

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Fifth Session
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, November 30, 2000/Agrahayana 9, 1922 (Saka)

(The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock)

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q No. 161.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Today, in the Zero Hour, I wish to take up the issue of coastal devastation in Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

... (Interruptions)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Inventory of Archaeological Survey of India Monuments

*161. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to State:

(a) whether the Government have prepared the inventory of all the archaeological monuments in each circle of the ASI;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that many of the protected monuments in India are without proper care and basic staff facilities and sufficient funds have not been allocated for their conservation and preservation during the last three years; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken/ funds proposed to be allocated for their preservation during the current year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The inventory of the Centrally protected monuments of the Archaeological Survey of India is available in the Parliament Library.

(c) and (d) The Archaeological Survey of India protects 3606 monuments and sites through out India. The statement of allocation of funds and expenditure for the last three years is given in Statement-I. The allotment for current year is given in Statement-II. A higher budgetary allocation would assist the Archaeological Survey of India in discharging its mandate.

The National Culture Fund set up by Government envisages that individuals, community and corporate entities can contribute towards assisting the ASI in structural conservation and provision of amenities around the monuments. A MoU in respect of the Humayun's Tomb is already under execution. The ASI has also identified 34 monuments for upgradation.

Statement-I

State wise allocation and expenditure for the maintenance of monuments during last three years

S. No.	State/Union Territory	1997-1998 Rupees	1998-1999 Rupees	1999-2000 Rupees
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	8,393,000	8,498,038	12,340,000
2.	Assam	3,182,729	3,278,037	6,205,661
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	—	—	—
4.	Bihar	13,867,300	6,091,473	11,569,951
5.	Delhi	26,100,000	34,198,128	30,048,689

1	2	3	4	5
6.	Daman & Diu	2,370,132	1,591,791	2,025,000
7.	Goa	3,291,000	2,456,771	4,735,000
8.	Gujarat	5,918,855	7,295,718	7,963,075
9.	Haryana	8,113,353	7,320,093	6,321,837
10.	Himachal Pradesh	4,251,424	8,183,658	10,575,016
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	7,379,000	7,799,992	9,600,000
12.	Karnataka	16,744,275	17,112,209	25,212,000
13.	Kerala	4,578,000	5,400,329	5,067,937
14.	Madhya Pradesh	14,344,901	14,217,372	18,899,884
15.	Maharashtra	8,147,000	15,301,025	13,900,000
16.	Manipur	—	—	393,790
17.	Meghalaya	—	98,781	—
18.	Nagaland	219,518	1,470,828	266,222
19.	Orissa	3,751,680	5,078,001	10,800,000
20.	Pondicherry (U.T.)	258,464	568,633	180,219
21.	Punjab	7,638,670	3,742,972	3,903,915
22.	Rajasthan	17,300,000	12,200,000	16,100,000
23.	Sikkim	1,487,186	24,995	3,020,000
24.	Tamil Nadu	10,077,240	8,810,025	11,057,025
25.	Tripura	698,952	583,476	2,120,830
26.	Uttar Pradesh	28,357,890	31,709,672	37,000,000
27.	West Bengal	9,791,000	6,964,453	10,000,000

Statement-II*Allocation for the year 2000-2001*

S. No.	State/Union Territory
1	2
1.	Andhra Pradesh 117.00 Lakh
2.	Assam 113.94 Lakh
3.	Arunachal Pradesh 7.62 Lakh
4.	Bihar (Including Jharkhand State) 109.42 Lakh

1	2
5.	Delhi 300.00 Lakh
6.	Daman & Diu 20.91 Lakh
7.	Goa 51.25 Lakh
8.	Gujarat 92.59 Lakh
9.	Haryana 65.00 Lakh
10.	Himachal Pradesh 156.35 Lakh
11.	Jammu and Kashmir 103.50 Lakh

1	2	
12.	Karnataka	208.00 Lakh
13.	Kerala	50.30 Lakh
14.	Madhya Pradesh (Including Chhatisgarh State)	156.66 Lakh
15.	Maharashtra	153.35 Lakh
16.	Manipur	1.25 Lakh
17.	Meghalaya	0.55 Lakh
18.	Nagaland	3.50 Lakh
19.	Orissa	101.35 Lakh
20.	Pondicherry (U.T.)	2.00 Lakh
21.	Punjab	45.43 Lakh
22.	Rajasthan	165.00 Lakh
23.	Sikkim	53.50 Lakh
24.	Tamil Nadu	144.70 Lakh
25.	Tripura	19.27 Lakh
26.	Uttar Pradesh (Including Uttaranchal State)	376.00 Lakh
27.	West Bengal	130.45 Lakh

SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to inform the Minister that the protected monuments in Tamil Nadu like the Vellore Fort, Mamallapuram, the Gingee Fort need more financial assistance for renovation and conservation. Would the Government allocate more funds for the same on its own or from the National Culture Fund? I would like to know as to what steps the Government has taken to prevent vandalism and encroachment of protected monuments like Mamallapuram.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Firstly, this year we have provided Rs. 31 crore under the Plan expenditure for the upgradation and protection of various monuments. Secondly, regarding the various monuments and heritage sites in Tamil Nadu, I wish to inform the House that with the active co-operation of the hon. Members of Parliament, and with the Special Purposes Vehicle of National Culture Fund, we can pool in sufficient resources. We can discuss this matter.

SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Why the Archaeological Survey of India is not using the income generated from the protected monuments like Taj Mahal for its developmental activities?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: According to the principles of public finance, whatever fee is collected from the monument would go to the General Exchequer. The money for the development and other activities of the monuments come from the Government of India. The Ministry has taken up this matter with the Finance Ministry for perusal. The view of the Ministry is that whatever is collected as fee from the monument should be converted into a Dedicated Fund, and the same would be pooled back for the development of various sites of Archaeological Survey of India.

