR noted that Ministry of Steel had sought further time of six months to finalise a rehabilitation proposal for the revival of the company. BIFR was, however, agreeable to grant three months time to SAIL to submit a fully tied up revival proposal to the operating agency for the revival of the company, failing which the winding up notice issued earlier would be confirmed without further hearing.

Government of India, in February 2000, approved a Financial and Business Restructuring package for SAIL which, inter alia envisaged write-off of loans and advances of SAIL/Government of India to IISCO for Rs. 1,946.17 crore as on April 1, 1999. As a part of the restructuring plan of SAIL, Government of India approved conversion of IISCO into a joint venture with SAIL holding minority shareholding.

With a view to converting IISCO into a joint venture, SAIL invited "Expression of Interest" from suitable companies. Three parties, namely, BHP Minerals Marketing, Australia; M/s Mitsui Company Limited, Japan; and M/s Tyzhpromexport (TPE), Russia responded. The parties carried out due diligence. However, M/s BHP and M/s Mitsui later indicated that they were not interested in the steel works of IISCO. This left TPE as the sole contender for the joint venture.

A proposal was submitted by TPE, the only party remaining in the fray, for joint venture for revival of IISCO. The matter was taken up during the VIII Session of the Indo-Russian Working Group on Ferrous and Non-ferrous Metallurgy held in February 2002, and it was decided to

[Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy]

set up a Task Force which will examine all relevant issues including the economic viability of the proposed joint venture and recommend the parametres for the formation of a viable joint venture.

Meanwhile, SAIL has proposed an alternative revival package for IISCO which has been based on the report from MECON. At present, this proposal is under consideration of the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can put only one question now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, this is unfortunate that IISCO has been referred BIFR in 1994 and that during the last eight years, the Government has not taken any decision in regard to its revival.

IISCO is one of the best-located steel plants in the country. Best quality of iron ore is available in East Coast captive mines in Gua, Manoharpur, Chasnala, Jitpur and Ramnagore. The washery at Chasnala produces the best quality of coal with only 17 per cent of ash content. With its captive iron ore mines at Gua and Manoharpur, collieries at Chasnala, Jitpur and Ramnagore—all with huge reserves—the integrated steel plant at Burnpur, a captive foundry and spun pipe plant at Kulti and with a marketing network spread all over the country, IISCO has the advantage of a complete linkage from raw material to the marketing state. By exploiting the potential of its collieries and with a minimum capital investment at Burnpur Steel Plant, IISCO can turn around to become a profit-making organisation and has the potential of becoming the best integrated steel plant in our country.

When IISCO was taken over in 1972, the then Steel Minister, late Mohan Kumaramangalam had assured the House. He received the support from all sides of the House. I have seen the debate on IISCO Nationalisation Bill. He assured the House by saying that 'the Government is taking it over and the Government will nationalise IISCO which is the oldest steel plant in our country in order to modernise it'.

When it was nationalised in 1972, it became a part of the wholly owned subsidiary of SAIL. Since 1978 or even since 1972, no investment has been made to modernise IISCO; and thus, it became sick. You will be

surprised to know this I have seen some of the plants and equipments. The plants which were set up 30-40-50 years ago are still functioning.

It has a workforce of about 23,000 persons as of today, including the workers of collieries and iron ore mines. This is with regard to direct employment. There are hundreds of other small scale units also. There are about 30 cement plants which are small and medium sized in and around Burnpur. Depending on the slag supplied by IISCO, there are hundreds of ancillary units where hundred thousands of workers are employed.

If IISCO is wound up, what will happen to the economy of that area? Not only the State of West Bengal, but also the neighbouring State of Jharkhand will get adversely affected.

We have been receiving the same replies from the hon. Minister. Today, the Minister, in his statement, has not categorically stated what he is going to do. He reiterated what he stated earlier. Three months back I received a reply from the hon. Minister. He said the same thing in his reply. In reply to an Unstarred Question, he said that the Government is still considering the viability package submitted by the SAIL, which was prepared by MECON.

MECON is an organisation under the Ministry of Steel. In the statement which he made today, it was stated that it was decided to set up a task force which will examine all relevant issues including economic viability of the proposed joint venture and recommend the parameters for the formation of viable joint venture. In the concluding paragraph he again stated that SAIL has proposed an alternative revival package for IISCO which has been based on the report of MECON. This viable package was submitted to the Ministry long back, at least one year back, by the Steel Authority of India. What is the Government doing? Why is it not taking a final decision in regard to the revival of IISCO?

I am told that the Minister of Finance is providing Rs. 540 crore for Voluntary Retirement Scheme. What is the intention of the Government? They are providing Rs. 540 crore for Voluntary Retirement Scheme, which means that they want to throw away the workers. Majority of the workers will take voluntary retirement and then the Government will decide to close this premier, oldest and

most important steel-manufacturing unit of West Bengal. If the Government has the fund of Rs. 540 crore for Voluntary Retirement Scheme, why can it not have fund for revival of IISCO? What is the proposal of MECON or the Steel Authority of India Limited which is pending for months together with the Ministry of Steel?

Sir, the total cost for revival as per MECON's Report will be Rs.1042 crore. The Government has the fund of Rs. 540 crore due to Voluntary Retirement Scheme. As per MECON's or Steel Authority of India's proposal, this Rs.1040 crore or Rs.1080 crore is not required in one year. This fund will be required within three years. My question is, whether the Government will utilise the fund of Rs. 540 crore, which the Ministry of Finance has agreed to provide for VRS, for revival of IISCO. Minimum fund will be required for the first year and the rest of Rs. 500 crore will be required for the second and third year. I would like to know whether the Government of India will consider the proposal of the Steel Authority of India Limited seriously.

During one or two decades thirteen proposals were made but nothing fructified. The so-called Russian proposal, TPE, will also not fructify. Why then is the task force again being appointed? I would like to know whether it is the intention of the Government to delay it so that it will have a natural death. Before the 1st of April, I had sent a letter to the Prime Minister. Sir, the representatives of all the political parties met the Prime Minister. We pleaded before him that on 1st of April, when the Government representative will be before BIFR, he should categorically say there that the Government is seriously thinking to revive IISCO. Sir, we were assured by the hon. Prime Minister. But in BIFR's meeting of 1st April, that was not stated by the Government's representative. Rather the Government representative asked for extension of time. I was told by the Minister before 1st of April that the Government would ask for six months' extension. At that time, I told him that BIFR will not give six months' extension. If you are not in a position to submit a revival package, BIFR will not give extension.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Are you asking the question?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I am the only Member who have given notice for this Calling Attention. Therefore, you should give me some time.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister has made the statement.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I know the Rule regarding Calling Attention. But please give me some more time. It is a question of thousand and thousand of workers.

[Translation]

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, they are aware about the rule, even then they are violating the rule. They should be punished.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : You may please sit down. You are not the Chairman. Keep it in mind, when you get the chance to speak.

[English]

The Government representative asked for six months extension but three months' extension was given with a stricture that if the revival package is not submitted by 1st of June, BIFR will not call any further meeting, but BIFR will unilaterally declare Indian Iron and Steel Company as closed.

I would like to know from the Minister whether before 1st of June, the Government of India will submit a revival package to BIFR.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, please sit down for a minute. As per Rule 197, after the Minister made a Statement you can ask only one question. However, since you are the only Member who have given this Calling Attention notice, I am exercising the residuary power under Rule 389 to relax the Rule only today. The rules are made to exercise.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I thank you very much. My second question is that whether the Government will consider providing Rs. 540 crore—which is being provided for VR—for revival of IISCO. It is because money is there. The fund is there to throw out workers. But the Government has no fund to revive a very important steel manufacturing unit in the State of West Bengal.

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

Thirdly, I would like to know whether the Government will positively take a decision in this regard. I am not talking of the TPE proposal; I am talking of the SAIL proposal, which is both short-term and long-term. I would request the Minister to kindly consider and approve the SAIL proposal for the revival of IISCO. I hope the Minister of Steel would positively respond to all these questions. I know his problems; I know his difficulties also. He will have to fight with the Minister of Finance. He knows where are the hurdles and difficulties. This is not a question of one political party. The demand to revive IISCO is the demand of the entire House. The Minister of State for Communications is sitting behind the Steel Minister; he is also nodding his head. That means he is also supporting me. So, this is the demand of the entire House.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : There is only one thing. VRS is also necessary for revival. You can demand additional funds.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South) : We do not agree for VRS. We are agreed that this company should be revived.

SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR : No industry can be revived at present without VRS, without modernisation and without addition. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DAB ACHARIA : I would request the Minister to assure this House that the Government would take positive steps in regard to the revival of IISCO.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Hon. Member Shri Basu Deb Acharia has made some valuable suggestions. Kumari Mamata Banerjee also had raised a question during the Question Hour in this respect. In fact, the Government is quite serious for the revival of IISCO. At the moment we know the entire steel scenario of the world. Even in our country no financial institution is agreeable for investment and modernisation in any steel plant. Already the financial institutions in the country have invested about Rs. 30,000 crore in new steel plants. The total investment of the financial institutions is about Rs. 90,000 crore and in the modern new steel plants alone, their investment is Rs. 30,000 crore where they are not

getting any return because of the recession world over in the steel sector. So, no financial institution will come forward for investment in IISCO for modernisation.

We know the age-old plant of IISCO. Its technology is to be changed and a lot of money is necessary for this purpose. Whatever proposal is submitted by SAIL is not just a revival package, but I can say it is a survival package. This survival package is the first step for the revival of IISCO. It includes whatever the hon. Member has told this House. This survival package also includes VRS. Even MECON has also recommended for the VRS because the work force is much more as compared to the requirement of production in IISCO.

You know the situation in Kulti. At the moment whatever we are producing in Kulti has no market either in the country or outside. Therefore, after we made several requests to the West Bengal Government, they have taken up marketing of some materials and they are taking some materials for their own purpose. So far whatever is being produced that is kept in the godowns because there is no market for it. At Kulti alone the work force is more than three thousand. Naturally, the number of employees is much more than what is required for the unit. If you take IISCO as a whole, its work force is quite large and therefore VRS is quite necessary to make it viable. At this moment the entire expenditure on the employees and workmen alone is about 19 per cent.

In a new steel plant, they require 4-5 per cent as establishment expenses whereas we are making an expenditure of about 19 per cent towards labour cost. It has to come down to the international benchmark of 4-5 per cent in establishment expenses. That is why, VRS is quite necessary to make it viable. The revival package will not be very much viable if VRS will not be included in the revival package.

So far as TPE is concerned, the Government has taken a decision for a Joint Venture. Three parties had expressed interest and at the moment, only TPE remains. The other two parties have left. As regards the TPE, the hon. Member has raised a point on why there is a large Work Force. This decision has been taken in the VIII Session of the Indo Russian Working Group on Ferrous and Non-Ferrous Metallurgy and they should examine the entire economic

viability and other things. That is the decision taken by the Russian Government and the Indian Government jointly in that VIII Session. With that decision, this task Force has been set up and the Ministry of Steel has sent a group to Russia to examine the TPE's proposal. At this moment, the Russian Government has not agreed with TPE to use the rupee-ruble escrow account. The Russian Government has so far not agreed to utilise the Russian escrow account. So, that is standing in the way and although TPE is not expressing that they are very much interested, they are dilly-dallying.

There is another alternative proposal that is pending with the Government. I have just now told you that SAIL has submitted a package with the recommendation of MECON, and VRS and other things are part of that proposal. It is not just pending with the Ministry of Steel. A lot of consultations is required with the Ministry of Finance and other Ministries. The proposal has to be sanctioned totally by the Government and the Cabinet. The proposal is under active consideration of the Government. I can assure that to the House.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, he has not replied to my question as to whether before 2nd June, he will submit the revival proposal to the BIFR or not. You tell us positively on that point. What is your intention?

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : The date has already been given. We shall have to give a reply. We shall have to take a decision on that. I hope the Government will take a decision before that.

SHRI BASU DAB ACHARIA : Will the Government submit the revival package or not? I want that the Government should submit a revival package before 2nd June.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : I cannot assure on that because it is not the decision of this Ministry alone. We shall have to consult the Ministry of Finance, and the cabinet shall have to take a decision. I can tell you that we will take a decision before 1st July about the revival package which is pending with the Government.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Are you going to submit the revival proposal or not?.... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : The BIFR has given time upto 1st July and not 1st June. Before 1st July, the Government will definitely take a decision.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am not specific on the decision. I want to know whether, before 1st July, the Government will submit the revival package or not. You may take a decision to close down IISCO or to submit a proposal. Sir, he has not replied to this point.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : It is pending with the Government....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, will he assure the House?....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, I have been very lenient to you. I relaxed the rule and allowed you to speak.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I want a categorical reply from the Minister on whether any revival package will be submitted by the Government to the BIFR before 1st July. Please tell us on this point....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I just want to help the Minister. I am not going to put a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have not given notice and your name is not found in the list. However, I am allowing you to speak.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I always abide by the ruling of the Chair.

I would like to address the Minister through you Sir, that he has cited a case of Russia escrow utilisation and Russia Government not agreeing to it.

Is it not a fact—if the Minister knows about it he can reply, otherwise he need not—that Government of India along with Russian Government is exploring possibilities of investing our money in petroleum sector of Sakhalin, and in the Defence sector to buy TU tanks? When the Russian Government is extremely liberal with all these arrangements, why do you not include IISCO escrow account matter also in that? You are not including it because it is West Bengal! If Government of India can

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

submit a package before BIFR for IBPL, then why can the Government of India not submit a proposal before BIFR for IISCO also, before it rings the death knell on first July? The Prime Minister, in his meeting with the delegation of all parties—I should not take the name of the Prime Minister—in our presence, directed the Secretary of Steel, to work out a proposal and submit it. What is preventing you to do that? Who is preventing you to submit this proposal till this date? I shall not take the name of the Prime Minister. But the hon. Prime Minister gave a direction in our presence. The Minister may please answer as to why this proposal has not been submitted. As Shri Basu Deb Acharia stated, will you enquire, if the Russian money and Russian Agreements are being encouraged in other sectors at their terms, then why IISCO could not be included in that package for utilisation of escrow account? What is wrong in that?

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I walk-out.

14.37 hrs.

Shri Ramdas Athawale, then left the House.

[English]

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Sir, this is a burning issue. This morning also I raised this issue. There is a feeling among the working class that ultimately VRS will be given and this will be closed. If the worker is willing he can take VRS. But if the Government itself decides about the VRS package right now, then a message will go that the Government is not interested in modernising this Company, instead the Government is interested in closing down this Company. As Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi stated, if Russian project could be included in Defence and Petroleum sectors, then why not IISCO. It is not just today we are shouting. We are shouting since eight or ten years. IISCO's modernisation package is pending since long. I do not know who are the people who are misleading the Government to sell out this Company? We are the last to tolerate it. IISCO is the pride of our country. That is why, either through the Russian proposal or SAIL's

proposal the Government must sanction the package. Instead of giving the money for VRS, the Finance Minister can give the money for revival package and modernisation of IISCO. If you want Members of Parliament from West Bengal are ready to give Rs. 50 lakh from the MPLADS Fund. There are totally forty-two Members from West Bengal. We are ready to give the money, if you want. But see to it that IISCO is not closed and that IISCO is modernised. We are always talking of VRS. I am sorry to say that we are always talking about VRS of working class. That sends a wrong message. Let us start Voluntary Retirement Scheme for the politicians and not for the working class! That is why I would request that it should not be closed.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, the workers are angry. They say that railway tracks will be blocked and nothing will move. It will invite serious problems.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, I have given you maximum time.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : I have not said anything in my statement regarding VRS.

When the hon. Member Shri Basu Deb Acharia has raised it, I told him that this is a part of the revival package. It is not a separate proposal. No proposal has come for VRS. Or, it is not that the Finance Minister has not agreed to VRS. The entire revival package includes the VRS. It will not be treated separately. It will not be considered separately....(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Why? You call it a revival package...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : I have told you that this is a revival package....(Interruptions) It is for the rehabilitation of the workers....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, you have taken forty minutes for one Call Attention. I have given maximum time to you.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : We can take more than one hour. You know the problems of the people.

MR. CHAIRMAN : If one Member takes one hour, then it would mean that 544 Members will take 544 hours.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : The hon. Member Kum. Mamata Banerjee raised an issue. The Government is quite serious about it I have told you.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The Government is not at all serious about it.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : The hon. Prime Minister was kind enough. During his Russian visit, he raised this issue and he discussed this issue with his Russian counterpart to help this Steel Plant, to allow to utilise the Russian Escrow Account. It is the hon. Prime Minister who was kind enough to request his Russian Government counterpart there. So, with that request, the Eighth Session of the Indo-Russian Working Group on Ferrous and Non-Ferrous Metallurgy went on discussing the issue. He discussed a part of this issue with his Russian counterpart....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : How long will you continue this discussion? Unless you take a final decision, it will not work.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : If you realise what is happening, you will not say so. The Russian Government is not interested in it because steel production has already over-supplied....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : The Russian Government is interested in our investment in the Sakhalin Project and other defence deals but not in respect of the Escrow Account for utilisation of the IISCO....*(Interruptions)* The Government of India spends a lot of money on junk projects which America has not done. Why are you investing in such projects?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : This proposal is not just pending with the Steel Ministry. I have told you about it. But this is a confidential matter. How can I say where it is now pending? However, I can tell you that this is not just pending with the Steel Ministry.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Russia is compelling us to buy their tanks, technology and

compelling us to invest in their projects. We are not compelling them to do this in our project.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : The proposal has already been sent. I hope the Government would take a decision before the last date.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : It is unfortunate that the hon. Minister has not replied to any of our questions. We wanted to know whether a proposal for the revival of IISCO would be submitted to the BIFR before 1st July? He has not stated about it. So, we are walking out in protest.

14.42 hrs.

At this stage, Shri Basu Deb Acharia and some other hon. Members left the House.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : I think the hon. Minister has assured us that he would submit it.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Are you assuring us? I think he has assured us that the proposal would go before the BIFR.

SHRI PRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : I have assured that the decision of the Government would be taken before 1st July.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Are you not giving the package?

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : How can I do it? It is pending with the Government....*(Interruptions)* The revival package is pending with the Government for consideration. A decision will be taken before 1st July.

REPATRIATION OF PRISONERS BILL*

14.43 hrs.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the House will take up the next item. Hon. Home Minister to move for leave to introduce the Repatriation of Prisoners Bill.

*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-2, dated 9.5.2002.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI) : On behalf of my senior colleague Shri L.K. Advani, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the transfer of certain prisoners from India to country or place outside India and reception in India of certain prisoners from country or place outside India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motion moved :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the transfer of certain prisoners from India to country or place outside India and reception in India of certain prisoners from country or place outside India."

Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan has given notice to speak on this.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Sir, I am not opposing the transfer of prisoners on humanitarian grounds. But I am opposing the introduction of the Bill on grounds of competence and jurisdiction.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have given notice for opposing the Bill. If you are not opposing it, there is no scope for you to speak.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Let me finish it. I have given notice to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Are you opposing it?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Then, oppose it.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : What can I do? I am not opposing the transfer of prisoners. But I am opposing the introduction of the Bill at this stage on grounds of competence and jurisdiction. We all know that we have Extradition Treaty with certain foreign countries.

When an offender is absconding and taking shelter in a foreign country, we get the attendance of that accused through Interpol. That treaty is there. But I am not aware of any treaty entered into between India and any other foreign country in regard to transfer of prisoners. We would have to enter into a treaty with another country. Before entering into a treaty with another country, how can we get jurisdiction to decide matters regarding a foreign citizen

undergoing imprisonment under the Indian Act in a foreign State?...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Suppose an Indian citizen is imprisoned in a foreign country!

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Then, it should be *vice versa*. You are well aware that the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 extends to the whole of India. There is no jurisdiction beyond our territory.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Except Jammu & Kashmir.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Yes. That is another matter and that is a debatable point. Our Criminal Procedure Code extends only to India except Jammu & Kashmir. How could it be extended to a foreign country when our Criminal courts are functioning under the Criminal Procedure Code and the judgement is pronounced under the Criminal Procedure Code. Even in this Bill also, there is a provision. I can read that particular portion.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can speak everything at the time of consideration.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Yes. But, as to why I am pressing this point is....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : When you want to oppose, you simply oppose it.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Please do not interrupt. If you interrupt, I would not be able to complete the sentence. Mr. Chairman, Sir, Please listen to me without distracting my attention. Why I refer to this is because the power of the court to revive the judgements and also power of the State Government and the Central Government to omit the sentence is also provided even after the transfer of prisoners to a foreign country. Our jurisdiction is still there. This is done under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code. Then once the transfer is made and the prisoner is in the foreign country, how can we exercise jurisdiction over him without a treaty? We have an Extradition Treaty. But, we do not have a treaty in regard to the transfer of prisoners. So, it is a premature attempt...(Interruptions) Shall I continue?

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please conclude now.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : We shall have to first enter into a treaty or arrangement with a

contracting State. Definition of 'contracting State' is given in the Bill. If the contracting State has already entered into a treaty or arrangement with us, then we get the jurisdiction.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are talking about the merits of the Bill.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : It is not about the merits of the Bill. I am talking about its jurisdiction and the competency, not the merits of the Bill. I do not go into any merit of the Bill at all. I do not go into the provisions of the Bill at all. I am going into the jurisdiction and competency of this House to make a legislation.

Suppose, if there is an exchange of prisoners between India and Pakistan, how will it be carried out? Of course, how far Pakistan would comply with the treaty is another matter because Pakistan is encouraging the terrorist activities in India. With regard to transfer of prisoners, how can we make a legislation without a treaty with Pakistan.

First we should enter into a treaty with a foreign country. Then only this House can have the jurisdiction to pass the law here. Suppose we want to transfer prisoners between India and the United Kingdom, until and unless we enter into a treaty like the Extradition Treaty with that country, how can this House get the jurisdiction to legislate about the prisoners detained in the United Kingdom? If a foreign citizen is detained under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code in India, until and unless they surrender their jurisdiction, how can we legislate? Where is the competency for us to legislate? As far as extradition is concerned, we have an Extradition Treaty with the United Kingdom. So, with the help of Interpol we get the prisoners extradited to India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Radhakrishnan, you raised the question about the competence of this House to legislate on this matter. This House is omnipotent and this House has got the jurisdiction to pass a law regarding Indian citizens residing anywhere in the world. If they are in any prison and if they are brought back to India, they will come under the jurisdiction of Indian law.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : But they are deciding about foreign citizens detained in India.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Mr. Chairman, Sir, for the information of the hon. Member, I would like to inform him, through you that the Government of India has already entered into agreements with three countries and we are negotiating with other countries also to enter into such agreements. We have already entered into an agreement with the United Kingdom, France and Norway and we are negotiating with other countries also for this purpose.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : That will have to be mentioned here, in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of this Bill...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : If you go through the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, you will find that the Government of India can ask for any detail and any document from any country. So, by virtue of that, they have entered into an agreement with France, UK and Norway.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : So, there must be an amendment to that effect in the Criminal Procedure Code also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You read Section 169 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Then, it will be clear to you.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Sir, this is only an enabling law to transfer convicted persons from other countries to India and also to transfer foreigners convicted in India on humanitarian ground. I agree with the hon. Member that neither in the Criminal Procedure Code nor in the Prison Act nor in any other Act, we have a provision for this purpose. That is why, this Bill has been introduced here. By this enabling Bill we can achieve that purpose now, after entering into agreements with foreign countries.

Then, we have to see the human angle also, the climate and the accessibility of the families of convicted persons, whether Indians in foreign countries or foreigners in India. They have to be transferred to their respective countries. So, when we pass this Bill, this will enable us to implement the agreements which we have already signed with some countries and also in the process of signing with certain other countries. So, this House has full jurisdiction to pass this Bill...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Radhakrishnan, you can speak in detail at the time of consideration of this Bill.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Sir, article 253 of the Constitution makes it very clear that the Government of India can pass such a law for giving effect to international agreements. We have to have a law to fulfil international commitments. Since we do not have a law now, we have to pass this law here.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yes, only after passing a law we can enter into a treaty. We cannot say that we are entering into a treaty as we are going to pass a law.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we can enter into a treaty and then pass a law over here.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI : No, first we have to have an enabling law and we have introduced this Bill only for that purpose....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, how can you allow other Members, who have not given a notice, to speak now?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Yes; I cannot allow other Members who have not given a notice to oppose the introduction of this Bill.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Radhakrishnan, you can clarify all your legal doubts at the time of consideration of this Bill. Please take your seat now.

(Interruptions)

DR. BIKRAM SARKAR (Panskura) : In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, there is one sentence....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI I.D. SWAMI : That could be at the time of consideration.

DR. BIKRAM SARKAR : Sir, his objection is not valid. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, it has been mentioned as under :

"The Bill proposes legislation, in conjunction with bilateral treaties to enable the Central Government to

transfer foreign convicted persons to their country and *vice versa*".

That explains it. He was reading the first part of it. I am reading the last part in order to clarify the point.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do understand that this is to enable citizens languishing in jails in foreign countries.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are going to participate in the debate.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : That would be at a later date and not now....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the time is over. I have to inform the House that as per well established practice, the Speaker does not decide whether the Bill is constitutionally within the legislative competence of the House or not. The House also does not take a decision on specific question of the *vires* of a Bill. I shall, therefore, put the motion for introduction of the Bill to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the transfer of certain prisoners from India to country or place outside India and reception in India of certain prisoners from country or place outside India."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI : I introduce* the Bill.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House would now take up matters under rule 377. Now, hon. Member, Dr. Madan Prasad Jaiswal.

*Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

14.57 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) Need for inclusion of Kalar, Kalwar and Kalal Castes in the List of Backward Castes in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh

[Translation]

DR. M.P. JAISWAL (Betia) : Kalar, Kalwar and Kalal castes have got recognition as backward classes in eight states and they are getting the facilities being provided to the backward classes for their development. Due to these facilities only they have got the opportunity for development. But till now these castes have not been recognised as backward class in Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat. Though they are educationally, socially and economically very weak in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh and special assistance for their upliftment is needed from the Government. For this, it is essential that they should be included in the list of backward class in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.

Through the House, I request the Government to take action for providing recognition to Kalar, Kalwar and Kalal castes as backward class in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh, so that the people of these castes living in these states could get opportunities for development.

(ii) Need for early electrification of certain ST dominated blocks of Singhbhum Parliamentary Constituency, Jharkhand

SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA (Singhbhum) : My parliamentary constituency has been deprived of basic amenities even after 54 years of independence. Not a single village under Tauntnagar, Manjhari and Kumardogi blocks of my parliamentary constituency has been electrified so far. These are tribal dominated blocks. In the absence of electrification neither the local people are getting opportunities to develop nor education of their children is going on smoothly.

I would like to make a submission through this House that the electrification of the villages in these blocks should be done so that these may also join the mainstream of development.

(iii) Need to widen National Highway No. 3 between Agra and Mumbai

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur) : National Highway No. 3 from Agra to Mumbai is urgently required to be converted into four lane or six lane highway. A demand to build bridges on the rivers and nullahs falling between Shajapur and Maksi especially on Lakhunder river and an overbridge on Maksi railway crossing is pending since long. This matter is under consideration for last three years.

I, therefore, demand from the Government that orders for early solution of these problems should be given.

(iv) Need for proper maintenance of National Highway No. 26 between Narsinghpur and Lakhnadaun in Madhya Pradesh

SHRI RAM NARESH TRIPATHEE (Seoni) : The 70 Kilometer long stretch of National Highway No. 26 between Narsinghpur and Lakhnadaun is in a dilapidated condition. The embankment on Majha nullah collapsed during rainy season last year due to which traffic was disrupted. Traffic on this road was started again by filling stone. Rainy season has arrived again but so far this embankment could not be constructed. Height of another embankment on this road is quite less and due to water logging in rainy season traffic on this road is disrupted for several hours and sometimes for for two days. The National Highway No. 26 is one of the most important highways, which links the National Highway No. 7, the longest in the country at lakhnadaun via Delhi, Agra, Jhansi and Sagar. If proper attention to its repair is not paid immediately, the traffic on this road will come to standstill in rainy season.

I, therefore, request the Minister of Surface Transport to pay attention towards repair at the earliest.

15.00 hrs.

(v) Need to provide additional Central assistance to the State of Karnataka to check sea erosion in the coastal areas of the State

[English]

SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR (Mysore) : Karnataka has a coastline of about 300 kilometres stretching from Mangalore

[Shri S.D.N.R. Wadiyar]

to Karwar covering three districts with a number of estuaries formed due to the drainage of large number of rivers joining the Arabian Sea. Out of this 300 kilometres, a length of 215.685 kilometres has been identified to protect the sea coast against erosion. The State Government of Karnataka had prepared a Master Plan for Rs. 5750 crore and submitted to Central Water Commission in September 1997 for obtaining external funding.

The Central Government has sanctioned only Rs. 5.5 crore for anti-sea erosion works in the form of grant in the ratio of 75:25 between the Centre and State and asked the State Government of Karnataka to bear the remaining amount from the State Budget. The State is financially not sound to bear so much amount for implementing the anti-sea erosion schemes.

I request the Union Government to provide adequate funds for anti-sea erosion activities in the coastal areas of Karnataka.

(vi) Need to provide ownership right to labourers living in labour Colonies in Kanpur under Industrial Subsidized Housing Scheme

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur) : Sir, 30,643 labour colonies were constructed in 16 districts of Uttar Pradesh in 1950 with the help of central assistance under Industrial Subsidised Housing Scheme, ISI. Besides Uttar Pradesh, such industrial colonies were also built in Orissa and Delhi. Under this scheme about 18,000 housing units for labourers were also constructed in Kanpur. Later on these residential units were transferred to Uttar Pradesh Government with 50 percent subsidy and now these are looked after by Labour commissioner working under Labour Ministry of Uttar Pradesh.

After transfer of these residential units, it was suggested by Government in 1978 that those living in the residential units should be given ownership rights in one go with 20 percent rebate on the cost incurred on these residential units or in instalments on 15 years. As per the implementation of this suggestion the ownership of the residences of Karampura Shramik Colony in Delhi were given with 20 percent rebate on actual cost for Rs. 4458

or on monthly instalments of Rs. 31-47 for 15 years at the rate of 5 percent interest. In Orissa, the residents were given ownership free of cost, treating the recovered rent as cost of these residential units.

I, therefore, request the Union Government that ownership rights of labour colonies in Kanpur should be provided to labourers.

(vii) Need for modernisation of Tripura Police Force to combat Cross-border terrorism.

[English]

SHRI KHAGEN DAS (Tripura West) : Tripura has a long-standing problem of terrorism, which inhibited the rapid development of the State. Since terrorists have bases in Bangladesh and they are being aided and abetted by ISI and other foreign agencies, the Central Government has a critical role to play. The requests to the Central Government for effective border management to stop cross border terrorism have yielded little result. As per BSF norms, the deployment of BSF along Tripura-Bangladesh border is most inadequate. Fencing work of the entire 856 kms. of Tripura border with Bangladesh has been slow. In fact, the work is totally stopped now. Hence, the State police faces a serious problem in handling the much better armed terrorists. Therefore, I strongly demand that the Central Government must immediately fulfil the modernisation needs of the Tripura forces and take steps for effective border management.

(viii) Need to ensure quality of mineral water being sold in jars and bottles throughout India

DR. MANDA JAGANNATH (Nagar Kurnool) : Sir, with drinking water crisis throughout the country, people are getting accustomed to buy sealed water bottles and sachets being sold in every nook and corner of the country.

Only the affluent and health conscious people can afford it as its prices are at par with milk prices. However, with no mechanism to check the quality of this water, people may end up endangering their health.

There are over hundreds of brands of water being sold in jars and sachets. Most of them are not of ISI standards. The formula adopted in the so-called mineral water bottles

should be standardised and it should also be ensured that skilled workers are available in all the plants to analyse and ensure that only standardised water is bottled, which is fully sterilised for human consumption.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to direct the Prevention of Food Adulteration Department in each State to test all packaged drinking water for human consumption, especially 20 litre jars that are used in all public functions throughout India and consumed by lakhs of people daily.

(ix) Need to provide sub-urban railway terminal near Arakkonam bus stand in Tamil Nadu

DR. S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN (Arakkonam) : Sir, at present Engineering Workshop at Arakkonam does not get many job orders and sometimes the Workshop is not used to optimum level. To boost the Workshop to get adequate job orders, the Workshop may be converted into Mechanical Workshop with proper re-training to workers wherever necessary. This would not only help railways to utilise its workshop to an optimum level but also generate more economic activity and also employment opportunities to the unemployed.

There is an urgent need for opening of sub-urban railway terminal in front of Arakkonam Bus Stand since the present Junction is far away from the town and it mainly caters to long distance passengers. The daily commuters have to walk for a long distance and therefore there is a growing demand for opening a sub-urban railway terminal near Arakkonam Bus Stand.

I would therefore urge upon the Railway Minister to take necessary steps for providing good number of job orders to Arakkonam Engineering Workshop and to open sub-urban railway terminal near Arakkonam Bus Stand.

(x) Need to provide financial assistance to Government of Bihar for development of various tourist centres in the State

[Translation]

SHRI MANJAY LAL (Samastipur) : Sir, Bihar has been an important place from religious, historical, educational

and social point of view. Patliputra, the capital of Bihar, education centre of Nalanda, Vaishali, Vanavar (district Jahanabad) Bodhgaya, Rajgeer, Bhimbandh, Kakolat (source of cold water) and some other places are worth seeing and have their historical importance and that is why these places have been a centre of special attraction for the native as well as foreign tourists. In the absence of development and proper maintenance of these tourist spots and due to lack of residential and transport facilities, these tourist spots have got a severe set back. Besides, the state Government have suffered huge loss of revenue to be earned from these tourist spots.

I, therefore, request the Union Government to make provision for budgetary allocation for proper development of these world famous tourist centres of Bihar and ensure that tourist industry may not suffer.

(xi) Need to develop tourist circuits at par with international standards in the country

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : Sir, in his budget speech the hon'ble Minister of Finance made an announcement to develop six selected tourist circuits at par with international standards. In this context, I demand completion of incomplete work of Buddhist circuit and selection of Bhagwan Mahavir circuit, Mahatma Gandhi Circuit, Ram-Janaki Circuit and Sufi Circuit. Along with this, I demand that statue of Bhagwan Bahubali at Shravan Vela Gola in Karnataka and relics 'Asthi Kalash' of Bhagwan Bhuddha at Vaishali in Bihar should be declared as world heritage.

[English]

(xii) Need to ensure that Central financial assistance provided to Government of Punjab is distributed to municipalities for their smooth functioning

SHRI VINOD KHANNA (Gurdaspur) : Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House towards municipalities of Punjab, which are in severe financial mess. The municipalities of Punjab were promised sufficient financial assistance from the State in lieu of abolition of octroi on the basis of which the Government of Punjab had approached the Central Government for financial assistance, which was accorded. But even after two hefty instalments paid to the State Government, municipalities have not been paid even single penny out of the financial

[Shri Vinod Khanna]

assistance received by the Government. This has landed the municipalities all over Punjab and people living in urban areas into difficult situation. The municipalities are not able to pay salaries to their employees for the last two months. Development and maintenance works have also stopped.

I, therefore, request the Union Government to ensure that the amount of financial assistance given for municipalities should immediately be distributed to them and the amount should not be diverted or used up for other projects. Also, in order to ensure smooth functioning of these local bodies, sufficient finance be provided to municipalities for distributing salaries to municipal workers, for maintenance and for completion of projects already undertaken.

(xiii) Need for expeditious release of funds for computerisation of treasuries in Karnataka

SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ (Tumkur) : Sir, the Government of Karnataka has taken up the project of computerisation of Treasuries in the State and all the 28 district treasuries and 185 sub-treasuries are being computerised and have been brought on line through VSAT network. The total project cost is Rs. 56.40 crore. The hon. Minister for Information and Technology, Government of India during his visit to Bangalore has assured that the Centre will finance the network portion of the project which is being executed by Software Technology Park of India (STPI), Bangalore.

The Centre's share on network portion of the projects works out to Rs. 29.48 crore. The State Government has already made a request to the Centre for the release of the said share immediately.

I urge upon the Ministry of Information and Technology to expedite the release and remittance of assured funds to the State Government.

(xiv) Need for early construction of Remaining Part of Road between Dhami and Kunihar in Himachal Pradesh under Central Road Fund

[Translation]

COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla)
Mr. Chairman, Sir, in my constituency there is a road of

strategic importance which is known as Kingal-Dhami (D.G.B.R-Deepak project) road. This road was constructed in 1962 after Chinese aggression for the purpose of providing the shortest route between Tibet border and main military base at Chandi Mandir and also to provide all weather road for the whole year.

Due to some reasons only 2.5 kilometer stretch between Dhami and Kunihar region was left to be constructed, which is incomplete even today. Construction of this road will facilitate. Unemployed youth, farmers and people engaged in horticulture.

I, therefore, requested the Government of India to make arrangements for construction of remaining 2.5 kilometer stretch of Dhami and Kunihar region on this road between Tibet border and Chandimandir from 'Central Road Fund' during financial year on priority basis.

(xv) Need for a comprehensive social security scheme in the country

[English]

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (Contai) : Sir, our Government needs to introduce a comprehensive social security system as it prevails in almost all western democracies. It gives social security and other benefits to unemployed people apart from providing medical insurance at the cost of the State. The reason for non-existence of such a scheme, over 50 years of our independence, is financial implications. We can overcome this difficulty once we face this problem. The Government should, therefore, enter into discussion with all concerned, both in public and private sectors and also with the NGOs, various insurance companies and start the social security system which will offer at least some unemployment allowance and medical assistance. It is certain that it will also make it easier for the Government to shed off excess manpower in the Government and introduce VRS effectively in public sector organisations, etc. This should not be delayed any longer and taken up seriously and in right earnest.