[Translation]

SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the voluntary organisation or company desirous of maintaining the archaeological sites which the Government is not being able to do for want of funds or economic constraints will be allowed to do so?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Ram Naik has just promised an investment of Rs. 25 crore from Indian Oil Corporation to National Fund for Culture. Private companies, educational institutions can also come forward to preserve and maintain such historical sites through National Fund for Culture. NGO's can also come forward.

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the House towards the fact that many sites of archaeological importance are being maintained and preserved. But as I had raised the issue through a question during the last session also that the chemicals being used for cleaning the monuments and the process of cleaning itself, is leading to the damage of monuments and also affecting the quality and existence.

I want to know whether an inquiry has been conducted in this regard and also any new method has been developed for the better maintenance of these monuments so that they do not wear out and are not damaged? Whether you have taken any action in this regard? If not, whether such an action is being considered?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Member had raised the issue last time also. We are not using any chemical which are harmful to the monuments. If you can mention specific cases. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Last time I had told you about Khajuraho. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is the problem. Once you have asked the supplementary, you have to yield for the Minister's reply. Then, you can ask a question. You are obstructing the Minister when he is giving the reply.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: We have a National Laboratory for conservation. We use only that Chemical and conservation methodology which is developed by their research.

[English]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, very recently, there has been a hike in the fees for entry into these monuments which have created certain problems. For example, in Taj Mahal in Agra, the fee is also expected to be collected from those people who go to the mosque there to offer their prayers. Now, this levying of the fees from those who go to the mosque to offer their prayers is rather unfair and unjust.

Now, if you say that these people are exempted, then what is the mechanism by which they can be exempted? If it is the point that they are to be identified, then, it is very difficult to identify the persons going inside the monuments to offer their prayers and others.

MR. SPEAKER: This question is not about collection of fees but preservation of the monuments.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, as you have rightly pointed out, this question does not purport from the main question.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: But in Taj Mahal, special arrangements have been made for Muslim brethren who want to offer *Namaaz* in the mosque which is near Taj Mahal. There is a special entry. There is a special provision. No monument fee is being collected from them.

SHRI B. VENKATESHWARLU: Sir, among these 3,606 monuments and other sites which are protected in the country, I think, several monuments are under encroachments and disputes. We had the opportunity of visiting most of these areas. These encroachments and the disputed sites have not been cleared in the recent past. Steps are also not being taken adequately to clear these spots.

In addition, the security part of it is also not quite adequate in most of the monuments. When questioned with the respective staff there, it has been said that the dedicated fund that is being utilised pooled and distributed elsewhere.

Is the Government thinking in terms of allocating at least a part of the fee collected at a particular monument to the same monument for its maintenance because in view of their importance, the higher collection will be there in certain monuments? Will it be there?

The other part of my question is that the Borra Caves and the Golconda monuments in Andhra Pradesh are not being adequately protected.

I would like to know whether the Government is contemplating any plan to protect these particular monuments in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: There are 3606 monuments under the Archaeological Survey of India in the entire country. There are more than 20,000 monuments under the patronage of the State Governments. For these monuments, we are giving Watch & Ward facilities and there are 3463 monument attendants. We have taken 671 private security guards to be deployed in 26 important protected monuments also.

I would like to place before this august House that there have been 298 reported encroachments in various monument sites, and through legal action, we have got the encroachments removed in 14 monuments. It is an on-going process because we have to go to the court of law, we have to go to the District Magistrate and all that.

In one more question, the hon. Member has asked whether the monument fee collected in that monument can be dedicatedly used for that monument only.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: At least a part of it.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: I have already said that according to the principles of public finance, whatever is collected from an attached office of the Government of India—Archaeological Survey of India is an attached office of the Government of India—will be remitted to the general exchequer, and through the Budget it will come back to us. Therefore, we are making a plea to the hon. Finance Minister that as a dedicated road fund whatever is being collected from the monument fee should also be dedicated to the upgradation of monuments only.

Finally, with regard to the two monuments, that is Borra and Golconda, there is a lot of development in Golconda, where land scaping and gardening has been done. Golconda has become more lush and green and looks beautiful. We are taking adequate care of it.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: What about Borra caves in Vizag?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister has already given an elaborate reply.

SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: Sir, nearly 30 kms. around the Konark Sun Temple or the Black Pagoda in Orissa, particularly in Prachi Valley Area, a number of ancient monuments have not yet been identified and registered. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, whether the Government will take steps to identify, register, protect and preserve such important monuments in Prachi Valley Area.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, actually this inventory is being prepared at the all-India level. Up to 1997, this inventory of all the monuments was being prepared circlewise. We have got 18 circles and two mini-circles. These circles usually keep the inventory. In 1998, we appointed a Committee under two former Directors-General of Archaeological Survey of India. Now that the inventory is being made at the all India level, the circle which constitutes Orissa will take care of it.

SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: Will the hon. Minister kindly revise it?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: It is an ongoing process. I think, in the next one-and-a-half years, we will be completing this project.

SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: Will the hon. Minister take into account particularly the Prachi Valley Area?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Every monument which is under the protection of the Government of India is being taken care of. All the 3606 monuments will come under this.

SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: It is beyond that.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: The thing is that there are thousands of monuments which belong to the State Governments. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: Even they are not under the State Governments. But they are very important monuments.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, if you address the Chair, you can avoid all these confrontations.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, the thing is that now there are listed monuments under the Central Government and the State Governments. There are other monuments which are not listed under the State Governments as well as the Central Governments, but we are going to take a view regarding them.

[Translation]

SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, fund allocation has been made for monuments located in all the States but no allocation from central fund has been made for only cellular Jail of Andaman and Nicobar islands which has been recently declared a national monument. I want to ask hon'ble Minister whether funds would be allocated for this monument? It needs to be repaired by the Archaeological Survey of India. Will he attend to that? Cellular Jail needs to be repaired immediately. Will he take action in this regard?

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, Cellular Jail is an historical monument. The Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Government of India will take adequate care of it. I will assure that to the hon. Member.

SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister about the real position of the Beakle Fort, which is one of the greatest national monuments existing in Kerala. Now, there is a tourism project namely, BRDC. Many tourists from all over India and abroad are visiting it. What is the quantum of amount that the Central Government has given for the development and preservation of the Beakle Fort and the development of BRDC tourism project?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: I can supply the information to the hon. Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Ramsheth Thakur.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Sir, kindly allow Half-an-Hour discussion on this subject. There are many issues, which have to be dealt with. Tourism is going to be a major industry. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Already Half-an-Hour is coming to an end.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am ready for Half-an-Hour discussion on this issue. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It has already taken Half-an-Hour.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Sir, this is an important subject. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister had allocated Rs. One crore 39 lakhs last year for maintenance of the monuments and important sites of Maharashtra and for the year 2000-2001. Rs. 1.53 crore has been allocated. But the number of important sites have not been mentioned for which allocation has been made. I want to know that from hon'ble Minister. There is an important place near Mumbai called Elephanta which was earlier known as Dharapuri. It attracts many tourists. Therefore more attention needs to be paid to that monument. For the last few days, it had no electricity or water. I want to know by what time electricity and water supply will be restored by Central or State Government since it is affecting revenue earning as well as the tourists.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: I will immediately take action to restore electric and water or supply to Elephanta caves and its maintenance. Allocation from National Culture Fund for the development of heritage of Maharashtra is under consideration.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Q. No. 162. Shri P.R. Khunte.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it will be better if Question No. 162 and 163 are clubbed together.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Members agree, then Q. Nos 162 and 163 can be clubbed together.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri P.R. Khunte.

[Translation]

New Textile Policy

*162 SHRI P.R. KHUNTE:
SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Garment Sector opened to foreign investors" appearing in 'The Hindustan Times' dated November 3, 2000;

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

(c) whether the Government have announced the New Textile Policy to boost the Textile Industry;

(d) if so, the salient features of the policy;

(e) the benefits likely to accrue to textile industry and workers therefrom; and

(f) the extent to which export target and employment opportunities have been envisaged in the New Policy?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes Sir. Envisaging that the clothing sector is poised for radical changes in the emerging international trading environment, the National Textile Policy 2000 provides for de-reservation of the garment industry. It is expected that this measure will attract larger investments including foreign investments.

(c) to (f) Yes Sir, the Government have announced the National Textile Policy—2000 (NTxP-2000). The Policy redefines the goal and objectives and focuses on strategic thrust areas so as to strengthen the Textile Industry and make it globally competitive, by facilitating and enabling technological upgradation of all manufacturing segments of the industry; increase in the raw material base by emphasis on productivity and quality; integrated human resources development, with special attention to those working in the de-centralised and the traditional sectors; attention to product diversification with a strong multi-fibre base and innovative marketing strategies; and a major thrust on exports. The target for textiles and apparel exports is US\$ 50 billion by 2010 with garments contributing US\$25 billion. While no specific figure has been projected, the policy aims to increase sustainable employment through the growth of the industry.

[English]

Closure/Revival of Loss Making N.T.C. Mills

*163. * SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO:
* SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU
YADAV:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

*The Members were not present in the House.

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "NTC Ki Ghate Wali Millen Band Ki Jayengi" appearing in 'Jansatta' dated September 5, 2000.

(b) if so, the names of mills likely to be closed, State-wise;

(c) the names of mills identified for revival and the details of their revival package, mill-wise;

(d) the number of workers affected due to closure of mills and steps to be taken for their rehabilitation, Mill-wise;

(e) whether the Government had any dialogue with the trade unions to explore ways to modernise the mills and to make them operational;

(f) if so, whether the Government have any talks with the financial authorities concerned to improve the financial position of the mills by way of waiving loans etc;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) whether the Government have any proposal to set up a mill for making cloths, carpets and mats from Jute; and

(i) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) to (i) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Government have decided that in case of the 8 sick subsidiaries of NTC, a unit-by-unit approach will be adopted and all revivable units will be revived and non-revivable mills will be closed down after making available attractive VRS to the workers. Mills to be closed or revived will be decided by BIFR after examining the viability of each unit.

(d) Does not arise at this stage.

(e) The issue was discussed with trade unions and the Industry in the Tripartite Industrial Committee on Cotton Textiles held on 5.7.2000.

(f) and (g) NTC has requested BIFR to direct the financial Institutions to agree for a one-time settlement of their dues.

(h) and (i) No Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Hon. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Indian shops are flooded with foreign clothes. Owing to the intensive export campaign adopted by the foreign companies to target our market, our textile industry is getting adversely affected and we are not paying attention towards Swadeshi. We are fully concentrating to promote foreign goods and clothes. It has been 53 years since our independence. Mahatma Gandhi, though no more among us, was the one to recognise the true potential of Swadeshi. He had also launched a movement to burn the foreign made clothes and other articles.

MR. SPEAKER: You are giving a speech. Whether you won't ask the supplementary?

SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: I am not delivering speech. I am asking the questions related to my supplementary. Today when Mahatma Gandhi is no more, he has been turned into an object of worship. He is remembered only on 2nd October and for the rest of the time, we tend to forget him. It is a very serious matter and it should not be taken lightly or in a humorous tone. Today the economy of the entire country is being ruined which is a matter of concern for the entire country. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether the new textile policy would promote our textile industry or cottage industry? Our hon. Minister is a very sensible Minister and I am very well acquainted with him. Kosa is produced in very large quantity in the newly created Chhattisgarh State and it is well known throughout the country for it. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether he will try to set up handloom industry in Sarangarh headquarters?