15.15 hrs.

GENERAL INSURANCE BUSINESS (NATIONALISATION) AMENDMENT BILL—Contd.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we shall take up Item No.12 – further consideration of the General insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill.

Shri Rupchand Pal, the time allotted to your party was 11 minutes but you have already taken 31 minutes. There are a number of Members to speak. So, kindly conclude in two-three minutes.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly) : I would not take much time, Sir. The only time required is for the points which I could not make yesterday.

Sir, merger and consolidation are the order of the day and in such a situation, how and why has the Government taken a decision for de-merger? Even the other day, the ICICI was merged with ICICI Bank in the private sector. The world over, there is merger and consolidation because it adds to the strength, helps in business promotion, higher income, risk-bearing capacity, increased assets base and other areas of co-operation. What was the opinion of the consultants? Internationally-reputed consultants like Pricewater House and Chitale and Company opined against this particular step, against de-merger. In the in-house journal, the CMD of the United India Insurance Company stated that the National Insurance Company Ltd. would become the most vulnerable. It is not only in the in-house journal of the United India Insurance Company, in very many in-house journals, the top managements have been expressing their opinion. But the consultants opine otherwise. What did the hon. Minister, while replying to the debate on IRDA, say? He said: "I am giving this assurance on the basis of my understanding that LIC and GIC are not going to lose business in the new situation and they are only going to expand their business. And just within a few days, what has happened? Even in the limited competition between the public sector General Insurance Company, which has taken place on the basis of an executive order, unhealthy practices are noticed in grabbing of business by one subsidiary from another. I am

giving you one example of the recent grabbing of insurance pertaining to ONGC with a sum assured of \$ US 12 billion, by the public sector company, United India Insurance Company from the other public sector company, New India Insurance Company. This is happening. Undercutting and unhealthy practices are taking place. Even now this is happening when the foreign insurance companies are yet to take shape. Under whose influence is this being done? Under the influence of the multinational insurance companies, such a disastrous decision has been taken by this Government—neither the consultants, nor the people who know insurance business, nor the trade unions are being consulted. Even the Finance Minister had assured otherwise. But this is happening in contravention of the assurance given by the Finance Minister. I have already mentioned about the unanimous recommendation of the Committee on Public Sector Undertakings. What did they say? They said :

"The Committee note that initially when the insurance industry was nationalised, four subsidiaries of GIC were formed to provide the insuring public the benefit of competition..."

I think hon. Member Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay is a Member of the Committee. Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra is the Chairman of the Committee. They said :

"But with the entry of private and foreign companies into the insurance market, the Committee feel that there is no need to have four different subsidiaries to provide competition which is readily forthcoming from the private sector. The need of the hour is to have one merged entity which would greatly reduce management expenses and also simultaneously enhance *per capita* premium productivity and reserve position of the merged entity." "

But, even after all these recommendations, the Government has decided like this. The capacity to underwrite mega insurance risks will hamper as a result of this. The risk retention capacity of a consolidated public sector will be much more. When the other insurance companies are merging, we are weakening them. This has been done because of the pressure by the foreign insurance companies and through their Governments and the Government of India has surrendered. What will

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

happen to the poorer sections, the social insurances who are giving insurance to us at subsidised cost? All of them will vanish. For example, what will happen to the Personal Accident Social Security scheme (PASS) and the HUT insurance? The cost of insurance would go up and small insurers will suffer.

It has been said that in the name GIC of India which has got a good brand name worldwide, we shall use that brand name exclusively for Re-insurance. This popular brand name can also be used in the area for insurance. It is said that one who is in insurance business cannot do re-insurance business. One who understands a little bit of re-insurance business will never agree to such a proposition. The consultants have never agreed and the experts have never agreed. This is the most unfortunate part of it.

Sir, I am not going to take much of time of the House. I have tried to make my point and impress upon the Government that things are taking place without concurrence of this House. What about the authority of Parliament? I am asking the question to you. The subsidiaries of GIC are being looked after by GIPSA. What is the constitutional position of GIPSA? Let this House know it. It was said that the professionals will dominate it. How many bureaucrats from the Finance Ministry are still continuing and waiting to join these public sector insurance companies? I am not naming any one of them. But they are there. They are in the wings. They say the professionals do not understand anything. The professionals are being taken away by the private insurance operators in this country. I do not know what will happen to this country.

The public will suffer. We shall go back to the pre-nationalisation days. The foreign insurance companies, which are hand in glove with the domestic operators, will loot our money. Our economy will suffer. Our nationalised sector, which has been rendering immense service to the growth of our economy will not be able to do so.

Therefore, in such a situation, I oppose this Bill. I again appeal to all the concerned in this regard. At some point or the other, everyone belonging to this House,

be it from the Treasury Benches, the BJP commented on it. Their own Committee on Public Undertakings unanimously recommended that it should not be done. There are very many individual Members who have put their signatures that it should not be done. A Memorandum was submitted to the then Speaker, who is no more. He agreed on it. We had a long discussion with the hon. Speaker.

I think the consensus of the House is that it is not the right time. We are not against reforms. If there are any reforms which are urgently necessary, in the national interest, then they should be taken up. But weakening the nationalised sector, allowing others to consolidate and to have more muscle to divide us, to allow under-cutting among ourselves, to compete among ourselves are not correct. All this would weaken us. The United India Insurance Company will weaken the New India Insurance Company and the New India Insurance Company will weaken the National Insurance Company. This should not be done.

Therefore, my earnest plea to this Government in this regard is as I mentioned earlier. I have been doing it. I am not against reforms. The reforms do good to this country.

There is a consensus. I can go on quoting individual Members and important leaders belonging to different sections of this House as I have mentioned about the recommendations of different Committees. So, I oppose this Bill and say that in the national interest, it should not be passed. I warn that if it is passed at all, within 24 hours, whole of insurance industry throughout the country will come to a standstill in protest.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I whole heartedly support the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001 moved by the hon'ble Minister of Finance. My hon'ble friend Shri Pal on the one hand says that he is not against economic reforms but on the other hand he is bent upon undermining them. The same old tune is being harped upon. We adopted the new policies in 1991 and in this era of liberalisation and globalization, we decided to invite private companies in Insurance sector.

15.26 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

Now those companies have started entering this sector then why this old tune is being harped. I would like to say that China is an ideal for communists. Even that country had opened its insurance sector for foreign insurance companies in 1988 and issued licences to 28 foreign companies for joint ventures. In this way, business of insurance increased there rapidly during last ten years. Out of the total 130 countries of the world, China has set up its 164 liaison offices in 84 countries for expansion of insurance sector. It is happening in China. Some countries like Burma and Korea have not opened this sector for foreign companies. When the whole world has united in this field and we have signed WTO. In this era of globalization and liberalization, when the Bill regarding Insurance Regulation Authority has been passed then why they are harping their old tunes now. This shows difference between their preaching and practice. This is Ostrich like approach of the ideology of our communist friends that burry your face and pretend if they are not looking anywhere then no other person is looking towards them. Today reforms are taking place speedily throughout the world and they threaten to call for strike in the country. The public undertakings about which this hue and cry is being raised have become sick due to strikes. Economy of our country has suffered a lot due to the politics being played by various parties. These communist forces are trying to put hurdles in the way of economic development of the country and provoke them to call for strike as the Government have taken a decision to take up reforms in insurance sector. Sir, through you I condemn this tendency. I would like to say that nationalisation is being done in Insurance Sector for its competition with private companies. There is no need to say that earlier the Government have taken a decision that all the four subsidiaries of GIC namely—National Insurance Limited, New India Assurance Limited, Oriental Insurance Limited and United Insurance Limited should be made independent, so that under the control of the Government these would be able to carry out their business independently and GIC should work independently in the field of re-insurance, so that India may

be able to get a place among the developed countries. This step is being taken for progress of the country and I support such a step.

Sir, on the one hand our Minister of Finance has announced that this Government is committed to achieve the economic growth rate of a 9 percent and this growth rate can be achieved only when insurance sector and Department of Pension Funds come forward and more savings are required for this purpose. The budget can be enhanced only with the assistance of insurance sector. Only the insurance sector has a capacity to provide social security. We have failed to provide social security to our people during last 50 years and thus lagged behind in this sector. We have not been able to get a desired rate of growth in our saving and economic development. The insurance sector is a manpower based industry and this can open new avenues for employment of youth. The people who say that foreign companies will come here and take away our wealth are presenting a horrible picture to frighten people. I would like to clarify that NDA Government is not going to sign any secret agreement and will maintain transparency in its work. Alongwith this I would like to say that NDA Government is committed rapid progress of economic reforms whosoever may oppose that. Cursing of crows do not affect bull and I feel that the Government would be able to achieve the desired economic growth rate by implementing these economic programmes.

On the one hand we want to bring competition, efficiency, improve consumer service and level of services, expansion of business, protect the interests of policy holders, regularising the investment of funds in insurance companies and bring prosperity and on the other hand we do not want to take any risk. We are trying to jump ahead with folded hands and feet. What will be situation in such a condition. We will remain in a dilemma.

I would like to tell the hon. Minister of state in the Ministry of Finance. Shri Patil ji that the direction towards which we have proceeded is—'Prashansa Punya Path hai, Barhe Chalo, Barhe Chalo' as 'Isque-yar me jo Thokarein Khaya nahin karte, Manjile Muksud vo paya nahin karte' which means that this path is commendable and noble March ahead because those who do not get hurt in love

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

and friendship, they do not reach their destination. I would also like to tell my friends from the congress party that the process of liberalisation had been started at the time of hon'ble Narsimha Rao and Manmohan Singhji and a lot of water has flown in the Gangas since then now it does not behove them to blindly support leftists for the sake of support. I would like to request that they should also support this Bill strongly so that we could tell the world that whether it is the ruling party or the parties in the opposition, all are united on the question of economic development of the country or on the question of providing autonomy to the insurance sector or strengthening it...

(Interruptions) Please listen to me. You could speak when your turn comes.

SHRI C.N. SINGH (Machhlishahar) You have mentioned about the policy of liberalisation of Narsimha Rao and Man Mohan Singh Ji. It is on account of this that they are in the opposition. Now you are also following the same policy....(Interruptions)

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Today America, England and other big nations of the world which earlier gave the slogan of socialism have also adopted the policy of liberalisation. It is only after that they are touching the economic heights. So we should not have a narrow outlook. We should show the world that 'Log Kahte hain ki Badalta hain Jamana, Mard wo hain jo Jamane ko Badal dete' people say that time changes and he who changes the time is a brave person so I would like to request the Government that in the economic development sector.... (Interruptions) You may think anything 'Jaki Rahi Bhavana Jaisi'. Besides I would also like to submit that though Foreign equity limit has been enhanced to 26 percent yet there is no question of foreign exploitation, pressure and rights particularly when 74 percent share will remain in the hands of Indians as per the provision made in it and besides this the foreign investors are also required to fulfill prescribed social obligations.

When all these restrictions have been imposed then it is not appropriate to say that the country will be enslaved and country will have to repent for this. When the Insurance Regulatory and Development in Authority Bill was passed by the House. The hon'ble Minister of Finance had

candidly announced at that time that there are only three sectors: the Insurance sector. First is Life Insurance, second is general insurance and the Third is Reinsurance sector. In order to give monopoly to GIC in reinsurance sector and to provide an open play ground to it a provision has been made separate all its four subsidiary companies from it so that they could run their business independently. Till now civil aviation works, and crop insurance was under the GIC, however now the Government have set up a separate company and work related to crop insurance will be given to this company while the work related to civil aviation will be as earlier in the hands of these companies so that they could run properly.

Sir, I would like to make one more submission. Till now we have lost lakhs and crores of dollar because in India we have not developed GIC as a re-insurance company. This is what the economists say. The economists have said that had we followed this policy after independence and allowed GIC to operate in the reinsurance sector, India would have earned lakhs and crores of dollars and the economic condition of the country would have been strong however it could not be achieved simply because efforts were not made to utilize GIC in reinsurance work. So I feel that two small amendments that have been made in this bill are commendable and it will do country's welfare. The first amendment has been done in sector 9. In the proposed amendment it has been so provided from the beginning that the GIC instead of looking after superintending and central of general insurance business, will run re-insurance business only. Thereafter, wherever there is a mention of corporation, it will be substituted by Central Government and its four subsidiary companies will be separated. All the four insurance companies will come under the Central Government and will work independently.

Sir, just now Pal Saheb was making a mention the Malhotra Committee. I would like to mention two three recommendations out of the recommendations made by the Malhotra Committee. First recommendation is that the private sector should be permitted to enter into the insurance sector with a minimum paid up capital of Rs. 100 crore. It was the first recommendation. The second recommendation was that in select cases foreign

insurance companies could be allowed in the domestic insurance sector. Such prominent foreign companies could be asked to establish joint venture with any Indian Partner under certain terms and conditions. Besides the eighth recommendation was that the existing subsidiary companies of GIC should be separated from it. Thereafter the GIC should be established an insurance company. There are the three main recommendations of the Malhotra Committee which have been accepted by the Government and the Bill has been introduced with a view to implement the said recommendations. Then God knows why there people are opposing this Bill. On the one hand they are referring the Malhotra Committee, on the other when the recommendations of the committee are being accepted and steps taken to implement then by way of introducing a Bill, it is being opposed.

Sir, there is no need to say that on 2 April, 2003 a high power Malhotra Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri R.N. Malhotra, ex-Governor of the Reserve Bank of India to investigate into the structure of the Insurance sector to study the financial system of economy, and to make, recommendations regarding incorporating structural changes in the sector for making it more efficient and competitive. I feel that the recommendations of the Malhotra Committee have been made after much deliberations by thinking the economists and the Government have brought this Bill on that basis. So we should strongly and firmly support this Bill.

Sir, one more point is that the Government are committed to give autonomy to LIC and GIC. So the Government desire that these companies should be made managing companies and these companies should be managed by professionally competent persons in a professional way.

Sir, these days these companies have become the avenues of employment. It is true that LIC and GIC have earned a lot. It gave a lot of money to plan millions and millions of rupees have come in these plans from these companies however these companies are being made independent to recruit professionals and experts to manage them very professionally. I feel that such steps will make the companies function more smoothly and they will be beneficial for the country.

Sir, first of all the Government is committed and determined to achieve 9 percent economic growth rate. It is possible only when the Insurance sector is brought to the front through LIC. When insurance sector will come to the front through LIC, saving will be possible and when there is saving, the growth rate will also go up. So I would like to submit that we should strongly support this Bill. With these words, I support this Bill.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to make a very critical observation on my own and on behalf of my party on this Bill.

It is a fact that it is the Congress Government which initiated the process of liberalisation on economic front in this country. It was done not because it was Congress's desire but because it was in consonance with the global situation that obtained after the fall of the Soviet Union. No one in this House can deny the economic and political reality following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and its ultimate impact not only on the Eastern Bloc countries but on all the developing nations of the Third world, and the drastic way in which things had changed. Why the Soviet Union collapsed is not the issue under debate today. The issue under debate is, should manner in which the Government brought this General Insurance (Amendment) Bill be supported *in toto* or rejected *in toto*.

We, on behalf of our party, conveyed our feelings on this to hon. Parliamentary Affairs Minister this morning. Let the distinguished Minister Shri Patil take the views of the House into account. Let him not reply to the debate today. Let him please have a word with hon. Finance Minister after scanning the suggestions made in the House and then come back with his reply, if necessary with certain riders in the Bill for the future of the General insurance Company and its subsidiaries which will become independent.

It is true that Shri Manmohan Singh and Shri Narasimha Rao initiated the process of liberalisation. But the concept of liberalisation should be understood in its right spirit, it should not be misinterpreted. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat was misinterpreting the concept of liberalisation. Liberalisation is opening up your mind, your markets, your

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

trade, and exchange views and technologies with others for expansion and growth etc. Liberalisation is not liberty to loot. It is not liberty to exploit. One should understand this clearly.

In the decade of 1970s, Shrimati Indira Gandhi very rightly made a new beginning in the economy of the country, bringing the dream of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru into reality, by nationalising the banks, by strengthening the public sector, by nationalising coal mines, by nationalising the general insurance business. Did she do something wrong? She did the right thing. It is now understood by the entire nation that the internal strength of our economy came from that. Millions and millions of toiling masses who are now getting some kind of support—whether you talk of Kisan Credit Cards, or L and Development Bank loans, or extending support to artisans—are getting it all from that umbrella of nationalised banks.

We have no conflict on the concept of liberalisation and nationalisation. What we, the Congress Party, is trying to highlight today to the Government is that the objective must be understood. On the one hand the Government is saying that the whole world is talking of globalisation. The Government is taking shelter of the Report of the Standing Committee.

Though the report of the Standing Committee was not unanimous yet whenever they get a chance, they take the shelter of the report of the Standing Committee. But whenever we site examples that so and so Standing Committee gave so and so recommendation, then the Government keeps quiet.

Sir, in this Parliament we have two types of Committees. The are: the Standing Committees; and the financial Committees, namely, Public Accounts Committee, Committee on Public Undertakings and Estimates Committee. Now, the Committee on Public Undertakings of this very House, of which the Chief Whip of B.J.P, Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra is the Chairman and, Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay who is sitting here is a Member had given its opinion and observations. But its opinion and observations, after examining all aspects, have been ignored totally by the Government. They are taking shelter

that the Standing Committee gave some observations and report.

Sir, I am not going into the debate as to whether the recommendations of the Standing Committee should prevail and the views of COPU should be rejected.

I would be very objective in my debate. Firstly, do they consider that it is the ground reality of this country that de-merger and de-linking at this hour is necessary?

The passed this Insurance Regulatory Authority Bill. From day one of the 13th Lok Sabha, when the Finance Minister came with that Bill, in spite of difference and opposition from many, we tried to accommodate our views and supported the Bill.

Mr. Chairman, can the hon. Minister tell me that from 1999 to 2002, what has been the expansion, net coverage and net participation of the private insurance companies in India after the Bill was passed? Let the whole House know. He should tell us that 'yes, this is the quantum of jump, substantial coverage, threat of competition etc., for the last three and half years.'

Sir, the progress is very slow. They are watching. They are watching the weather; they are watching the pattern; they are watching the in-built capacity and strength of LIC; they are watching the in-built capacity, goodwill and strength of GIC; they are watching the in-built capacity, strength and capital of National Insurance Company; they are watching the capital of Oriental Insurance Company; and they are watching the capital of New India Insurance Company.

14.47 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*]

If they substantially fell that there is a role to play, they will come. If they substantially feel that they may be outnumbered, they will not suddenly cover. They are also very intelligent people. They are not coming for charity here.