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has pointed towards the large scale availability of foreign clothes in Indian market. The Government also is very concerned over the development and it is taking steps to reduce the import of foreign clothes to the maximum possible extent. Besides, the purpose of newly formulated Textile Policy, 2000 is also to promote the manufacture of good quality yarn and in turn good quality cloth and garments and ensure its consumption in Indian market itself to meet its growing demand. India is a huge market with a population of a billion. The foreign textile industry has its eye on the Indian market. Hence, the

Government also want that good quality cloth should be manufactured in the country under the new Textile policy. Not only this, it also seeks that textile industry should also meet the demand of our countrymen besides exporting it for Indian made cloth is in much demand in the foreign market. Presently, we are earning approximately 14.32 billion dollars i.e. Rs. 60,000 crores through the export of our textiles. There is a further scope to expand it and hence the Government intend to increase export in this sector. The increase in export will naturally lead to the spurt in employment.

I would like to add one more point. By 2004, our multi fibres agreement will be phased out. After this, the textile market or any other market will enter totally free regime and no country will be able to maintain any restrictions regarding exports and imports. Hence it was very necessary to formulate a new Textile policy for making textile industry more competitive and therefore we have formulated it.

As far the Question of increasing Kosa production in Chhattisgarh is concerned. We will certainly accept any proposal regarding sericulture activity forwarded either by the State Government or by any parliamentarian. Provision regarding handloom industry has also been made under the new Textile policy which seeks to provide protection to the handloom industry besides including a host of other schemes for growth of the industry and the welfare of the weavers.

SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask second supplementary from the hon. Minister as to whether the Government of India have made any provision to promote the export of clothes manufactured by cottage industry under the new Textile policy?

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government has been trying not only improve the cottage industry, handlooms and other similar areas but is also trying to strengthen it through making provision for setting up of weaving centres to promote the export of goods manufactured by these industries in this era of globalisation and modernisation.

[English]

SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ: The silk industry is one of the important industries that comes under textiles. Unfortunately in Karnataka, a majority of the agriculturists are feeling very bad about the wrong import policy. Nearly 50 lakh people depend upon the silk industry in Karnataka.

About two years back we selling silk at the rate of Rs. 150 per kg of cocoons. It has been reduced to Rs. 60 to Rs. 65 per kg. Unfortunately, every agriculturist is going to give up this sericulture. In time, the reelers and also the weavers not only in Karnataka but all over the country are feeling very bad.

According to the new textile policy, the objectives of the strategic points are technological upgradation, enhancement of productivity, quality consciousness, likewise improvement of exports and so on. Unfortunately under the wrong policy of imports, every year China is going to dump raw silk on this country. In this manner, what action is the Government going to take to curb the import of raw silk just to benefit the agriculturists not only in Karnataka but all over the country?

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: So far as the import of silk is concerned, I have to say it very clearly say the Government's import policy is not a wrong policy. Because the country's demand of silk is nearly 24 thousand to 25 thousand metric tonnes while our production of silk is merely 14,000 or 15,000 metric tonnes.

SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ: If you give encouragement to the agriculturists we will be able to produce 16,000 metric tonnes....(Interruptions)

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: I am coming to your point, my learned friend, bear with me.

So, there is a gap of ten or eleven thousand between the demand and supply. The Government of India is also trying to increase the production of silk and the sericulture activity, and our Central Silk Board also is trying to increase the production of silk. So, there are so many programmes and schemes going on and I think that within a short time, the country will be able to produce the silk required by us. But because of this gap, there is a necessity — that is the need of the hour — to meet the shortage of silk. So, the Government has decided to import, not to adversely affect our reelers or the people involved in the sericulture activity. It is done only to meet that gap in the shortage of silk.

[Translation]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: 70 per cent of the cloth is manufactured under the powerloom sector in textile industry. Today, the powerloom sector is in very bad condition. 80 per cent powerloom sector is closed. I would like to know as to what steps are being contemplated by the Government to provide assistance or relief to the powerloom sector?

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I donot agree with what the hon. Member has said that the 80 to 90 per cent of powerloom sector is closed. But I will certainly accet that the powerloom sector is not functioning in the way it should. Even, at present the production of fabric and cloth is increasing at a rate of 8 to 9 per cent. Not only this, export is also growing at a rate 10 to 11 per cent. Despite all this, the Government have formulated the schemes like cluster schemes under the new Textile policy for the modernisation and upgradation of the powerloom sector. We have also tried to include the small powerloom units into clusters by upgrading them technologically and economically through making provision in this regard under the new textile policy.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, textile industry is the oldest industry in our country and when we talk about this industry it also covers the cotton, jute, silk industries, composit mills, powerlooms, handloom etc. under it. It also covers the aspects of textile export, issues related to new technology and those related to NTC mills, its landed properties and the future of the workers working in it. Hence I would like to know from the Government as to whether all these aspects have been/are likely to be included in the new textile policy? It is also imperative to take into account as to how an issue which has been left out from being included in the new Textile policy can affect it. I would also like to know as to by when you are going to formulate this new policy and whether or not you will take it up in the House to discuss it?

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, new Textile policy has been announced a few days back. But we can certainly hold discussion in the House over it, if the House wants and it should be discussed. ...(*Interruptions*) I am also in favour of holding discussion for the textile industry is the one which provides employment to two crore people, besides earning a foreign exchange to the tune of approximately Rs. 6000 crore for the country. As we have to compete in terms of production also, hence we will certainly welcome the 'Suggestions put forth by the hon. MPs in this regard. As far as the question of powerloom and handloom sectors the issue of NTC mills as pointed out by the hon. Member is concerned, cabinet has recently approved an approach for it and have referred the issue to BIFR. Today out of a total of 119 mills, 25 are fully functional and 50-51 mills are functioning partially.

[*Translation*]

With a view to find out unitwise viability of closed textile mills, the Committee of Experts from amongst Textile Research Association would prepare a report with

regard to revival of maximum mills and place it before BIFR. We are ready to recommission as many mills as recommended by BIFR. I would also like to tell that first time in the history of NTC and BIC, we have decided to revive two textile mills at a cost of Rs.211 crores. For the first time, the Government of India has paid attention towards the workers. Now the Dhariwal and Lalimli mill of BIC will run smoothly and the worker would be able to work whole-heartedly.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Sir, through you, I would like to ask hon'ble Minister that Ganesh Sugar Mill which was functioning under NTC in my Parliamentary Constituency, district Maharajanj has been closed for the last six years. The Government have handed it over to BIFR. Two proposals regarding revival of this sugar mill have been received from private sector. One such proposal is from JVG Sugar Mill, Ganaura, Nichlol, district Maharajanj. Would the hon'ble Minister like to tell as to whether the Government will hand over the mill to the private parties from whom such proposals have been received if NTC is not in a position to revive these sugar mills?

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Sir, as far as Ganesh Sugar Mill, which is under NTC and the case pertaining to which has been referred to BIFR, is concerned, the Government have definitely received a proposal relating to it. The Government would surely consider the proposal received regarding any mill which is not viable for revival or which cannot be revived. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: I think the Minister is going to lay the New Textile Policy today. Hon'ble Members can go through that. Now we go to Q. No. 164.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Sir, I would like to ask hon'ble Minister whether the Government agree with the proposal received from private sector and whether efforts will be made to obtain BIFR's consent in this regard?...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Today the Minister is laying the New Textile Policy in the House itself. You can go through the contents of the New Policy also and then we can discuss it.

...(*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Sir, I too would like to ask a question on same issue. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister also has said that the Government has no objection to discuss the Textile policy.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Sir, you may hold half an hour discussion on this issue. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: First you go through New Textile Policy.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: If necessary we will hold discussion on this issue.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now Q. No. 164. Please co-operate with the Chair.

Recovery of Dues

*164. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI:
SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS to pleased to state:

(a) the total amount Railways have to recover from various Oil Companies, Coal Companies and Private Companies etc. and the interest thereon;

(b) the measures the Railways have taken or propose to take to recover that amount with interest;

(c) whether any responsibility has been fixed on officials for not recovering the amount;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) The total amount of Recoverable Dues to end of September 2000 is Rs. 2748.84 Cr. from Oil Companies, Coal Companies, Power houses and State Electricity Boards, State Governments, Local Self Government, other Public Sector Undertakings and Private Companies etc. Railways neither levy interest on their freight and other related dues nor pay any interest on refund and claims for compensation.

(b) The measures taken by Railways to recover the dues include:

- (i) Railway outstandings are adjusted from dues of these defaulters.
- (ii) Pursuant to Governments decision on 7th February 1997 that the outstanding dues from State Electricity Boards and Power Houses as on 31.12.1996 would be adjusted from the Central Plan Assistance of the State Governments subject to certain limits, an amount of Rs. 116.93 Crores has been received by Railways.
- (iii) Ministry of Railways has approached Secretaries of the concerned Ministries, and Chairmen-cum-Managing Directors of Public Sector Undertakings for early clearance of dues.
- (iv) The Chief Ministers have been addressed for their intervention in the matter of clearance of outstanding dues to the Railways from the Electricity Boards.
- (v) Regular coordination meetings are conducted with various Government Departments, Oil Companies and Private Companies at the Divisional and Headquarters level. Officers at senior levels and Inspectors periodically contact major defaulting parties in this regard. In addition to above, a review will be made on issues relating to outstanding dues of Railways in December 2000, and a specific plan of action will be finalised in this regard.

(c) to (e) The matter of recovery of dues is being pursued vigorously at all levels. Therefore fixing of responsibility on officials of Railways does not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Sir, I would like to know from hon'ble Minister the details of outstanding amount of oil companies Coal companies, Power Houses, State Electricity Boards and local self Government during the

year 1998-99 and 1999-2000. Also, apprise the House as to which official was contacted on which date alongwith the names of the Chief Minister contacted and about follow up action taken.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Sir, as on 30th September, a recovery of Rs. 2700 cores is to be made, out of which maximum amount, of Rs. 996 crore is outstanding against Badarpur Thermal Power Station. Rs. 249 crore are outstanding against Punjab State Electricity Board, Rs. 131 crore against Delhi Vidyut Board, Rs. 85 crore against APSEB, Rs. 62 crore against Haryana State Electricity Board, Rs. 53 crore against National Thermal Power Corporation, Rs. 44 crore against Rajasthan State Electricity Board, Rs. 32 crore against Gujarat State Electricity Board, Rs. 31 crore against Maharashtra, Rs. 21 crore against Tamil Nadu, Rs. 15 crore against West Bengal, Rs. 13 crore against Uttar Pradesh, Rs. 8 crore against Damodar Valley Corporation, Rs. 5 crore against Madhya Pradesh, Rs. two crore against Bihar. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, I think all these things are there in the statement.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Since he has sought the information therefore I am providing it, moreover these details were not provided in the statement. Rs. 2 crore are outstanding against Assam Electricity Board, Rs. 1 crore and 95 lakhs against Karnataka Electricity Board, Rs. 2 crore 86 lakh against Bihar Electricity Board. Thus in all it comes to around 1 thousand 761 crore rupees. Rest of the amount is outstanding against other companies and organisations. Thus in all, total outstanding amount is over Rs. 2700 crore.

SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Which Special Action Plan has been formulated in December, 2000 as the issue of outstanding amount?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is true that we have been making plans regularly to recover outstanding amount and ultimately common man gets affected by our plans. Tomorrow if we stop transporting coal, power supply will come to a halt. Hence we have conveyed our request to Chief Minister and some of the Chief Minister have even acted upon our request. The Chief Minister of Punjab took initiative in this direction and even paid Rs. 100 crore. We always try to take it up at higher level. Late Kumaramanglamji is no more. Maximum amount is outstanding against Badarpur

Electricity Board which is managed by NTPC. They promised to pay Rs. 500 crore, however, we have not received the payment as yet. We keep on holding secretary level meetings. In 1997, even hon'ble Prime Minister was requested in this regard. Thus whatever is possible, we do that.

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, whether any arrangement has been made for reassessment and recovery of outstanding amount? You have taken some steps and made a plan

[*English*]

for implementation of various schemes for pre-payment of freight, for carriage of coal.

[*Translation*]

It has been stated in the reply to me:

[*English*]

"Railways neither levy interest on their freight and other related dues for pay any interest on refund and claims for compensation".

[*Translation*]

In this process, several people face difficulty in getting compensation. I would like to know whether any committee has been constituted for it's monitoring?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as hon'ble Lady Member has stated, we don't charge interest on outstanding amount, similarly we don't pay interest either. We always carry out monitoring at Ministry level. If this issue is not resolved at Ministry level, a committee can be constituted at Secretary level to resolve this issue. We have put up this proposal too.

[*English*]

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, last year the Minister for Railways convened a meeting of leaders of all parties in which she told that more than Rs. 5,000 crore were yet to be realised from different Departments. Now, it is stated that dues are to be realised from private companies also. What are those companies? Does the Government take any action against a private company for realisation of dues? If no action is taken, then, they will file a winding up petition and the Government will not be able to realise its dues. All are equal before law. If a citizen — a landlord or an occupant — is not able

to pay his dues in time, his line is cut. The same principle should apply to the private companies also. Why does the Government not take steps to recover dues, at least, from the private companies?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Hon. Speaker Sir, as the hon. Member has correctly said, we follow the rules. But unfortunately, the dues are more in case of public sector than the private sector. If we compare the amount of dues, we find that Rs. 2,500 crore are due from the public sector whereas the amount due from the private sector altogether is around Rs. 200 crore. Individually, barring one or two no one is owing more than Rs. 1 crore to us. So, it is very difficult for me to apply a uniform law. Unless we take action against public sector also, it will be very difficult for me to take action against the private sector. We have to apply law to both uniformly.

[Translation]

Report on Railway Reforms

*165. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN:
DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Dr. Rakesh Mohan Committee, set up by the Government on railway reforms, has since submitted its report to the Government;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof;

(c) whether there is an urgent need for massive reforms in Railways in view of its mounting expenditure; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) No, Sir, Rakesh Mohan Committee which was set up in December 98, is scheduled to submit its final report by end of December, 2000.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Reforms in Railways are a continuing process and on receipt of the Rakesh Mohan Committee report, further review will be made.

SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to ask two questions. In some districts railway lines were constructed by the Britishers but in those areas there are no facilities. Toilet and water facility is not available there. From Pachora to Jamnagar there is one such railway line. I would like to know whether any attention has been paid towards that railway line in the report? My second question is that in Jalgaon there is large scale production of Bananas. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Second supplementary will be allowed afterwards.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, about the area which Rakesh Mohan Committee was entrusted to study that report has not yet been submitted. When report has not been submitted then how can I tell the House what is there in the report?

DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR: Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, Rakesh Mohan Committee was constituted in December 1998. I would like to know whether any time limit was fixed for submitting Committee's report? If so, the time limit thereto? Part 'b' of my question is whether committee has submitted any interim report? If so, when it was submitted and what action was taken on it? Part 'c' of my question is, if this report is not submitted by December, 2000 then whether the hon'ble Minister will extend its time limit?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Member said that this Committee was constituted in December, 1998 and asked its time limit? Its time limit is December, 2000. Officials remain in contact with them. But I am hopeful the report would be submitted by the end of December two thousand.

DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR: I would like to know whether any interim report was submitted?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: It is the entire report.

DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR: I would like to know whether any report was submitted in between?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: No report was submitted in between. Time was given till the end of December 2000 for submitting the entire report. I am sure the deadline will be met. As far as extending the time limit is concerned no such proposal had been received from their side. It means the report would be submitted by 31st December, 2000.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, Dr. Rakesh Mohan Committee on Railway Reforms was appointed after a Seminar was held in the month of August, 1998 which was attended by a number of representatives from the developed countries. May I know the Terms of Reference of this Committee from the hon. Minister?

In 1984, a Railway Reforms Committee was constituted and that Committee also submitted its Report long back. I would like to know whether all the recommendations of Railway Reforms Committee headed by Dr. Pandey have been implemented.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, as Shri Basu Deb Acharia has correctly said, the earlier Committee was headed by Shri B.D. Pandey. I do not have the exact figure, and I do not know whether all the recommendations were accepted or not. They have made more than one hundred recommendations.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: They have made a thousand recommendations and not one hundred.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: He is giving the information.

MR. SPEAKER: Although he is having the information, still he is asking a supplementary question.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: If you are so keen about that, I can give that information to you. As far as the 'Terms of Reference' of Dr. Rakesh Mohan Committee are concerned, they are as follows:

- (i) to estimate the financing requirements of an expansion and upgrading programme for Indian Railways that would optimise the use of rail transport mode, and support the rail traffic growth; commensurate to the growth rate to the economy;
- (ii) to identify the sources of funding of the estimated investment over a 15-year period; the fiscal and policy measures needed for assessing the fund sources and priorities in investment;
- (iii) to study the models of structure and ownership of rail transport facilities devised and functioning in developed countries and recommend on their relevance to Indian Railways' requirements so as to facilitate the objective mentioned above; and

- (iv) to recommend suitable regulatory arrangements that would facilitate orderly expansion of the system, promote the desired degree of competition and protect the users rights of quality service.