Sir, I thank GIC; I thank LIC; and I thank the subsidiaries. You know how strong is their in-built network that they have been able to sustain their growth, capacity and insurance coverage.

They are still examining the private parties. Prof. Rasa Sing Rawat mentioned about China. Has he studied about China? China took 15 to 16 years to open up the window having their in-built strength without democracy in their system. Ours is a democratic nation where you have to take care of the people first. They have to take care of the interests of the workers and employees, in general. Then, it is the Parliament which will give the ceiling to it.

Sir, I am now coming to the provisions. I will highlight a very serious thing. He has said that he wants to amend Section 9 of this Act substituting one thing only. The words are very simple. Instead of controlling and carrying on the business of General Insurance, the words 'carrying on re-insurance business' had been substituted.

Now Shri Nitish Sengupta is present here. We may differ with each other on some matters. That is different. But I admire and regard him. His knowledge about the revenue and financial system, I consider, is much better than any one of us. The moment he says 're-insurance', the answer goes straight to the desk that it is the 'capacity and strength of the balance-sheet'. It is about competence and capability of having attained the strength. Re-insurance is not a localised issue. It is international. Risk insurance depends on the strength. They are de-linking. They are re-insured by GIC. Who know, tomorrow, they may not be strong?

That is why, very intelligently, to safeguard the situation, you have said in subsection (2) that:

"The following provision shall be inserted:

Provided that the Central Government by notification increase or reduce the authorised capital."

It means that if some day you feel that you are threatened and you are not sufficiently strong enough to show your balance sheet, you can pump in or inject or increase the authorised capital. It is to strengthen the capital base and to meet the situation. I agree with that. That is why, I said that you have understood that there is risk, and so, you made that provision.

GIC is there for the last so many years; but GIC will only be the re-insurer. Even the powers to supervise and control are proposed to be taken away. This is contrary to

the recommendations and observations of the Experts Committee. The powers will be taken away from them. As per the proposed amendments, the four companies—New India Assurance Company Limited, Oriental Insurance Company Limited, National Insurance Company Limited and United India Insurance Company Limited—of the General Insurance sector in public sector will become independent and shall be competing with each other, as also with the other companies in the private sector. So, the assurance given by the Minister in the House that the GIC will be in a position to compete, would prove to be incorrect and misleading.

Even before the proposed amendment having been considered and passed, GIC has been made a re-insurer and the four subsidiary companies have been made independent. By an order of the Government, GIPSA has been created for coordinating the activities of the General Insurance subsidiaries, which called a meeting of the Unions in the General Insurance sector belonging to Class I and Class II officers as also the Class III and Class IV staff. It gave written proposals, stating among other things, "In the wake of liberalisation of the insurance industry, it was decided at the Governing Board of the GIPSA, that measures need to be taken to restructure and re-engineer our organisational structure to succeed in a competitive environment."

There was almost a pandemonium in the House when the discussion on the IRDA Bill was going on. Except the Congress Benches, no one stood by the Government to support the Bill. I agree with that and I do not deny what Shri Rupchand Pal has said. We declared in the Election Manifesto that we will support the Bill and so, we stuck to it. We are not hypocrites to say something in the Election Manifesto and do the opposite in the House. But we made certain suggestions and gave some riders also.

My dear friend Shri Madhavrao Scindia is not here; he is no more; in his rejoinder, the Finance Minister said:

"There is no question of retrenchment of any staff from these public sector insurance companies, namely, the LIC, the GIC and its subsidiaries. Let me assure the House that all further measures which are necessary in this direction will also be taken by the Government in due course to make these organisations strong."

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

So, he gave three assurances to the House. Firstly he said that no retrenchment in any of the companies and their subsidiaries will be made; secondly, he said that whatever further measures which are necessary in this direction will also be taken by the Government—this is to protect the employees; and thirdly, he said that the Government in due course would make the organisation more strong.

These subsidiaries are delinked and are independent; they are coming under the umbrella of the GIC. The private sector, as I told you, has not come to India totally now. They are waiting. When will they start coming? Maybe, it will come after two years or three years or four years. You can protect the GIC with that clause. But how do you protect the subsidiaries, if any one of them found itself in a non-competitive position? The 'inter-cut' had already started. The New India Assurance Company Limited is trying to grab the business of the Oriental Insurance Company Limited and the Oriental Insurance Company Limited is trying to grab the existing business of others. This has started during the last 6-8 months. The Minister may deny this. Whenever the private sector comes in, how do you fulfil the assurance of the hon. Finance Minister? Where is the rider in the Bill?

Is there a rider in the Bill that these companies shall not inter-cut their business with effect from so and so date?

[Translation]

They would not interfere in the business where one gets it, but would adopt other business.

[English]

I can understand. There is no rider. If any of the independent subsidiaries cannot find a level-playing opportunity on the on-slot of the private parties in country, which are coming in a big way after three to four years, how will you protect these people? I agree, that you may argue that if you merge this unit, it will be a strong corporate body. But with so many office establishments, the problem of redundancy may come. You may say that. You

can restructure that also. But is it also not a fact that if you do not merge all these to make a corporate giant, if a threat comes and if one of the units is liquidated or face disaster, how will you protect that? Therefore, we should not blindfold our eyes and say, go ahead. It is not correct. You should have a careful scrutiny.

Now, everybody is talking about West and West. Prof. Rasa Singh has left the House. What is the practice in West?

[Translation]

What is going on in the west, that if there is any such unit, it should be merged and should be strengthened.

[English]

Please do not de-link or separate but merge. Throughout the world, even in the United States of America, this is the practice. I am prepared to read the Senate Committee Report. It is that important. They say: "merger more, consolidation more is giving us strength more to compete in the field." You are not following that. You are following your own theory. In India itself ICICI and ICICI Bank are merged and they became more stronger to compete with any international agency. They have realised it. Even ICICI and ICICI bank could realise it. Can the Ministry not realise that the merger of these four units would become stronger to compete with any giant of the private sector which is coming to the field and show our worth?

Therefore, I say that time is not ripe to bring this Bill. You can wait for two to three years. You may see how they perform and then do it. What is the hurry if we cannot lay so fast in the morning before they come or is there any understanding that they will not come till we do not do it. The Minister can spell out these things. Sir, I sincerely appeal to the Minister, please have a word once again with the Cabinet. Please do not treat our suggestions as if we are hitting the Government. We are here to accommodate you. We support you. These are the issues in the interest of the people, which should not be lopsided or should not be taken as criticism but as an advice.

Mergers and acquisitions are taking place all over the world, especially in financial sector to survive and

succeed in competition. Merger of all the four public sector General Insurance companies is all the more required to meet the competition from private sector. If merger is not allowed and splitting up of public sector takes place, it will lead to what? You know, it will lead to more Chairmen, more Executive Directors, more paraphernalia, and more establishments. The only threat of merging is more offices will be rendered surplus. The Government can dispose of the real property. Computerise everything. Who is preventing you? But there will be the following dangers:

1. Multiplication of administrative expenses such as four CMDs, 4 x 4 GMs, etc. besides HOs and so many lower offices.
2. The financial strength of the public sector, instead of being conserved and consolidated, would get frittered in competition between the public sector giving advantage to private players.
3. Already, even in the limited competition between the public sector general insurance companies as subsidiaries of GIC of India, unhealthy practices are noticed in grabbing of business by one subsidiary from another. With the delinking of the subsidiaries from the parent GIC and making them independent companies, such unhealthy practices would increase without any check. It has started happening now in snatching of business by one public sector general insurance company from another.

16.00 hrs.

The recent grabbing of insurance pertaining to ONGC with a sum assured of US \$ 12 billion by the public sector unit, the United India Insurance from the other public sector unit, the New India Assurance has its inside story of unhealthy practice. This requires to be probed along with other similar shifting of business from one public sector unit to another public sector unit. That is why, I ask, can you not put a rider saying that existing date of business as it stands today, shall not be interfered? They can try for other business.

[Translation]

Meaning thereby that one should not plunder or disturb the articles of his own house but should bring other things to his house.

[English]

There is no rider like that. It is left to internal manipulations. The capacity to underwrite megha insurance risk will hamper if the public sector is divided into four and their financial base is weakened. The capacity to retain risk of a consolidated public sector would be bigger than a split-up organisation because of the financial base. That means, more premium can be retained and less premium outgo for reinsuring the risk. If the split up takes place, it will weaken the public sector general insurance companies. Ultimately, the Government would use it as a handle to disinvest and sell it to private sector. In the end, it will lead to good bye. Then, again there would be a package of disinvestment. This is where we are leading.

Sir, if the public sector is weakened, the social insurance, which is given at subsidised cost, will vanish. Already, the social insurance cover meant for rural poor, such as, Personal Accident and Social Security Scheme and Hut Insurance have been withdrawn.

The cost of insurance also would go up for the common people since the cross subsidies available for small insurance would stop. The creamy profitable insurance will go to private sector and the weakened public sector will not be in a position to cross subsidise the small insurance.

If the name of GIC of India has to be used for the exclusive Indian Re-insurer to get the better advantage of the popular name in the international market, there is no prohibition to merge all the four subsidiaries into a single entity by giving any other name. While in rest of the world, companies are merging—and you have to compete with them—you are yourself de-merging your own house. That is what is our critical observation is. The Government should think once again.

In today's competitive scenario, the effort should be to consolidate and strengthen the public sector. This was assured to be done by the Union Finance Minister

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

in Parliament while moving IRDA Bill. I quoted the Finance Minister's Speech. Sir, there are more details which I would like to highlight.

Sir, we, the Members of Parliament, speak on the basis of Budget, Annual Reports of the Ministries, the findings of PAC, COPU, and the Standing Committees. But we are not essentially experts. On such matters, the Government is always guided by the expert opinion given by the experts in this particular field of insurance. Sir, the management of GIC and United insurance India, who are with the Government till now, have been totally kept out of the discussion and consultancy. Their views have not been honoured. Sir, the amendment is with me. It says that the GIC will be the exclusive re-insurer and the four subsidiary companies carrying on general insurance business would be delinked from GIC and they would function independently and compete with each other, besides coping with the private insurance companies.

Sir, as per the write up in the in-house magazine of United India, the consultants appointed by the GIC of India to restructure the general insurance industry explained the need of consolidation and merger. Sir, who had appointed it? It is not the Congress Party's suggestion. It is not suggested by anybody else. It was GIC of India who had appointed it for restructuring the general insurance industry which explained the need for consolidation. They said that the consolidation is needed and not delinking. Yet the Government is going in the opposite direction. The Government is going against its own institution. Sir, when the IRDA Bill was taken up for discussion, the Finance Minister further said:

"I am giving this assurance on the basis of my understanding that the LIC and GIC are not going to lose business in the new situation and that they are only going to expand their business. Therefore, the question of their workers being threatened with loss of job opportunities does not arise."

I have substantiated how they lost the business. I have also just now substantiated as to how the business of GIC has been taken away. Therefore, I think the Government is acting in a hurry in this matter. They could wait for some

more time to discuss the issue. If you cannot withdraw the Bill today, at least consult the experts in one or two days. Heavens would not fall. Find out whether some riders could be introduced somewhere to protect the future of these companies and ultimately offers will come from the private field.

I will not take much time of the House on this. I will now come back to one or two more important issues. I am just taking one point from the *House Magazine* which has been quoted by many Members, including Shri Rupchand Pal. In the *House Magazine* of United India (June-July, 2000 issue) a write up was brought out by the then CMD where he stated:

"National Insurance Co. Ltd., would become most vulnerable to the onslaught of privatisation of the industry and will soon be merged with United India Insurance Co. Ltd., in case it fails. After the licences are issued to Reliance and Tata AIG, and when they start operation, very substantial business would go out of New India Assurance Co. Ltd., and then what would happen to New India?"

By this write-up it was made clear by the then CMD of United India that the merger of the four companies as one is the best solution for competition with the private sector.

Now I come to my concluding remark. Does the Ministry consider that these four subsidiaries could be merged as one consolidated unit and be ready to compete with the threat posed by the private sector—any day this may come? Otherwise, as has been envisaged by the then CMD of United India in the *House Magazine*, if they come what guarantee or what assurance the Government can give? I think incorporating some provision inside the text of the Bill that the disaster will not affect any of these Indian units in future would be acceptable to us. If the Government does not assure the House and clearly envisage the policy in the text of the Bill and if they simply keep quiet or say 'all right, you pass the bill', then we will be doing a great injustice to the dream of Smt. Indira Gandhi, to the toiling masses of the nation, to the very solemn assurance given on the floor of the House by the Finance Minister, and to the workers/employees of these four subsidiaries and the GIC as a whole.

Therefore, I appeal to the Government to conclude the debate today. We do not mind it. But, as I have conveyed to the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, please have a word once again with the Finance Minister and respond to the critical note of the principal Opposition Party of Parliament and others. If we find a satisfactory answer which could resolve this issue at least for the time being, you can go ahead. Or else, please do not hurry up to get the Bill passed and allow the doors open for others not in terms of expanding, but to give them liberty to loot.

With this critical comment, I wait for the response from the Government. I would reiterate not to conclude it today. Think over this issue. We would like to have another round of discussion with the hon. Finance Minister to exchange our views. Tomorrow is going to be the election of the hon. Speaker. Therefore, tomorrow it is not going to be possible. On Monday we can do it. Afterwards, if the Finance Minister feels that there is some merit in our arguments or he has the capacity to dispel our apprehensions, you come with the Bill, we will support it. We are not here to block it. But this is our humble opinion and the considered view for the consideration of the Government.

SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH (Machilipatnam) Mr. Chairman Sir, I thank you for the opportunity you have given to me.

I support the amendment to the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001. Due to the various changes in the economic environment of our country, there is an absolute need to modernise and bring a relevant legislation and rules connected with it.

It is foreseen that the General Insurance Corporation of India will have to face severe competition from private companies. There are multinational companies with vast resources and experience which have entered the field and will continue to do so. The GIC has four subsidiaries. They are the National Insurance Company of India Limited, New India Insurance Company, Oriental Insurance Company and the United India Insurance Company. While we are passing the legislation to enable the GIC to expand its activities, it is a matter of concern to see whether there has been any visible steps taken by the GIC to prepare the four subsidiary companies to face the coming competition from the private companies and the multinational units.

Since 1972, these four companies have been enjoying a monopoly status. But now, they have lost it. What are the steps being taken to meet the strongest foreign and domestic private insurance companies? I think it is important for the Government to see what strategy should be evolved. Of course, there will be a strategy. But is it sound and viable? This is what we have to think at this moment. The GIC and its subsidiaries have a vast network all over the country. This is a major advantage. If the GIC is able to evolve a new strategy, then this company would be safe. Otherwise, what will be left is only its valuable real estate and building.

There is no doubt that this Company has been in existence for the last 30 years. It has built up vast management and marketing experience for the last 30 years. The Government must take necessary steps to enable this Corporation to continue and serve the rural people and people in small towns through innovations in management and marketing.

Another issue which I would like to highlight is that speedy service to the policy holders is very important. Of course, speedy service to the customers is most important. Now, if the GIC and its subsidiaries are not able to improve their service, then the company will face a severe crisis in future. So, GIC and its subsidiaries should provide speedy benefits to the policy holders.

While supporting this legislation, I say that we should ensure that GIC evolves best management practices.

It should recruit best possible people and give them incentives to perform in a better manner. Employees in private companies and multi-national companies are getting more facilities and incentives comparing to the employees of GIC. That is why the private companies are working well. The GIC should also provide better incentives to its employees. The whole work culture has to change. Otherwise, GIC will not be able to face the future with any certainty.

With these few words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI C.N. SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to oppose the General Insurance business (Nationalization).

[Shri C.N. Singh]

Amendment Bill, 2001. I would humbly request the hon. Minister not to take my points as criticism, but consider them as suggestions. After going through the objects and reasons of this Bill I was not able to find any reason for de-merging the GIC or de-linking all of its four Insurance Companies from GIC. There can be only two reasons for de-merger. First reason could be that the Government have, without any forethought, taken decision-but what would be the result. Whenever decision is taken in this manner, the result is obviously bad. I recall history when Muhammed-bin-Tughlaq, out of fear of foreign invasion, shifted his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad. Daulatabad was made the capital. People somehow managed to reach Daulatabad by bullockcarts, tongas and other means. Delhi, then, was not protected and the invaders got full opportunity to plunder Delhi and the entire country. Thereafter, he changed his mind and re-shifted to Delhi from Daulatabad.

The GIC was a good Insurance Company and was also running in profit. There are only two Insurance Companies, GIC and LIC and hon. Indira Gandhi had taken a very good step by merging other companies with GIC and nationalising it. It was largely beneficial. Two big companies came into existence and they became helpful in the development of the entire country. If today it is demerged, all the four Insurance Companies will be separated from one another and become weak.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you come from Bihar, and there is a saying in Bihar that 'Unity is Strength'. A farmer had seven sons, who fought among themselves and were never united, due to which their enemies beat each of them. The farmer took out four separate strings and asked them to break them. They very easily broke the strings but when the farmer tied all the four strings together and asked them to break, no one could break it. Similar is the case with GIC, today it is being delinked and then the Government plan to make dis-investment of it.

All these four companies, despite earning profit, would be closed. Now they would incur losses. The Government Companies are established so that Government could earn

profit, people get employment and Government income increased. People trust Government Insurance companies and other Government Companies. I would like to tell the hon. Minister that the policy of liberalisation is dangerous for the country. It is not right to bring foreign companies into the country. The Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance Patil ji is a great thinker. I know that he has been elected from Maharashtra. He is a patriot. He has immense love for the country and is a simple man. His clothes are also very good. He is inspired by nationality and love for India. But then in spite of all this why is he giving impetus to foreign companies. The country would be ruined with the arrival of multinational companies. One East India Company had come but we have not been able to get over the shocks it gave to us. We were slaves for two hundred years. It would cause danger for the country if foreign companies are invited in the finance sector. The hon. Minister should therefore withdraw this Bill.

Sir, people have great faith in the public sector companies. They know that their money in Banks and Insurance Companies will be safe. People do not have faith in private companies as they feel that those companies would definitely run away overnight. The Government is responsible if one deposits money in public sector Banks. I feel that if foreign companies come into Insurance Sector, all these four companies would be completely closed. I would like to cite an example. This case of National Insurance Company pertains to Lucknow, which would reveal that the National Insurance Company would not be able to stand competition with the private foreign multinational companies. Vishnu Bhagwan Aggarwal had a godown in Lucknow. He had drawn loan from the Bank of Baroda for it and had insured the godown for Rs. 25 lakh with the National Insurance Company. The Godown caught fire in 1985. The keys and locks of the godown were with the Bank of Baroda. The surveyor, as also officers of the Insurance Company and the Bank officers reached the spot. Nine fire brigades controlled the fire in 17 hours, but on the question of insurance claim merely a sum of Rs. 12 lakh and 30 thousand was approved. Shri Vishnu Bhagwan Aggarwal went before the arbitrator. He awarded that Shri Vishnu Bhagwan Aggarwal should be given Rs. 23 lakh 80 thousand alongwith interest but the National Insurance Company did not listen to him. He made an appeal in the High Court. I wrote to the hon. Minister in

this regard and he too agreed that interest would be given, but Vishnu Bhagwan Aggarwal has been fighting the case in the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad Highcourt for the last 17 years and the Insurance Company has been avoiding the case. A man is being harassed for the last 17 years and his financial condition is also bad. He could not repay the bank loan due to which he had to be admitted in Escorts hospital for heart operation. If this is the situation, people would lose faith in Insurance Companies. And if in such cases, the foreign Insurance Companies make immediate payment, no Indian would go to these insurance companies.