[Translation]

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you. I want to know from the Minister as my colleague Shri Mahajan asked, British people laid railway lines many years ago and one such rail line is Bhuswal-Surat railway line where every year railway tracks develop fractures and it results in train accidents. On all passenger trains only 9-10 bogies are attached and there is no facility of toilet or water and are very old. I would like to know from the Minister whether any scheme is there for Bhusawal-Surat rail line in his note. If so, what action Railway Ministry is going to take to improve it?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Members question is not related to Rakesh Mohan Committee but I would like to tell the hon'ble Member that tracks develop rail fractures and resultant train accidents which used to take place have reduced now because Public sector Bhilai has started manufacturing better rail lines. Indian Railway and Steel Authority of India jointly had improved the quality and have started making better railway lines and shortcomings have been removed. Due to this reason there is reduction in accidents.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as far as the hon'ble Member mentioned about lack of water in trains. My submission is if he gives information about any specific line or train, we would try to make improvements.

SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, trains which were earlier started by princely rulers and specially those which connected tribal areas have been discontinued by Department of Railways I would like to know from the Minister whether Government would try to restore those narrow gauge trains again?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Ministry is already seized of the issue of narrow gauge trains raised by the hon. Member. I would like to inform him that orders have been issued for restoring five such narrow gauge railway lines trains in Gujarat which were built by the princely rulers. Besides these narrow gauge trains rest could not be started till now for the reason that speed was very slow and people used to give preference to road transport rather than going by train. We will also pay attention to other narrow gauge railway

lines if traffic has discontinued and make them operational again.

SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA: Please tell which are these five railway lines.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: I do not have the details but those five railway lines are in Gujarat.

[English]

Leasing of Oil Fields to Private Sector Companies

*167. SHRI⁺ Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY:

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

(a) whether the Government have found several irregularities in awarding the lease of oil fields to some private sector companies during 1995;

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether demands have been made to probe into the leasing of oil fields to private companies by CBI; and

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

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) to (d) The awards of discovered fields to private parties under the first offer were audited by Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) in 1995-97. In its reports CAG had made certain observations on reimbursement of past cost to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), not carrying out comparative economics of developing the fields under Joint Venture vis-a-vis ONGC development fields on stand-alone basis before taking decision on awards by Government, down-grading of reserves for Pann-Mukta fields for bid evaluation, freezing of cess and royalty and not providing a level playing field for National Oil Companies (NOCs), apart from procedural aspects on tender opening etc. Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) instituted a preliminary inquiry and two Public Interest Litigations (PILs) were filed in the Delhi High Court in 1997 seeking to cancel the award of Panna Mukta field and to conduct an independent inquiry. After

hearing all the parties and receiving report from the CBI on award of Panna Mukta field, the High Court in January, 1999 dismissed the PILs.

A Special Leave Petition (SLP) was filed in the Supreme Court in February, 1999 against the judgement of Delhi High Court. The Supreme Court after detailed hearing of the case dismissed this petition on 19th October, 2000.

The policy for offering of discovered fields for private participation was reviewed by the Government in 1999 and it was decided that in future the bids for such fields may be invited by the National Oil Companies, ONGC and Oil India Ltd. themselves.

SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I want to know whether the Government has found several irregularities in awarding the lease of oilfields to some private sector companies during 1995; if so, the facts and the details thereof.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, a complaint was received by the CBI alleging some irregularities; and two Public Interest Litigations were filed in the High Court. One petition was by Centre for Public Interest Litigation, and another was by Dr. Wadhwa. The CBI submitted its report to the High Court. The Bench considered it. Finally the High Court Bench, consisting of hon. Justice Sabharwal and hon. Justice Gupta, dismissed the Public Interest Litigations in January, 1999.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Reddy, You may ask your second supplementary.

SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY: I have no other question to ask, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: There are no supplementaries on this question.

National Judicial Commission

*168. SHRI⁺ SUKDEO PASWAN:
SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3613 on April 17, 2000 regarding setting up of National Judicial Commission and state:

(a) whether the Government propose to bring forward a legislation for setting up of a National Judicial Commission; and

(b) if so, the time by which the legislation is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) The Government is examining a proposal to set up a National Judicial Commission which would recommend judicial appointments in High Courts and the Supreme Court of India as also draw up a code of ethics for the judiciary. The matter is under examination. However, it is not feasible to indicate a time-frame by which a Constitutional Amendment Bill could be introduced.

[Translation]

SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Government is examining a proposal to set up a National Judicial Commission which would recommend judicial policies in High Courts and the Supreme Court of India. More Code of conduct would also be laid down for Municipal Corporations. I would like to know whether any time limit is fixed or not in this matter? Please give information.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to the question it is clearly mentioned that it is not possible to fix time limit at this juncture because proposal is being examined and when the time comes to bring necessary amendment in the Constitution it would be done.

SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, what is the reason for not fixing time limit. And according to the suggestions received how much time does the Government have and what is the problem in fixing time limit, please elaborate. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are asking or Mr. Paswan is asking.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Sir, he is not asking the question. Actual question is whether they will provide reservation to Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: On this issue it is necessary to elicit views of various sections of society. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Athawale it is not the procedure. You please sit down.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: As views of various sections of society are necessary on this issue and that exercise is on. Therefore, it is not possible to fix time limit.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Maintenance of Monuments

*166. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV:
SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Memorandum of Understanding has been signed for restoration of Jantar Mantar and other monuments in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to sign MoU for restoration of monuments of Rajasthan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Archaeological Survey of India have concluded Memoranda of Understanding with the Aga Khan Trust and the Oberoi Group of Hotels for upgradation of the garden, revival of water channels and illumination in respect of Humayun's Tomb, New Delhi and with M/s Apeejay Surrendra Private Limited for structural conservation, upgradation of the garden and illumination in respect of Jantar Mantara, New Delhi.

(c) As of now there is no such proposal.

(d) Question does not arise.