All our companies would be closed and they would face the same fate as the public undertakings are facing after dis-investment. If this Bill is not withdrawn the Finance Ministry will also be disinvested. A day will come when there will be a need to disinvest Parliament also. As the Government cannot act lavishly by taking foreign loan. The Government would raise loan from one place and those people would invest here and would definitely take away our benefits. And that is why it is my request that this Bill should definitely be withdrawn in the national interest otherwise all the four companies would be closed by next year. And if all these companies are separated, I would say that the Government intend to sell them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there was a serial on television 'yes Minister' by name. It was shown that the Ministers and Government accept whatever advice the officers give to them. Similarly when all the companies have been merged in one General Insurance Company then what is the need of de-merging all these four companies? What would be the benefit? The Government are giving concession to the foreign companies which are coming here, but would not agree with us as they are in majority. The BJP had given a slogan that they would not use or even touch foreign articles, and would boycott foreign clothes but they are adopting every foreign article by deviating from their path—be it trade, or finance—foreign companies are being given chance in India in every sector.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Standing Committee of Finance had opposed de-merger of GIC and the newspapers are not in favour of this de-merger. Even the 'observer' has made an allegation as it had come to know from

government sources that the Government are de-merging these four companies under foreign pressure as also for the purpose of disinvestment, which is definitely not in the interest of the country. This de-merger is being done under foreign pressure, which is really bad. I would make an appeal to all the hon. Member of this august House to oppose this Bill.

Shri Dasmunsiji is very much right that a right decision can be taken after reconsidering it. Hon'ble Minister, please do not mind, there is a saying "Nindak niyeray rakhiay". That means, only that man can be successful in life who listens to his critics and tries to remove his shortcomings. Similarly, Government should listen to the opposition. Opposition plays a constructive role in the interest of the Government be any Government in the power. Congress Government remained in power for long and now BJP is the ruling party and several members of other parties have also joined the Government. The Party in the power becomes arrogant and does not pay heed to others. They act on the advice of bureaucrats. It changes ideology of the Government. Therefore, it is the opposition who plays a constructive role to give appropriate suggestions to the Government and Government may implement these suggestion. If these suggestions are not implemented, it would be detrimental to the country.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it should be noted down today that if these four companies are demerged, definitely these would be sold to foreign companies under disinvestment in the coming days. It will deteriorate the economic condition of our country. I appeal to the Government to withdraw this bill in the interest of the country and the insurance company.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now. Your 15 minutes are over.

SHRI C.N. SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will speak within the time allotted for my party. Even 9 minutes have not elapsed still. Other Members have spoken for 40 minutes. I am winding up in one minute. I appeal to the Minister not to demerge these companies rather a strong company be set up with the amalgamation of these companies with General Insurance so that it could business not only in India but abroad also and achieve

[Shri C.N. Singh]

fame in the field of insurance and the people of our country and people like Vishnu Bhagwan Aggarwal could feel that injustice is being done to them.

With these words, I request the hon'ble Minister not to pass the bill. It should be reconsidered alongwith the suggestions given by us.

[English]

SHRI ADHI SANKAR (Cuddalore) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for the opportunity given to me to spell out my view on behalf of my party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, while participating in this discussion on the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001. I am extending my support to this Bill while drawing the attention of the Government to be careful with the ultimate result of the demerger of GIC from its four subsidiary companies.

Sir, insurance business may not be a sophisticated industry, but it has its presence all over the country as an existing industry. I do not find any need for foreign investors or foreign companies to be in the insurance business in our country. Our financial service industries like banking and insurance have an established presence for many decades now. The General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001 is considered to be an economic step to draw the benefits of allowing foreign companies who have made a mark in the international arena.

The Central Government has a definite role in this respect. It has to pave the way for this purpose. Globalisation and economic liberalisation make it necessary for the Government to carry out economic reforms. In the light of experiences in restructuring, we understand the need to throw open the service sector too. So, this Bill is very essential to protect the interests of policy holders and to promote the insurance business in our country.

The General Insurance Company would don the mantle of National Reinsurer. All other functions like its undertaking general insurance business, underwriting civil

aviation, crop insurance business etc., will be taken away. With the passing of this Bill, the General Insurance Corporation will no more be the holding company of four subsidiary companies. In terms of the proposed guidelines, the National Re-insurer. Would be required to distribute half the re-insurance premium income in its books into the domestic market. This is aimed at reducing the risk the National Re-insurer is exposed to.

The GIC's premium income would flow into domestic market and the amount would vary from around Rs. 1,900 crore to Rs. 850 crore. In view of the above provisions in the Insurance Act of 1938 and IRDA Act of 1999, the General Insurance Corporation can carry on exclusively re-insurance business. Therefore, the Central Government has decided to entrust the re-insurance business to the General Insurance Corporation. It is a move in the right direction.

The de-linking of the four subsidiary companies is being done in the light of opening up of the sector. After de-linking the four subsidiaries of the General Insurance Corporation, the ownership of the subsidiaries will be transferred back to the Central Government, along with the capital investment.

Now, GIC has been performing well as compared to many other financial institutions. GIC was doing extremely well under the stewardship of Shri Sengupta. He, being a good administrator, had ably performed well. At the same time, GIC would be remodelled, and the income it was generating would become considerably less. It may take away its powers to effect transfers of its employees. Now, these powers stand transferred to the four companies.

I for one feel that the Government must have allowed optional transfer of its employees before it could take away the four subsidiaries from the hold of the GIC, which was exercising such powers so far.

GIC, the parent body, has staff strength of about 650 persons. There are about 400 Class-I officers, and less than 250 are Class-III and Class-IV employees. They must be given an option to seek absorption in the four subsidiary companies that operate through the length and breadth of the company.

It is to be noted that the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority had been pushing forward for an Ordinance to be issued thus enabling the GIC to be converted into a national re-insurer. At a time when private players are also entering into the insurance sector, it is imperative that the country has a national re-insurer at the earliest. As such, three licensees have been awarded and three others have received approval in principle. So, it is time to act fast and keep pace with the changing times.

While effecting the restructuring of these well-established national institutions, the Government must take to ensure that the much apprehended retrenchment does not take place. As such, transfers from one subsidiary to another or intra-corporate transfers, which were handled by the GIC, stand nullified. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that the long-pending demands of the officers of the New India Assurance Company have gone unheeded. Their pleas for transfer were ignored. In the changed scenario, who will take care of them? The Central Government must show its humane face in redressing the grievances of employees of the subsidiary companies.

It needs to be stressed that the human potential plays a major role in any service sector. While considering this point, the Government must take diligent care in rehabilitating the trained personnel in our insurance sector.

As we all are committed to economic reforms and as this happens to be an economic measure that is taken up as a logical follow-up, I welcome this Bill with a prayer to the Government that welfare of the employees is never lost sight of. With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on General Insurance Business (Nationalization) Amendment Bill, 2001, Presented by hon'ble Minister. The object of the Bill states :

[English]

"It is now proposed to transfer back to the Central Government, the share capital of the subsidiary

companies (vested in GIC) by making necessary amendments in GIBNA, 1971."

[Translation]

Number of amendments are there in this bill. I have read this bill and listen to the speeches made by the hon'ble members in this House which have creeter apprehensions on my mind regarding this bill. Just now, it has been stated from my party's side.

[English]

Where is the need? Why are we in so much hurry to get this Bill passed? We have appealed to the Minister that even if the debate is over today, he should re-think. Perhaps he should not insist upon that this Bill be passed today itself.

[Translation]

Sir, I have to mention two-three points. I do not want to take much time. At the time when it is quite clear before the country and the world also that more and more companies are emerging as a strong entity by merging with one another. As such, then why all these four companies are being separated and given independent entity, why existing strong entity is being broken in our country. I have two apprehensions in this regard. One is that scope of business has not been decided yet. Which has caused a fear.

[English]

These companies will compete with each other in getting the business in order to survive also. This is absolutely true.

[Translation]

Because every company has to continue its own business. It is question of survival of these companies. I would like to draw the attention of the House in this regard.

[English]

It is an irony that in the name of privatisation whether the companies get merged with each other or the companies are being separate or delinked, it is the labour finally who becomes the victims always

[Shri Madhusudan Mistry]

[Translation]

With the merger of these companies the number of employees will be increased. Then there would be retrenchment. Even if some dealing is being done for merger, it is not certain whether all these four companies would be able to do their business or there would be retrenchment on large scale.

I would like to quote some figures of the year 2000. During that year, there was a staff of 18,945 employees in NICL, 30,711 employees in NIAL, 19,268 in OICL and 21,116 employees in UICL and there was adequate reserve staff also. The investment was of about Rs. 5768 and the claim rate was 80.02%. However, the extent to which these companies will get support from Government is still doubtful. The bill does not state clearly whether the foreign companies coming to our country will help to survive our companies and about the steps Government would like to take in this regard. In the present scenario unemployment in the country is on the high side. People are not getting jobs. People working in factories are given forceful retirement in the name of VRS. They are not getting employment.

[English]

In fact, there is an interesting book called "The world without work".

[Translation]

Now the position is that people are willing to do work but jobs are not available. Till now no assurance has been given by the Government that there will be no retrenchment in these companies where the people are already working and it will not be closed down. My biggest fear is that more than 40 million people are unemployed in the country today. They are not getting jobs. Number of employees in Public Sector Undertakings or in other companies are reducing due to various reasons. The same will be happened in these companies also because then the plea would be placed that as they are not getting business. The reaction of the Government would also be the same that as the company is not doing good business, jobs should be reduced otherwise the company could not survive.

Government will either favour the retrenchment or reductions in other expenditures to make the company viable. Such a position will arise in these companies also. Therefore, it would not be wrong on the part of the Government to come out for the protection of these companies. I will again request you to rethink about this bill. Do not present the bill in haste. Due to the merger of these companies, the strength and business will increase. However, I have one more reservation and you may also pay some attention to it.

All the insurance companies have not been able to cover many areas. They should be encouraged or compelled to enter these areas. I would like to cite an example. Thousands of Houses collapsed in Gujarat earthquake. A big gap developed in my own home. No House was insured, and nobody has ever tried to insure his House with the Insurance company.

Recently, due to communal tension in Gujarat, Houses of thousands of people were destroyed. I am speaking on the basis of authenticated figures that there is not a single village where the Houses of minority community have not been destroyed. I think had they been insured...
(Interruptions) I am saying the same thing because I belong to Gujarat and all this happened in my constituency.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL) : When earthquake comes, it affects everybody. Minority and majority both are affected by it... (Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : I am not saying so. I am talking about the victims.

[English]

I am not talking only about the minorities. I am speaking about the victims of earthquake whether they are from the majority community or the minority community. I am not talking about any particular community. I am not using the expression, 'minority communities'...
(Interruptions)

[Translation]

Persons who lost their Houses and business did not have kind of insurance cover. If anybody had done

insurance, he did not make payment of premium. Attention of the companies should be drawn towards it and they should be told to take more and more people under insurance cover.

I would like to make an appeal that the Government should rethink over this insurance Bill. My apprehension is whether these companies would be able to survive in this competition, because thousands of people are working in them, there is a big question mark over them. What I want to say is that at the time they should at least get protection of the Government. Therefore, status quo should be maintained and efforts should be made to strengthen it.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001, introduced by the hon'ble Minister. There are many reasons why I am supporting this Bill. The first reason is that the Union Government will receive strength from this Bill. Secondly, it will be transferred from the corporation and come into Government hands. In this way, the Union Government will take over the Corporation and it will become powerful when employees from one company will be transferred to another. It does not mean that after getting power from the Corporation, the Union Government will do injustice to them. The Union Government will not cause any harm to the officers in any way. Now, companies will also be able to do insurance.

In reality, this bill is good in public interest, therefore it is very necessary to pass this bill, because insurance business is of great importance in India. Indian Insurance organisations do insurance of countrymen and foreigners. Insurance companies strengthen the economy and development of the country. In this way, money of crores of policies is invested in these companies of insurance sector. The people will also get benefits when insurance organisations are strengthened and with the enactment of insurance bill, people's faith in insurance companies will increase. This will increase business. It will also increase foreign exchange reserve and help proper utilisation of insurance money. With the insurance business coming to Union Government's hands, success will be achieved in the effort to check the loss incurred due to cut in interest rates. Attention should be paid to see that bonus

rated are adequate. This will help in reduction of expenditure on staff management and other expenditures. The trade unions working in insurance companies will not suffer any loss. The workers will also not have any adverse effect.

While keeping in mind all these things the hon'ble Minister has brought this bill. I understand, that this is a very good bill. I strongly support this Bill and hope that whole House will support this Bill. We will strengthen the hands of hon'ble Minister and make Union Government powerful by passing this Bill. I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

DR. RAGHUVNASH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : Mr. Chairman, Prof. Raza Singh Rawat has strongly supported this Bill for 4-5 times, but I strongly oppose this Bill. Please try to understand why I am opposing this Bill. The Government gave consent for its privatisations, foreigners and multinational companies will enter this sector who have been invited. Earlier also this issue was raised. The Left parties have always been opposing it, and we supported this, you may be remembering that when United Front Government introduced this kind of bill, then BJP people and the Prime Minister strongly opposed it. The Left parties were supporter of ruling side, but they were united with the opposition, therefore that Bill could not pass. Now, what is new in this Bill for which it is being said, that it is very revolutionary and is going to be beneficial for the country, I cannot understand it. Now since you are in the Government, you are supporting it—how will it benefit the country. The multinational companies of America and Britain are facing recession, they are in search of new markets. The doors of China are closed. They said, they will not allow any multinational. The other countries have got market like India. Multi party Government is in favour of multinationals. Multinationals will do business there. On one hand they have brought a bill to divide GIC, an institution already in existence into five parts so as to reinsure it. There will be one company called GIC and other four companies—there will be five companies in all then GIC will compete with other countries of the world by doing reinsurance—this is their thinking. The other four companies will do rest of the work. Shri Dasmunsiji had raised a question whether these four companies are that capable or not. What is the condition of our country.

[Dr. Raghuvaran Prasad Singh]

What is the position with regard to crop insurance and insurance in villages. Only urban and salaried class people are aware of insurance. What is their position of insurance in villages and rural areas, the hon'ble Minister should say. What is the position of animal insurance? A poor farmer buys cattle whether it is buffalo, cow or costly jery frizian breed from his hard-earned money. But if that cattle fall ill, there is no proper arrangement of medical treatment for cattle. If a cow, a buffalo, a bull or any other animal of poor farmer dies, it is like losing their property. There is no way out, none to help him and there is no system. Hon'ble Minister should tell what is the position of livestock insurance? He was telling that the Government have privatised insurance and thus multinationals would enter our insurance sector since there is enough scope for life insurance in India. government keep on making several false announcements on our economy that our growth rate would increase. The Prime Minister said that our growth rate during Tenth Plan would be ten percent and we have already achieved around 5 percent growth rate. Our growth rate is hovering between 5-6 percent whereas the Government claim that it would be ten percent during Tenth Five Year Plan. If we criticize them, they come to eight and then seven percent and they say that MNCs would enter life insurance sector. In that case how so high growth rate would be achieved?

He should tell how many companies became bankrupt in American and how many in Britain? British company launched life insurance business in India before India became independent and they did not allow any other foreign company to join the fray. This sector was nationalised by Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1956 and remaining portion was nationalised during Indira's regime in 1971. Now, they are going to denationalise and privatise it. How it would benefit the country? He knows the fate of small investors in India as happened with UTI investors. Several non-banking financial companies such as JVG, Hellius and Kuber and many others, were given licence in Bihar. Poor people save meager amount with great difficulties thinking that it would help him in rainy days, such as child-marriage or their education, but their entire money thus saved was lost in UTI scam. Now, they are opening insurance sector for MNCs. If these companies declare themselves bankrupt

what would happen to the people getting themselves insured through those companies? What remedy the Government have got to check it and to take action against them? Today, the Government have a Bill for extradition of guilty persons from foreign countries. It is the same Government who took the criminals to Kabul and set them free there and now they are telling that they are bringing a Bill to check it. They have cheated us and now they are asking us to help them to enact a law. The Government would ask for extradition of criminals who have fled India. They took the criminals from India to abroad and now they have come to the Parliament requesting for enacting a law. Similarly, they would come to the Parliament when the multinationals would declare themselves bankrupt and leave the insured people high and dry. They would again approach the Parliament and say that the Government would sign extradition treaty and bring them back to India to stand trial. Multinationals have declared themselves bankrupt in their own countries and cheated the investors. I know, 600 out of 900 companies in America have become bankrupt. All these bankrupt companies are searching market-like India.

17.00 hrs.

Insurance has been privatised and divided in five parts. They are telling GIC will look after re-insurance and if all the four companies look after separate business, who will look after live stock-insurance and the rural people? The Bill is silent about imparting training to the people engaged in insurance. At the same time, time and again the Government assure that the staff will not be retrenched. But it has been observed that whenever any company is privatised, the staff is retrenched. Thus, it has no mention of giving protection to these people. the Government are segregating all the companies and have allowed MNCs to enter Indian market and then asking the companies to compete with them. I want to know how our companies will be able to compete with them. We are greatly apprehensive about the Bill. By going through the Bill, I find this Bill, like "Vish Kumbham, payo mukham". It is as good as a pitcher full of poison but whose upper portion contains honey. It looks devastating for Indian economy. Poor people would invest their hard earned money in these companies and if those foreign companies flee from India, the poor lot will not get a pie back.

The hardliners, who are heavy on BJP talk of Swadeshi Manch. But it appears that they talk of Swadeshi Manch and work for Videshi Manch, i.e. MNCs are being invited to India. Import duty on foreign liquor has been lowered. The Government should also make arrangement for export of 'Tadi'. If duty on foreign liquor can be reduced the Government should take steps to export 'Tadi'. If such measures are not adopted, how our economy would improve. Indian economy is depending upon the poors. What arrangements the Government have made for insurance of the farmers and the poor people, animals, and insurance in rural areas? Multinationals will not open their doors for farmers. They would insure the rich people and will run away with their investment. Therefore, my submission is that hon' Minister should consider everything and remember Gandhian Formula. Gandhiji had said that the Government should act in the interest of 'have nots' and the working class and impact of the Government's action should be visible on them. It is the true test of action. But the present Bill has failed to stand test to it. Therefore, I am apprehensive that this Bill may lead India to economic slavery. Insurance is a risk cover, but risk of Financial loss to a common man is not insured. I agree with the suggestion of Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmuni that the Government should reconsider it. First clear all the doubts, then the Government can get it passed.

[English]

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (Calcutta North West) : Sir, I rise to support the Bill with some clarifications and observations. My name has also been mentioned by two of our previous speakers, as I am a Member of the Committee on Public Undertakings of which Dr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra is the Chairman. It is beyond doubt that we certainly made some recommendations on merger of four subsidiaries of insurance companies under GIC. It was not only the desire of the Committee but it was also the desire of the working class; it was the desire of the employees who were involved with these insurance companies. After a long debate and meetings which were held that this report was ultimately submitted.

The arrangement, which we are going to discuss, has already come into existence two years back. It is not that it will start operating after the Bill is passed. It has already started working. The GIC has already started functioning

as a re-insurer. When the IRDA Bill was introduced, it was fortunate for the Government that the main Opposition Party, the Congress Party did not oppose the Bill. They extended their full support. We were all panic-stricken at the initial stage that if the foreign companies start invading our Indian insurance market, what will actually be the fate of the Indian insurance companies, what will actually happen, and where the situation will ultimately lead to? I want some clarifications from the hon. Minister.

The IRDA Act had been passed in 1999. I want to know how many foreign companies up till now have come in India and have separately started operating throughout the country as insurance companies. I know of few of the insurance companies which are in joint collaborations and have started operating in the insurance field. But it is a fact that the area of operation of GIC as an insurer has been extended up to the whole world. So, naturally I am interested to know what are the countries up till now which have been covered by the insurance agency and whether GIC has succeeded to reach its target. I want to know whether it has only been prescribed that the GIC will emerge as a re-insurer or it has reached up to certain foreign countries also. If so, which are the foreign countries where GIC has succeeded to reach?

Sir, GIC had within its periphery, two major sectors—civil aviation and crop insurance. Its most unfortunate part is that few of the States were not covered through this Crop Insurance Scheme and West Bengal is heading that list. The farmers and the peasants are not covered with the Crop Insurance Scheme in the State of West Bengal though drought or flood affects the State and millions of farmers are affected by natural calamities. They are not benefited by this Crop Insurance Scheme. I may kindly be clarified by the hon. Minister whether my allegation, which I am making on the floor of the House, is correct or incorrect. If it be so, I want to know whether the Government of India can issue a positive direction to all the States to cover all the States and all the farmers under this Crop Insurance Scheme.

Sir, I would rather ask that when the insurance sector has been given an open market—we are well aware that the foreign companies have no infrastructure or mechanism as such by which they can penetrate into the rural sector and can reach the poorest of the poor people—when and

[Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay]

how the Government of India can penetrate up to the lowest level and can reach up to the grass-root level. Under which periphery, under which category, and under which scheme can these people be brought under insurance schemes? Our infrastructure in the insurance sector has to be more modernised and better organised because we have opened our market to the companies from world over. When the foreign companies invade our insurance market in India, they will look towards metro cities as such and they will not try to go inside and penetrate into the Indian insurance areas up to the grass-root's level.

What are the new dimensions, what are the new approaches, what are the new thoughts and ideas that the Government is now trying to project to build up this insurance sector as a very strong base of Indian economy? We are apprehending, as the Opposition Members also apprehend, whether the interest of the common people will be kept properly secured and whether by this competition, our insurance companies which have been demerged, will be able enough to stand on their own feet.

I would like to know whether GIC is now being reduced to such an organisation that it has no teeth to bite. People are asking these questions. They are saying that GIC is being reduced to such an organisation that it will have no teeth to bite. After these four companies are delinked, namely, National Insurance Company Limited, Life Insurance Corporation Limited, Oriental Insurance Company Limited and the United India Assurance Company Limited, what is the organisational restructuring that is going to take place? Is it also a fact that the individual units did not accept this proposal? The officials have this apprehension in their minds, not in the minds of the employees or the workers, that if these four companies are merged together, there will be one CMD, there will be two or three Executive Directors, but if they start functioning separately, then there will be different Executive Directors. If there was a proposal to bring all of them under one umbrella, then it could have been a better profit-making unit, a profit-making Central Government organisation, and they would have succeeded in resisting the foreign companies, who are trying to invade our insurance markets.

Therefore, we are very keen that the Government should do stocktaking to see what the actual situation is, where it stands now, how are the four subsidiaries functioning, whether GIC has succeeded in reaching its targets, how many foreign companies have entered into this market and how they are being regulated. Many companies may come and go, but how far we have succeeded in imposing the restrictions on them by which they could not cheat the common people? Many people who would invest in these insurance companies have to be provided proper security. I would like to know whether the provisions in the Bill are sufficient to provide security and protection because they have already started functioning.

The Opposition Members, while initiating the debate, had asked a few questions. I would like to know whether this major sector is capable enough to contribute to the Government exchequer or not. How far are you dreaming or are going to be successful in ensuring that the purpose of the Bill is achieved? This may kindly be clarified.

Last but not least, a monitoring system has to be kept in place to monitor the whole set up. Without a monitoring system, nothing can happen. So far as this insurance sector is concerned, a proposal to set up a new monitoring system may be brought along with this Bill.

These things may be clarified, and I do not oppose the Bill.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore) : Thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in this debate on the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001.

I rise to oppose the Bill. It is being argued that in the present situation, in the present era of globalisation and liberalisation, restructuring of GIC cannot be avoided. I do agree that restructuring of the GIC is very much needed. However, the point is, in what way GIC should be restructured. A query could be raised in this context as to whether we are in favour of strengthening the dominating position and competitive strength of the GIC or we want to bring it down to such an extent that ultimately it gets out of the global competition.

Sir, that is the main question that we have to deal with. What is the purpose of re-structuring? The purpose of re-structuring is to ensure efficiency by introducing clear objectives and performance criteria to make it more vibrant to meet the challenges. In view of this, the Standing Committee on Finance in their report submitted to this august House on the 19th of September, 2000 expressed their anxiety on the de-linking of GIC and advised the Government to consider all aspects before taking a final decision on re-structuring. It recommended for merger of all the four companies into one. I am strongly in favour of a single monolithic structure for the General Insurance Corporation.

Sir, in this context I would like to take the opportunity of referring to a report by the Committee on Public Undertakings. Many hon. Members of this august House have referred to this report. Please permit me to quote from the report. It says:

"The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Government should merge all the four subsidiaries of the General Insurance Corporation with the main GIC and also create a separate new Corporation for the purpose of carrying on the business of insurance."

Sir, the recommendation of the Committee was very clear. But it is amazing to note that this Government is not honouring the recommendation of this Committee. Not only that, before having introduced the Bill for passing in this august House, the Government has already taken administrative measures in this regard. This is unfortunate. This is nothing but undermining the parliamentary procedures.

Sir, I would like to point out that by inserting Section 24 in the Bill, the GIC is being prohibited to carry on general insurance business and the immediate victim of this would be the social security schemes. The Government made a commitment to provide social security for the people living Below Poverty Line (BPL). It is in total contradiction to that.

Sir, the proposed changes, by de-linking the four subsidiaries from GIC and granting them autonomy, may reduce the collective financial strength of this organisation as a whole and would adversely affect the bargaining

power of the company. Instead of consolidating the gains in an environment of competition, by inserting this Section 24 GIC would be singled out to face the competition alone. Hence I oppose the Bill and I would like to request the Government to think over it and apply their mind once again on the provisions of this Bill. I do not know the thinking of the Government on this. I do not know if the Government have that mindset to honour the recommendation made by the Committee on Public Undertakings Chaired by Dr. V.K. Malhotra, a leader of the BJP only.

I would request the Government to reconsider this. This Bill would have a tremendous adverse affect on the employees. I, therefore, urge upon the Government to reconsider its decision and withdraw this Bill. I oppose the Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (Parbhani) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I and my party Shiv Sena support general Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill. There is a provision to amend sec 9, 10, 18, 19, 20, 24 and 39 of original Act of 1972. I would like to give some suggestions in this regard. National Insurance Company and other insurance companies have social obligations. These should not act merely as profit earning companies but they should have some social obligations towards a common man. Their focus should be on poor artisans, peasants and the working class and ultimately they should act as insurance companies.

On-set of globalisation is a good thing. We are opening our doors for MNCs and we will have to think when many companies would come and join the fray in insurance sector. We should see that they accept social obligations, India comprises of small villages and the poor people spread over rural areas. So far, GIC and other insurance companies have not covered small artisans. I have won election from a rural constituency. I can challenge that artisans and farmers are yet to avail the benefits of insurance. There is a need to address this aspect through this Bill.

70-80 percent population of our country depend on agriculture. Several small scale industries are functioning in rural areas wherein weavers and carpenters also work.

[Shri Suresh Ramrao Jadhav]

There is a need to bring these small industries under insurance cover and expand them.

My submission is that if purpose of this Bill is to be achieved in real sense, small artisans should be provided the benefit of insurance. Though, this Bill will be passed but we will have to think whether foreign companies will cover rural areas? The Government should specify strict norms in this regard. These companies should cover rural areas to perform their social obligation and work for the common-man. Small scale industries should get benefits from them. As far as crop insurance is concerned, crops should be insured at low premium which should not be more than 0.50 percent. There is a need for foreign insurance companies to target it in future. There is a need to have a serious look at the recommendations of Malhotra Committee and work with a focus on common man.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for having provided me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to oppose this General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001.

In the last Monsoon Session of Parliament, this Bill was brought out for consideration and passing, and we opposed that. Our point of opposition was that the said Bill should be referred to the Standing Committee for scrutiny and then it should be brought before this House. At that point of time, we pointed out that the Committee on Public Undertakings had examined all aspects of the General Insurance Corporation and the proposal of de-merger of four of its companies. They had said that the function of GIC would be re-insurance.

Now, the Government has implemented the decision on its own. What is the rationale behind it? The Government has already made four subsidiaries of GIC as independent companies. General Insurance Company's function is to do re-insurance. After implementing the decision, what is there in the proposed Bill?

I would request the hon. Minister of State for Finance to explain as to why this Bill was not referred to the Standing Committee and why the Government had implemented this decision.

Sir, I have gone through the report of the Malhotra Committee and its recommendations. I have not seen anywhere in the report that the Malhotra Committee had recommended for making these four subsidiaries of GIC as independent companies.

The Committee on Public Undertakings (COPU) strongly recommended—before the bill was brought forward in this House—that instead of making these four subsidiaries as independent companies, they should be merged into one company; then only, the GIC will be strengthened and the GIC will be able to face competition. But they have now opened up, and the private companies have come in. At least six companies have registered themselves and started functioning. I do not know how many of them have gone to the rural areas. The Minister may tell the House about the percentage of rural insurance covered by these six private multi-national companies.

Everywhere we have this experience—world over, mergers and acquisitions are taking place, especially in the financial sector. But we are doing the reverse! Instead of merging these four subsidiaries into one single company—which was the recommendation of COPU—the Government has already made these four subsidiaries as independent companies.

What is the intention behind this move? Is it the intention to strengthen the subsidiary companies or is it the intention to weaken the subsidiary companies? We apprehend that the intention is to weaken these companies. In that case, they will not be able to face competition; the motive behind this—our hunch—is that the Government will gradually privatise these companies. It will be easier for the Government to privatise them, if they are weakened first, instead of strengthening them and making them face stiff competition from the foreign multi-national companies. So, the Government had decided to weaken the companies so that those companies can be privatised easily.

An assurance was given by the Finance Minister. When we expressed our apprehension, he categorically said that the nationalised insurance companies would not be privatised. The Government should clearly tell us the motive and the rationale behind making them as independent companies.

The second point is that we were told that after opening up of insurance sector, nobody would be retrenched. The Finance Minister, while replying to the debate on the IRDA Bill, said that:

"There is no question of retrenchment of any staff from these public sector insurance companies, namely, the LIC, the GIC and its subsidiaries. Let me assure the House that all further measures which are necessary in this direction will also be taken by the Government in due course to make these organisations strong."

17.35 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

This was the assurance given by the Finance Minister. He said that every effort would be made to make these companies strong. But instead of making these companies strong, the Government has weakened these subsidiary companies.

Sir, as per the General Insurance (Nationalisation) Act of 1972, the function of GIC was, superintending, controlling and carrying on the business of general insurance. And the functions of the Corporation shall include carrying on of any part of the General Insurance business if it thinks desirable to do so and aiding, assisting and advising the acquiring companies in the matter of setting of standards of conduct and sound practice of general insurance business and matter of rendering efficient service to the holders of policy of general insurance. Through this amendment Bill the function of GIC relating to superintending, controlling and carrying on the business of general insurance are taken away and substituted by the words 'carrying on the re-insurance business'. Who will then discharge the functions of superintending, controlling and carrying on the business of general insurance?

They have already constituted GIPSA. Although an assurance was given that there will be no retrenchment, this organisation called a meeting of all the employees, Class I, II, III and IV, and put a proposal before all the unions. The proposal was about the Voluntary Retirement Scheme. This is nothing but an effort to retrench the employees of LIC and GIC. Though an assurance was given at the time of consideration and passing of IRDA Bill that nobody would be retrenched and every effort would be made to strengthen LIC, GIC and its four subsidiaries. What is the motive behind it? Why such a Bill is being brought before the House?

The Committee is a mini-Parliament. The COPU presented a unanimous report where nobody dissented. The Chairman of that Committee, Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, is from the ruling Party. Shir Sudip Bandyopadhyay is also a Member of that Committee. He also agreed to the proposal of the Committee that there should not be de-merger but all the companies should be merged and made a strong organisation. Such an important Committee like the COPU made a unanimous recommendation but the Government did not take any care to examine whether this will adversely affect the functioning of the insurance companies. It will adversely affect the functioning of the insurance companies. In 1997 IRDA was not there. Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA) Bill was there. The word 'development' was not added to it. At that time, we all opposed it. We were with the ruling alliance. We used to support them from outside.

But sitting there, we opposed and the Prime Minister, at that time, came and withdrew that Bill because we thought that that was not in the interest of the people of our country. Sir, when the LIC was nationalised, what was its paid up capital? It was only Rs. 5 crore. When the GIC was nationalised, what was its paid up capital? It was only Rs. 35 crore. How much dividend have they paid to the Government? It was thousands and thousands of crores. Today, what will happen about social sector and social obligation in a country like ours where still 26 to 27 percent of the people live below the poverty line? Presently, the social obligation is being discharged by the nationalised insurance companies. Will the multi-national companies and the private insurance companies which are coming discharge that obligation? Why are they coming? They are

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

coming here in order to garner profit and repatriate that profit to their own countries. This Government has opened up insurance, financial sector and everything. This is not in the interest of the people of this country. That is why, we are opposing it and we are against such measures being taken by this Government.

I would like to ask why the Government had implemented it before bringing this Bill. What is the use of passing this Bill when the Government had already implemented it? We are just ratifying the action of this Government which we think is anti-national. This is anti-national. They want to destroy our nationalised insurance companies. They want to weaken our nationalised insurance companies so that this Government is able to privatise. That is the main motive behind this measure. That is why, I oppose it. I hope that the Government would, at least, re-think and would withdraw the Bill. You appoint an Experts Committee. We have report of the Expert Committee also. We can examine all the aspects as to whether this measure is in the interest of the people of our country and whether the private insurance companies will undertake crop insurance. How many of them have started crop insurance? How many of them have gone to rural areas? None. He will explain this while replying to the debate.

Sir, I oppose the Bill tooth and nail. I feel that even at this stage the wisdom will prevail upon the Minister and he will withdraw this Bill as was done by the then Prime Minister, Shri I.K. Gujral in 1997.

SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM (Vellore) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001.

Having set in motion the process of globalisation and liberalisation, our economy is undergoing phenomenal change. The monopoly enjoyed by the public sector so far, is being loosened up. It has now been thrown open to many players who are willing to come in the insurance sector. This service sector now provides competition to prospective entrants.

The General Insurance Company of India will be entrusted only with the reinsurance business with the passage of this Bill. GIC will no more be the holding company of the four subsidiaries of the insurance companies like the National Insurance Co. Ltd., the New India Assurance Co. Ltd., the Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd., and the United India Insurance Co. Ltd.

Sir, the Finance Minister could have explained clearly the reasons for delinking the four subsidiary insurance companies that are carrying the general insurance business. Informed people know that it has been done for a noble cause to provide a level playing field for both the private and public sector companies.

Already the results are encouraging. Better service conditions to the employees have come to the fore. Government can now hopefully reap the benefits by way of collecting Service Tax. The tax net is widened now. It is no more a kind of book transfer. It will be a real money flow to the exchequer. There were hue and cry about job security to the employees in the insurance sector. Now it has been found that competition in the industry indirectly ensures better service conditions and job opportunities based on quality performance.

The Bill also takes away civil aviation business and crop insurance business from the previous GIC. This would give a double benefit. The share capital will be transferred back to the Government. The field can be thrown open to more players. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority will become more meaningful. The Authority can have an independent or autonomous role in regulating the insurance business.

The Minister, I hope and think, has de-linked crop insurance from GIC only for the purpose of setting up a separate Agricultural Insurance Corporation as an amendment in the Budget of 2002. I request the Finance Minister to go ahead with those reforms. I wish he could have brought about a comprehensive Bill now itself.

At this juncture I would like to strike a note of caution to the Government. As this happens to be a critical transition phase, we must be careful. Success or failure of this policy change depends much on the way we handle things. So far as setting up of standards of conduct and

practice in General Insurance business and in rendering efficient service to the holders of the policies of General Insurance is concerned, GIC had a functional role. Now, when it comes to individual companies, the IRDA must play a dynamic role.

When foreign players are allowed entry in the insurance sector, they must begin with their own training divisions. They must be asked to invest in human resource development rather than hunting for heads and snatching them away from the hands of their competitors. Though this Bill does not spell out the possible entry of foreign companies, yet it must always be made mandatory to start the business with their own investment.

We all know that 99 percent of money in insurance sector is that of policy holders and the premium payers of the country. I welcome this Bill. I am extending my support to it on behalf of Pattali Makkai Katchi and also on behalf of our founder and leader Dr. Ramadoss.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur) Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001. In 1992, Late Shrimati Indira Gandhi had decided to merge all the four companies and Nationalise them she strengthen these four private companies by bringing them to the Government sector. The Government perhaps do not know the principle of delinking. I mean to say that these four companies, together, became powerful after merger. Even the NDA has 24 parties and they have formed the Government.

If 4 parties leave the alliance of 24 parties how long will your Government survive? These companies were strengthened after merger, but now the Government are pondering over delinking them.

Vikhe Patilji is a friend of mine, I want to say that they are trying to make him scape goat—They very well knew that this Bill is going to be strongly opposed and that is why Sinhaji did not come here and put this responsibility on him. I demand that this Bill needs to be withdrawn if they want to elect the speaker. Mr. Speaker,

your goodself, myself and also Shri Ram Naik who was a candidate for speakership, belong to Maharashtra. He was asking me whether I wanted to become Speaker, but I said that I cannot. It is possible only when the opposition comes to power. There is unrest in Gujarat, but why is the hon. Member creating unrest in the entire country by introduction of this Bill. The benefit being given to SC and ST employees through backlog is not possible if these companies are privatised. The Government intended to do away with the provisions of reservation. The Standing Committee has since opposed this Bill and we are also opposing it. I would like to tell to the hon. Minister that he should not come under the pressure of the Government, as I know his actual viewpoint, he is only talking of the Government's opinion. These companies would incur heavy losses due to privatisation.

"Insurance Bill Ko Aapko Vapas Lena Hoga,
Saare Desh Ko Aapko Vishwas Dena Hoga,
Agar Vishwas Nahin Dena Hoga,
To Satta Ke Bahar Aapko Jana Hoga,
Aur Aapko Jaane Ke Baad Humko Aana Hi Hoga."

I want to say that kindly withdraw this Bill and try to do good work.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, at least 14 hon. Members have participated in it. I am grateful to all of them. Many of the hon. Members have given suggestions and many have supported and many have supported the Bill. I would request the remaining hon. Members, who are bit apprehensive in this regard, to support it. I would first clarify one thing. Many hon. Members have mentioned that—

[English]

The Finance Minister has given an assurance that there will be no retrenchment, this Company will be strengthened and there will be no dilutions or disinvestment in the Government insurance companies. The Government is committed to that, the Finance Minister has given the assurance not as an individual but on behalf of the Government. So, there is no proposal before the Government for retrenchment of the staff.

[Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil]

[Translation]

The hon. Members would come to know the fact if I give figures with regard to the condition of the companies.

Their capital has increased from Rs. 40 crore to Rs. 100 crore and their free reserve rose from Rs. 824 crore to Rs. 1053 crore of the National Company. The free reserve of the company has gone up from Rs. 2483 crore in 1999 to Rs. 3066 crore at present. And that of Oriental Insurance has gone up from Rs. 495 crore to Rs. 919 crore. The United India witnessed an increase of Rs. 1178 crore from Rs. 968 crore earlier. The capital of all is hundred crore rupees but total networth is Rs. 2661 crore. With this, one comes to know that, despite delinking during the last three years, all these companies have been continuously growing and have earned a lot of profit, no company, among these, is running in loss. If it is desired, I can also give the figures, but presently the companies are making progress. The hon. Member has an apprehension that all the four companies would become weak when they are not one unit and due to internal squabbles they would cause harm to themselves. But they have stated that only Government Insurance companies are the Members of GIPSA. They have stated only they decide themselves as to how the Government companies would conduct their business. Among them no company is opposing the other, nor are they doing any such work which could weaken any other of them after delinking because we are presently talking of uniting them, but there is the problem of seniority. Our colleagues right now said as to what would happen to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. If all these become one single company—it would have more than 3000 offices and if the number of these offices is reduced, the problem of seniority crops up. Many companies were merged at the time of nationalisation, but still some disputes with regard to seniority are going on. I feel that the Government are committed to ensure that this Committee increases the strength of all the four companies and if required, the Government would also extend their support.

So far as GIC is concerned, they have recommended for Indian Re-insurance through the Malhotra Committee.

The company is working accordingly and increasing its business. They are receiving 30 percent business. Work is going according to the notification issued by the Government in November, 2000. But action has been initiated under Section 101 of the 1938 Act, to enact a law which would provide more teeth to the Government. With this the entire re-insurance business will go into the hands of all private companies or Government companies or foreign companies. There is no objection in it. They have applied a lot of expertise in it. The Geetakrishnan Committee has also said recently that all these four companies would be de-linked and would go from the hands of the Government. There is no problem if these four companies are delinked. I do not want to make any comment on your apprehensions that when in the entire world all are uniting then why not here also, but when we talk we say that we have fallen within the purview of the foreign policy. It is affecting us, but the point is that everyone should welcome the policy made by the Government as the Government are expanding the Insurance Sector through their policies without any pressure. As I have said initially that

[English]

no national company will be disinvested. They will be intact as national company.

[Translation]

Everyone is well aware of the foreign or private foreign companies coming here.

[English]

There will be only 26 percent cap for foreign investments.

[Translation]

The Indian Companies themselves need a capital of Rs. 100 crore, or Rs. 200 crore or even Rs. 300 crore and that is why I am saying that 17 companies, have, so far, been registered in life and non life Insurance and are getting business too. Last year the business of Life Insurance went up by Rupees fifty thousand crore, and that of the GIC upto Rs. 2500 crore. The Non life Insurance

business of each company is also increasing. I would like to say here that it was said that Parliament has been by passed in this regard.

No, the law that existed at the time of nationalisation was enacted in 1972 and under its provisions the Government have a right to issue notification only for delinking. But we have to give autonomy and new products are to be manufactured.

18.00 hrs.

Now companies have brought 26 new products and business has been taken up with Corporation Bank and SBI to reduce the cost of production. Oriental Insurance has started linkage with Corporation Bank. The Public Sector Banks and Insurance Companies are coordinating among themselves to reduce the cost of operation in rural areas. Nationalised banks are also willing to go to rural areas for the purpose of insurance. Business of LIC so far was about 54 percent in rural areas upto now, and after changing the definition it came to 18 percent. Business of private companies is 7.6 percent in rural areas. It is not so that nothing has been done in this regard. It has been provided in the Law. As just now a mention has been made by Dasmunsiji that an amendment was moved by Madhavraoji regarding social sector commitment and all others recognised that. I am very glad to say that the rules formulated by RDA is being followed. No concession will be given in this regard. I can give figures. I can give figures regarding annual commitment for rural sector as their social sector obligations.

[English]

Social sector includes unorganised sector informal sector economically vulnerable or backward classes and other categories of persons both in the rural and urban areas. In the social sector, in respect of the insurers, they would cover 5000 lives in the first financial year, 7500 lives in the second financial year, 10,000 lives in the third financial year, 15,000 lives in the fourth financial year and 20,000 lives in the fifth financial year.

[Translation]

In this way a mention has been made regarding non-life insurance. You may be knowing that—

[English]

Six non-life insurance companies operating in the market, for the full financial year of 2001-02, covered 19,845 lives against the minimum 5000 lives to be insured. We find that up to 31st March, 2002, the non-life insurance companies have procured fresh premium to the tune of Rs. 14.22 crore in the rural sector. So the Government is fully committed to this. I assure the House, on behalf of the Government that without social sector, we will not allow any private company to do business.

[Translation]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : You have stated that there are 17 private companies. How many shares do they have?

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : 17 companies have been registered. Six companies have achieved their target for business in the year. Their share in rural sector is 7.5 percent. The norms were observed and their achievement is more than the target. There is no lacuna in the newly amended law and no concession will be given.

[English]

The IRDA is monitoring it fully. It requires to invest not less than 15 percent in the infrastructure and social sector. In the case of non-life insurance, it is not less than 10 percent. With the data available with us, we find that up to 31st March, 2002, all the nine private insurance companies have invested around Rs. 60,000 crore in infrastructure and social sector. Similarly, the private sector insurance companies in life sector have invested around Rs. 130 crore in infrastructure and social sector.

[Translation]

It is not proper to say that multinational companies will come here and swallow Government companies. Like you, I am proud of Government companies.

[English]

They have full strength and they have total infrastructure. They are searching for it and using new products. As of today, no private company, may be in the

[Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil]

life or non-life sector, is in a position to compete with all the national insurance companies. So, that way, we are encouraging them. We are not discouraging them. We are giving them more and more autonomy. The Government does not want to interfere in their entire business. Naturally, day by day, it is a new thing. Of course, there are likely to be some teething troubles for the national companies for sometime, due to the private companies. They will be looked into. But we are fully supporting the national companies. There is no intention of the Government to denationalise it. No national company will be denationalised or disinvested. Ultimately, they will be in fact as it is today. They will be strengthened further and further. If required, the Government can give support to all the companies including the GIC. Of course, the fear is there in some people's mind but it is not correct.

A number of friends have mentioned about the Gujarat problem. Gujarat has faced an unfortunate tragedy. But, as you are aware, there are some casualties concerning insurance employees also. Banking, insurance and other sectors have settled one thousand claims. Forty-seven thousand insurance policies have been purchased. In non-life sector also, more than five lakh claims have been settled. Growth of business in the General Insurance Company in 1999-2000 was 4.8 percent; in 2001, it was 5.9 percent; and today it is 12 percent. The total growth rate of the Government insurance companies, including the General Insurance Company and four other insurance companies is more than 12 percent.

Some suggestions including waiting period have been given by my friend, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi. I would like to assure him that we would look into it. We are gaining some experience but we would look into this. Your suggestion is not only noted but the Government is also serious on these issues. If there is a need to amend further, the Government would not hesitate to amend the same at any point of time in favour of the company and in favour of the social sector, and in favour of strengthening the national character of the nationalised companies to give more strength and more autonomy. In that direction, somehow the Government is trying to strengthen the nationalised companies. We are not diluting any nationalised companies.

Further, a number of issues have been raised by the hon. Members. As I told, GIPSA is a very good organisation like the Indian Bank Association. They sit together, decide together. They are not against each other. I would like to assure that there should be no interference, which would make them grow stronger and stronger. If we interfere, we would be weakening our own companies. Kindly boost their morale; do not try to weaken their morale. I would appeal to the House to boost their morale by passing the Bill unanimously.

Then, a mention has been made by my friend about Shri Vishnu Bhagwan Agarwal, whose case is going on for 17 years. I would definitely look into the case, though it may be a personal case. I must tell you that every year LIC and GIC are disposing of a number of complaints. More than 27 complaints are cleared. There are more than three years' claims of 2.11 lakh. Now, the IRDA is monitoring it. They have received 270 complaints and settled 219 complaints. Whether it is a Government or private companies, they should be user-friendly, consumer-friendly and policyholder-friendly. An hon. Member has expressed an apprehension that if the Government companies function like this, who would go to a Government company. At the same time, everybody is also proud of Government companies. Today, public trust is only on Government companies, Government banks, and Government insurance companies because there is no fear of cheating. Why do they think so? They think so because there is an assurance from the Central Government, insurance sector and banking sector. Banking deposits are jumping like anything. There is a scam here and there and the Government is also inquiring into it. Here, the point is that definitely there are some weaknesses. We can find out the weaknesses. We can improve further. As I assured you earlier, we can amend the law after gaining some experience. We can amend the law in favour of progress of the society. No Government would say that it would not amend the law. Law is a continuous process. This is the assurance I want to give here.

I was mentioning about the settlement of 74.26 lakh claims and only 1.20 lakh claims are pending in the life insurance. There is a huge amount of policies. Day by day business is growing in all the four companies. A number of hon. Members have suggested to me that I need not

go into so much detail. I am not going into so much detail. I have already given some figures : LIC—36 lakh policies; private—27,000, which is eight percent. In the life sector, their figure is 7.55 lakh.

In the non-life sector, their figure is 81,000. As per the law, the Government is not only committed, but the Government is also monitoring their business activities through the Insurance Regulatory Development Authority. The Government is also reviewing the performance of the private sector companies from time to time as to whether they are cheating the public. An hon. Member mentioned about how the non-banking financial companies cheated a large number of people by vanishing after collecting a lot of money. So, we will not allow the private insurance companies to cheat the people. What happened abroad is a different thing. But in India, the IRDA is closely monitoring their performance. If any penalty is to be imposed, we will impose penalty on them and if any punishment has to be meted out to them, we will do that also. They will have to follow the rules and regulations and the laws of this country. There are no separate laws for the multinational companies and Indian companies.

So, I appeal to Shri Basu Deb Acharia not to say that this is an anti-national measure, because we are fully protecting the rights of the workers, whether they belong to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes or any other class of the society. No retrenchment has taken place till today. As I have already mentioned in the beginning, all the assurances given by the Finance Minister will be fulfilled. The hon. Prime Minister has also said that no cheating would be allowed and all the social sector obligations should be implemented scrupulously.

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Patilji, the Minister of Finance has given assurance that it would be strengthened further. I would like to know whether it will be capable to compete with foreign powers if it is deleted without merger. If so, please explain as to how that will be done and if not, then it should be stopped for sometime. I feel that it will be strengthen after merger.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Dasmunsiiji your point is right. In the beginning itself I told that your

suggestion has been received and the hon'ble Minister gave assurance that IRDA and other systems are being strengthened. We are not shy of bringing amendments. I, therefore, made a reference to your suggestion. I did not say that your suggestion is worthless...(*Interruptions*) We have no hesitation in making amendments.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly) : What was the need of this Bill?

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : The bill was necessary and that is why it has been brought. We would have not brought that if it was not necessary.

[*English*]

Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi and other hon. Members have given some suggestions. I would like to assure them that the Government would keep them in mind. After the passing of this Bill, if there is a need for any amendment, the Government will not hesitate to come forward and bring an amendment. I would once again like to assure the House that all the assurances given by the hon. Finance Minister at the time of passing of the IRDA Bill would be fulfilled. We are having an open mind. The Government cannot go ahead with a closed mind because it is a social sector business. So, I appeal to all the hon. Members of the House to support the Bill and pass it unanimously.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are not satisfied with the reply of the hon. Minister. So, we are walking out in protest.

18.13 hrs.

At this stage, Shri Rupchand Pal and some other hon. Members left the House.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : We are not satisfied with this Bill and therefore staged a walk-out.

18.13½ hrs.

At this stage, Shri Ramdas Athawale left the House.

[English]

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are not at all satisfied with the reply of the hon. Minister. He has not replied to the points that we have raised. So, we are walking out in protest.

18.14 hrs.

At this stage, Shri Ajoy Chakraborty and some other hon. Member left the House.

[Translation]

SHRI C.N. SINGH : Sir, on behalf of Samajwadi Party, I stage a walk out.

18.14½ hrs.

At this stage Shri C.N. Singh and some other hon. Members left the House.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Act, 1972, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2

Amendment
of Section 2

Amendment made :

Page 1, line 10,

for "2001"

substitute "2002" (3)

(Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 2, as amended, stand part of the bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 3

Amendment
of Section 2c

Amendment made :

Page 2, line 13,

for "2001"

substitute "2002" (4)

(Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 3, as amended, stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 3, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 4

Emdnement
of Section 15

Amendment made :

Page 2, line 20,

for "2001"

substitute "2002" (5)

(Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 4, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 4, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 5 and 6 were added to the Bill.

Clause 7 **Amendment of Section 31B** substitute "Fifty-third" (1)
(Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil)

Amendment made :

Page 2, line 34.

for "2001"

substitute "2002" (6)

(Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 7, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 7, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 8 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1 **Short title and commencement**

Amendment made :

Page 1, line 3,

for "2001"

substitute "2002" (2)

(Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Enacting formula

Amendment made :

Page i, line 1,

for "Fifty-second"

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Enacting Formula, as amended stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

The Enacting Formula, as amended, was added to the Bill.

The Long Title was added to the Bill.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Question is :

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

[English]

18.19 hrs.

BANKING SERVICE COMMISSION (REPEAL) BILL

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF
FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL) : I beg to
move :

"That the Bill to repeal the Banking Service Commission
Act, 1984, be taken into consideration."

Sir, all I would say is that we are just repealing this
Act.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motion moved :

"That the Bill to repeal the Banking Service Commission
Act, 1984, be taken into consideration."

Now, Shir Pravin Rashtrapal may speak.

SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL (Patan) : Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman Sir. From the Bill, it appears that it is very simple, but it is not that simple. In fact, according to the Statement of Objects and Reasons, it explains that in our Parliament, when we introduce this type of Bill, it proves that there is a failure of the system.

It is admitted that the Banking Services Commission Act was enacted in 1984 to provide for the establishment of a commission for recruitment. From 1984 to the introduction of this Bill, either this Government or the previous Government has not appointed the commission. As a result, now they are approaching this august House for repealing the Bill.

But I want to invite the attention of the hon. Minister to the last three lines of paragraph 2 of the Bill. It reads as under :

"The question of establishing the commission was again reviewed in 1987 and it was decided that this may be deferred as the restructured system of the Banking Service Recruitment Board was working satisfactorily for the recruitment of clerical cadre and officers of the banks."

Here they have admitted that the Banking Service Recruitment Board was working satisfactorily in the banking sector. On the same page, they say something contrary to this. Kindly read para 3 :

"Taking into consideration the decline in manpower requirements due to consolidation and mechanisation a proposal was made in the Budget Speech in the year 2001-02 to : abolish the Banking Service Recruitment Board to provide greater autonomy to bank..."

This is self-contradictory. In para 2 they have admitted that the Banking Service Recruitment Boards were functioning satisfactorily and in para 3 they are referring to the lecture of the hon. Finance Minister during the course of introduction of the Budget. He went on referring that the Banking Service Recruitment Board should be abolished. But he has not given reasons for abolishing the Banking Service Recruitment Board.

At this juncture, I invite your attention that in our country, one of the biggest democracies in the world, we

have got a Union Public Service Commission for recruitment to the Indian Foreign Service, Indian Police Service, Indian Revenue Service, Indian Accounts and Audit Service, Indian Postal Service, Indian Railway Service. Recruitment to the Class I post is directly made by the Union Public Service Commission.

This very Central Government has introduced regional level Staff Selection Commissions which are taking care of recruitment of Group 'C' & 'D' staff. We also appreciate and we all will agree that after the nationalisation of the banks and after the introduction of the Banking Service Recruitment Board, the recruitment of weaker sections of the society as required under the Constitution was properly made.

With the experience of Gujarat, I will tell that in Gujarat we have got Bank of Baroda, State Bank of Saurashtra, Dena Bank and Bank of India. These are the banks which have maximum branches in the State of Gujarat. If you go before 30 years to any office of these banks, you will have people from a particular caste, with a particular Surname only because there was no reservation. The reservation in the banking sector came only after the nationalisation in the year 1976. After the introduction of the Banking Service Recruitment Board, where there was a representative either from the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes in the Interview Committee, I will admit, justice was done to the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Now, in our country we have got reservation also for other backward classes for recruitment at the stage of entry.

There is no reservation at the stage of promotion for O.B.C. but there is reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes as far as recruitment to Government services is concerned. I want to know from the hon. Minister why the Government is still having the UPSC when they want to abolish the Banking Service Recruitment Board. Why is the Government still having Staff Selection Commission of recruitment to Group 'C' and 'D' posts? The Central Government appreciates the requirement for the Union Public Service Commission, the Staff Selection Commission and the Railway Recruitment

Board as far as Central Government appointments are concerned. This very Central Government is abolishing the Banking Service Recruitment Board. There is no explanation from the side of the Government. This House needs to be informed for what reasons they are abolishing the Banking Service Recruitment Board. The only reason given is that the Act was passed in 1984 but till today no Banking Service Commission has been appointed. Who is to be blamed for this—Members of Parliament or the Party in power? We need to be enlightened of the reasons for the abolition of the Banking Service Recruitment Board.

We need to be informed how these nationalised banks would implement the policy of the Government if they were authorised to make their own recruitment. Even now, they are not implementing the policies properly. Once the Banking Service Recruitment Board is abolished, I am afraid, the policy of reservation for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes would be jeopardised. I want to know how the Government is going to protect their interests.

They are informing us that because of mechanisation and automation there is no requirement for the Banking Service Recruitment Board. I do not agree with that. Maybe, right now, there is no requirement for the Board because in the place of clerks, you would require data entry operators. The old clerk might not know how to operate a computer. So, as a result of automation, maybe, the method of recruitment might change and you would conduct objective and practical tests. But after five years, when somebody dies or retires or takes up voluntary retirement, you would require a recruitment board. How do you say that there is no necessity for a service commission or a recruitment board? After five or ten years, there might be a good number of retirements from the banking sector. Those who had not opted for voluntary retirement would retire after five years. So, after five years, how would you appoint officers in the banking sector? After five years, how are you going to recruit personnel ranging from data entry operators to chartered accountants, required for the banking sector? All these aspects are not explained here. This Bill appears to be a very simple repealing Bill. There is no problem about it but we must know what facilities, what protection and what mechanism are provided for by the Central Government.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Sir, I am dealing with a situation that is unheard of. The Banking Service Commission Act was passed in 1984 by this House. The Act was never given effect to from the day it was passed. We had discussed matters in this House and the Act was passed but the Government did not implement that Act till today. It is a very peculiar situation, unheard of in the history of the statute book.

The Banking Service Commission Act was passed to give effect to some social commitments and the Government felt that the Banking Service Recruitment Board was not enough. So, a Service Commission was to be constituted.

With that in mind, this Act was passed. After passing the Act, the Government is having a flexible mind. After passing the Act, the Government came to the conclusion that continuance of the Board is enough. There is no need for constituting a Commission. That was the approach given by the Government. After passing this Act, the Board continued.

Sir, as pointed out by my learned friend, the Government came to the conclusion that although the Board is doing the work satisfactorily, it is not feasible for the Government to continue with the Board as such. The reason alleged is that some mechanism or computerisation had come. What is the net result?

Sir, India is a country where recruitment to public service is reserved on certain principles. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are entitled to reservation. Now, as per the Mandal Commission Report, the Backward Communities are also entitled to certain amount of reservation because public service is the biggest employer in democratic India. We do not have such other employer. So, all people belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes as well as Backward Communities look for employment in the public service.

Now, the Banking Service Commission is very important having branches throughout the country, in every village also where people are recruited for service.

Sir, just before that we have heard that insurance companies have been denationalised. That was another public service in which the Scheduled Caste and

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

Scheduled Tribe people were appointed. That also is lost. Hereafter, no Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe person will get appointment in insurance companies. Is there any guarantee? It is because they have been denationalised. The multinational companies are coming into the field and as such we are very much worried about the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates. They will only appoint their own men. So, a poor Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe candidate will be left to the mercy of God. He will not have any appointment in the insurance so also is the case in the Banking service, which is also a nationalised Commission. That is now open to all.

In the Banking Service also, these poor Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates will be thrown out. Who will care for them in the banks? Banks are investing money in the banking business. Are they eager enough to appoint people belonging to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe? I do not think so. They will not be compelled to appoint a certain percentage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates. We cannot compel and these Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates will be thrown out. We need not mention about the backward communities as such. They would be completely thrown out. The Mandal Commission Report will have no effect at all in the matter of recruitment in the banking service as well as in the insurance companies. Where will this lead to our country? The Government is having no policy decision in that matter. It is a flexible Government or the Government's mind is more or less like a rubber stamp, having no decision. It is because they are interested to safeguard the interest of some vested people.

Sir, as pointed out by my learned friend, in certain banks, it was reserved for appointment to certain community. I know that was the practice in our banks. Now, in certain banks only the *Brahman* candidates will be appointed. It was not open to the repressed or oppressed class. Now, all these people are thrown out of employment. So, the rational or the reasoning behind is, at least, for the time being they should continue the Board. Why should the Board be abolished?

After all, it is a *de facto* repeal. The moment this Act was passed, it was repealed by the Government. This Repeal Bill is coming to the House only in 2002, but the repeal came into force in 1985 itself, the moment it was passed. Have you heard of such a thing in any country in the world? But here it has happened. It was never implemented, it was never notified on some flimsy grounds. At least for the sake of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the poor people, the Government was kind enough to continue with the Board for some time on flimsy ground or with some changes and the Board was doing some functions. Now the Government has come forward to repeal this Act and, at the same time, the Board that was functioning earlier, will also be scrapped. Why should the Board be scrapped? I have no complaint for repealing an Act which never came into force because nothing will happen. But why should the Board be abolished? The clerks and other employees of the banks are recruited by this Board. Why should it be abolished? Let the Banking Service Commission. Which was a non-existent entity, go. We are not bothered about that. But we are really bothered about the abolition of the Banking Service Recruitment Board. The Minister may abolish the Banking Service Commission because it is immaterial, as I have already pointed out, but he may allow this Board to continue with all its powers, at least because we have some control over the banks. Certain banks have no control either of the Central Government or of the State Governments. For those institutions at least, this Board must be there.

Moreover, even for VRS, this Board is essential, even for determining the service conditions, this Board is essential, even in matters of promotion, this Board is essential. How can you abolish the Board? Who will determine the service conditions of the bank employees? So, I request the Government to continue with the Board which is functioning, according to you, satisfactorily? In the name of abolishing the Banking Service Commission, which never came into force, this Board should not be abolished.

I do not support and I need not support this Bill because it has never came into force. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN (Coimbatore) : Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I rise to support this Bill. After few years, the whole world is going to be opened. Liberalisation, globalisation and free trade are going to come into existence. At that time, only the service and the efficiency of any bank will be taken into account. Without keeping their efficiency in mind, these nationalised banks cannot compete with private banks. Multinational banks are coming up. International banking is coming up. Keeping all these things in mind, our banks also have to improve their efficiency. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN Efficiency is required, but what about the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes?

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN : Radhakrishnanji, I am coming to that point later. You please listen. You will definitely understand what for I am standing here today.

Sir, all the nationalised banks are not a single entity. They have their own areas of influence, their own areas of specialisation. So, they should be given proper powers to make recruitment according to their needs. Some nationalised banks are specialising on the industrial side, some are specialising on the agricultural side and some are having a very high regional influence. But since the recruiting powers are not with them, they are not able to recruit the right people for giving the right service.

In the changed scenario, this is a must. So, I support this Bill. But, at the same time, I request the hon. Minister that whether we like it or not, we have to accept one thing that the greatest sin, that is the practice of untouchability is still existing in our *Hindutva*. Until the time we entirely eradicate this untouchability and until the downtrodden people improve their standard of living and their social status, we should keep this reservation. I suggest that proper norms and proper systems should be developed so that all the nationalised banks should protect the interests of the reservation for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes so that those downtrodden people can get their due share and they can come up in their life.

With these few words, I support this Bill.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Thank you My Chairman. I will be too brief. I want to convey on behalf of our Party that we support this Repeal Bill. The time has now come for a competitive environment for the public sector banks to combat with the pressure of the other banks, to plan their own requirement of people under special category on their own style. I would like to convey to the hon. Minister through you, on behalf of our Party, to re-confirm in the House one thing. An announcement was made by the Government, by the hon. Minister of Finance earlier that there is no plan, no thinking of de-stabilising the public sector banks. I hope that when this Repeal Bill is concluded, the hon. Minister shall reiterate that issue. Still the House should know that there is no attempt to denationalise the public sector banks. This is the first point.

Secondly, the hon. Minister may kindly enlighten the House as to which category of people should be left out from the scope of the independent banks' own management plan to recruit and which category of people, if at all is required, the banks will recruit.

Thirdly, on the policy of recruitment, I want to know whether the Government is considering to have a similar kind of policy for each bank for the recruitment procedure so that there should be a common policy in the public sector banks. Otherwise, the Bank of Baroda decides one thing and the United Bank of India decides something else and in such a case an individual can go to a court and obtain a stay. So, there should be uniformity of policy or recruitment in terms of their specialisation.

Last but not least, the Government must assure the House about the reservation in the recruitment for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the OBCs. The Government must assure that while the banks will do so, they should strictly adhere to the reservation norms enshrined by the Constitution of India for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the OBCs in recruiting personnel in the banks of their own capacity. It would be more prudent that in every banking management, while they form their own recruitment cells which are to be approved by the Boards, there should be some experts who are knowledgeable in banking industry and who are

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

knowledgeable in the marketing plan of the other international banks and be able to combat with the situation in a better professional order.

We want to convey from our Party to the Government through you that since you got the opportunity once again to give back the authority to the banks, please convey the message to the banks that they should be more professional, more market-oriented and more competitive in whichever recruitment plan that they have for the future to make the banks more professional in future.

This is my submission so far as this Bill is concerned.

Sir, I would also like to convey to the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs that after this Repeal Bill is over today, let us not take up any other Bill. The Insurance Bill is a big one which we can take up on Monday. Tomorrow, after the election of the Speaker, we can take up the Legal Services Bill so that the business will be in order.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN) : Sir, it is agreed. We never say no to the Opposition.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (Parbhani) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, on my own self and on behalf of my Party I support the Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill, 2002. The Government have taken this step at the right time. It was necessary to repeal Banking Service Recruitment Board. I have made several submissions on Banking Service Recruitment Board during my tenure in the Eleventh Lok Sabha. I made a demand that examination for banking Services should be conducted in regional languages because how business of bank can be run if employees do not know the regional language. I have been making a demand since the eleventh Lok Sabha but Banking Service Recruitment Board ignored my suggestion. What I want to say is that it is really a good step to repeal BSRB as now it has no work to do. Sir, through you I would like to tell the hon'ble Minister that

a probe should be conducted regarding recruitment already made by BSRB. Now banking service has been privatised and the step taken by the Government was necessary in view of the working pattern of the private sector.

In the end I would like to say that I support the steps taken by the Government.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajanj, U.P.) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for allowing me to participate in the debate on Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill, 2002. If Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill, 2002 works sincerely in the achievement of its target, then on behalf of my party I extend support to this. But through this House I would like to tell the Government that in our Society there are 21 percent people belong to Scheduled Castes and 54 percent Backward Classes. If the intention of the Government is right then it should ensure that in new system also people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes should get reservation facility in accordance with their percentage and their population.

Alongwith this I would like to say that in this International Scenario, and in view of continuous mounting pressure of World Trade Organisation and for facing this competition we should put a check on those international banks which are likely to be invited here and pressurise them to follow the provisions of this Bill, so as to enable us face competition. Our experience, shows that with the present banking system. We have not been able to finance the rural areas properly.

For example, I would like to mention the Kisan Credit Card scheme implemented by the Government. In comparison to the target fixed for it, it would take another 20-25 years for providing Kisan Credit Cards to all the farmers who want to have it. I would like to say that competition at present. ...*(Interruptions)* Jaiswalji, please listen to me. You are a senior Member so please listen to me.

SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL (Varanasi) : How is it related to that. ...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH : It is related to that. You will know if you listen further. ...*(Interruptions)*. You are

representing an urban area and do not want to listen to problems of rural areas. ...*(Interruptions)*.

Today even nationalised banks are not discharging their duty properly in rural areas. As per their thinking rural areas look unprofitable for them. The whole competition will be confined to urban areas if nationalised banks will enter the market and be given a free hand by the Government. In such a situation national banks will also be compelled to divert their attention and then rural area will be neglected further. Therefore, through you I would like to make a submission that in view of the pitiable condition of rural areas, all these restrictions should also be put on international banks so that a healthy competitive atmosphere could be created in the country.

With these words, I again support this Bill

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Banking Service Commission (Repeal) Bill, 2002. The Commission was constituted under the relevant Act of 1984 and it was entrusted with the task of recruiting personnel in the Banking sector. Government had decided to make a change in it. The announcement to this effect was made by the hon. Finance Minister in 2000-01 budget. Now the Government are only implementing their decision. Earlier recruitments were delayed because there was just a single body entrusted with the task. Now the recruitments would be undertaken by the banks themselves and so the recruitment work would be expedited. I would take the opportunity to point out that recruitment and reservation related facilities for Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes were stopped as a result of a decision given by the Supreme Court in 1995-96. Due to that, from 1997, the vacant posts of SCs and STs are not being filled. I don't know what has befallen, whether God is angry, that situation is getting worse from the year 1997. The Government amended the constitution with a view to provide reservation facility to SCs and STs. The facilities, which had been withdrawn, were restored and orders were issued to make recruitments on that basis. The Banking Service Commission is being abolished before the follow up action on the order is taken. Now the recruitment would be undertaken by the banks themselves. I am not aware whether any order to this effect has been issued in the last 10-15 days or not but till 15-20 days ago no arrangement could be made for recruitment by the

banks. I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that whether the recruitment exercise is undertaken by the Banking Service Commission or by the Banks themselves, now that it has become certain that the Act is now being repealed and the Banks themselves would undertake the recruitment exercise. My submission is that orders should be issued to the banks at the earliest for filling the vacant posts as soon as possible and such rules should be made as would ensure impartiality, honesty and no corruption in recruitment process apart from expediting it. The candidates coming for examinations, interviews do not have to face any difficulties and they continue to get all the facilities that they were getting. Only then the whole exercise would be meaningful. Otherwise the whole exercise would be useless, and difficulties will only increase in the absence of any new mechanism of the banks. I trust the Government which had restored the rights of SCs and STs scrapped by a decision of the Supreme Court, would also act to ensure that the vacant posts are filled at the earliest. I, once again, extend my support to the Bill.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Amendment Bill pertaining to Banking Service Commission Act., 1984 moved by the hon. Minister is good as it seeks to amend the Bill on the basis of experience gained as out of Banking Service Recruitment Board.

It is good that they are trying to improve the recruitment process—be it for the Scheduled castes or of General category. My only suggestion is that some emphasis should be given to clear the backlog of SC and ST vacancies. The SC and ST posts in class one and super class one are not filled properly. Government of India provides 15 percent reservation to SCs while STs are given 7.5 percent reservation, but as per the census of 1991 the combined population of SCs and STs comes to about 27 percent of the total population. Therefore, the Government needs to amend the constitution. When the constitution was enforced in the country on 26 January, 1950 by Baba Saheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar, then the population of SCs and STs was 22.5% but now it has increased at least by five percents, therefore their reservation should also be increased by five percent. Secondly, the reservation of 15 percent and 7.5 percent

[Shri Ramdas Athawale]

means that such quantum of reservation should be given in each category including class one and super class one. Same thing applies to banking services also. The constitution needs to be correctly interpreted. 15 percent reservation to SCs and 7.5 percent reservation to STs should be given in each class, i.e., class one, class two, class three and also in class four. In my opinion, it should be so.

Secondly, whether in Cooperative Bank or the Nationalised banks, the clerical posts are very important with regard to corruption prevailing. The rural youths who completes B.A., B.Sc. or B.Com. needs one to one and a half lakh rupees to get recruited in the banks. I am speaking this and it should be investigated. As per the complaints coming to me, the economically backward youth of a village – be it SC, ST or of General category, needs lakhs of rupees for getting a job. We have the experience of Punjab with us, but that is happening at many other places also. Hon. Minister needs to consider it. The officials responsible for corruption in recruitment should be severely penalised. If the Government wants to do good, then such officials should be forced to mend their ways. I trust that they would be able to do it but for that you need some support. We are supporting the Bill, and we are here to support the good work of the Government and also oppose the works that do not appear good to us. The Bill that has been introduced is very important and this Government have some well-meaning Ministers as you. You are in Shiv Sena and you are a Minister since you are in the alliance. Earlier you were in Congress and were elected five to six times, but you were not given any chance. Therefore, you joined Shiv Sena and got the ministerial berth after getting elected. As a Minister, you need to do good work. We extend whole hearted support to the Bill. Please try to improve the recruitment process. We are with you as far as this Bill is concerned, but on other matters we are not with you.

SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL (Varanasi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, my submission to the hon. Minister is that alongwith reservation for backwards and Dalits, the same facility should also be extended to most backwards and most Dalits.

19.00 hrs.

If a Bill to this effect can be moved in the future, it would be better.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH : It has happened only in Uttar Pradesh. It has not been decided at the Union Government level. The leader of the House should say that the most backward formula should be recognised by the Union Government. It is beyond the purview of the hon. Finance Minister.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful that all the hon. Members have supported the Bill. All are aware that this Bill was commissioned in 1984. It was reviewed in 1987 and was found to have lost its meaning, but that could not be followed up soon. But it would be repealed from this date. As far as the reservation for SCs and STs is concerned, Government agrees with that and committed to it. A mention regarding Banking Service Recruitment Board has been made here. I would like to say that it has been already abolished and since 19th September, 2001, all the banks have been ordered to recruit personnel on their own but as per the strategy of the Government. Following has been clearly mentioned :

[English]

"The process of selection should be fair, just, objective and unbiased in all aspects and provide equal opportunity to all eligible candidates. Reservation in posts of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs, Ex-Servicemen, Disabled, etc., with concessions in eligibility norms as laid down by the Government of India from time to time should be strictly followed. There should not be any change with regard to minimum/maximum age limit. Candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, etc., may be provided the same concessions in fee and cut-off marks to which they are entitled to at present. In the selection committees set up for interviews, due representation should be given to the members belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minority communities. The recruitment policy should not neglect candidates with rural background or coming from weaker sections of the society."

[Translation]

We have added in it that a committee was set up under the Chairperson of Indians Banks Association to the effect that.

[English]

All these three four categories should be examined in the regional languages."

[Translation]

Regional languages have been given full importance. Government have agreed to this.

Shri Dasmunsi mentioned about more autonomy to the banks and also that Professional, IT people skilled personnel and new technology be allowed in the Banking sector. But professionalism in financial and economic sector can take place as per requirement. Only two banks have given recruitment advertisement-corporation Bank and PNB. The implementation of this policy would be accompanied by full consideration to SCs, STs, OBCs and the ex-servicemen. They would continue to get the cost of travelling for interview and regional languages would be allowed for the interview.

I once again thank all the hon'ble Members and request them to pass the Bill.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill to repeal the Banking Service

Commission Act, 1984, 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 clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Lok Sabha now stands adjourned till 11 a.m. tomorrow.

19.06 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of Clock on Friday, May 10, 2002/Vaisakha 20, 1924 (Saka).

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Published under Rules 379 and 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha
(Ninth Edition) and Printed by The Indian Press, G.T. Karnal Road, Delhi-110033.