[Translation]

Cost of Naphtha

*169. SHRI ZORA SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cost of Naphtha being imported by the Indian Oil Corporation is higher than the Naphtha being imported by the consumers direct;

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

(c) whether the power units of the country import Naphtha themselves which costs less;

(d) whether the fertilizer industry has also requested the Government to allow them to import Naphtha direct due to the same reason; and

(e) if so, whether the Government propose to review the cost factor involved in the import by the Indian Oil Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) Import of Naphtha for sale to consumers is not permitted under the EXIM policy. Hence, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) is not importing Naphtha for sale to consumers. However, IOCL acts as facilitating agency for import of Naphtha for consumption of Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Limited (IPCL). The cost of Naphtha imported by IOCL as facilitating agency on behalf of IPCL has been in the range of US dollar 289.70 per metric tonne (Rs. 13,029) to US dollar 369.40 per metric tonne (Rs. 17,066) during the period May to November 2000.

Dabhol Power Corporation Limited (DPCL) is the only power unit in the country that imports Naphtha for self use. The cost of Naphtha imported by DPCL has been in the range of US dollar 297.68 per metric tonne (Rs. 13,375) to US dollar 377.70 per metric tonne (Rs. 17,450) during the same period.

Thus, the cost of import of Naphtha by IOCL is comparable with the cost of import of Naphtha by DPCL. The minor variations in costs are on account of foreign exchange fluctuations/quality of product. The costs of import represent the landed cost of the product inclusive of customs duty. It does not include any handling costs and sales tax which is payable on indigenous product.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir, The Fertilizer industry has requested the Government to allow them to import Naphtha directly. This request is not on account of higher costs of import of Naphtha by IOCL but on account of higher costs of indigenous Naphtha due to sales tax levied by the State Governments. Sales tax is not leviable on imported Naphtha sold on high seas.

[English]

Tourists in Jammu and Kashmir

*170. SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of domestic/foreign tourists who visited different locations of Jammu and Kashmir State, particularly Mata Vaishno Devi and Amamath during each of the last three years and are expected to visit during the current year; and

(b) the steps taken to ensure the safety and security of these tourists?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) According to the statistic provided by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, the total number of visits of domestic tourists/pilgrims and foreign tourists in the State and at Mata Vaishno Devi and Amamath during the years 1997 to 2000 are as follows:

Year	Jammu & Kashmir Number of tourists		Mata Vaishno Devi	Amamath
	Domestic	Foreign	Number of Pilgrims	Number of Pilgrims
1997	4524286	21921	4434233	79035
1998	4878445	25485	4622097	149920
1999	4984773	26799	4668340	114366
2000 (Jan.-Oct.)	4692648	17935	4412896	173334

(b) Providing safety and security to the tourists including pilgrims is the responsibility of the State Government concerned. However, State Government of Jammu & Kashmir also deploys tourist police for providing assistance to the tourists.

[Translation]

Licence for Exploration of Crude Oil And Gas

*171. DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:

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

(a) whether the Government are inviting proposal from companies so that it may issue them licences for exploration of crude oil field during November-December, 2000;

(b) if so, the total number of such fields for which the licences are likely to be issued for oil exploration;

(c) the date on which the survey for identifying oil fields at these places was completed alongwith the estimated total oil reserves in these areas; and

(d) the reasons for delay in issuing licences for oil exploration at these places?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) The bids for exploration of blocks under second round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) are expected to be invited before the end of December, 2000 after completing various preparatory activities leading to invitation of bids. It is proposed to offer for bidding around twenty five exploration blocks, onland, shallow water offshore and deep water offshore.

(c) and (d) Exploration activities involving acquisition of new data, reprocessing/reinterpretation of the existing data form a continuous and ongoing process. The hydrocarbon potential of the above twenty five blocks can be assessed only after a discovery, through exploration. The exploration will start after the award of these blocks, signing of the Production Sharing Contract and grant of the Petroleum Exploration Licence.

[English]

Missing of Ammunition Wagon

*172. SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN:
SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a wagon load of high calibre ammunition despatched by the Jabalpur Ordnance Factory and meant for the Naval Armament Depot, Uran, remained undetected in a railway yard of North Mumbai suburb for more than two years;

(b) if so, whether the Government have made any inquiry in this regard;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the follow-up action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) A wagon loaded with high caliber ammunition was dispatched by Ordnance Factory, Khamaria at Jabalpur to Naval Armament Depot (NAD), Karanja on 1-12-1997. On non-receipt of consignment, NAD, Karanja took up the issue of non-receipt of the consignment with the Chief Commercial Superintendent, Central Railway on 18-5-1998. On receipt of information, Ordnance Factory, Khamaria also took up the matter with appropriate Railway authorities and a continuous follow up was made to trace the wagon. The wagon in question was finally received at NAD, Karanja on 7-9-2000. The marking on the wagon appeared to have been smudged owing to rain. The consignment was intact and there was no tampering. Its value was Rs. 14.29 lakhs.

After this singular incident, a system has been introduced by which the consignor also keeps track of the wagon till its receipt at consignee's end. However, an inquiry has also been ordered to fix responsibility.

Participation of Private Sector in Maintenance of Monuments

*173. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Government propose to hand over the maintenance of various monuments to private sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Union Government in this regard;

(d) whether any MoU has been signed by the ASI with the private sector in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof, monument-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The National Culture Fund set up by the Government of India envisages that individuals, communities and corporate entities can contribute towards assisting the Archeological Survey of India in structural conservation and in providing amenities around the monument.

(c) The Archaeological Survey of India have identified 34 monuments for upgradation of facilities.

(d) and (e) The Archaeological Survey of India has signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and the Oberoi Group of Hotels for upgradation of the garden, revival of water channels and the illumination of the Humayun's Tomb, New Delhi and with the Apeejay Surrendra Hotels Private Limited for environmental development, structural repairs and illumination of Jantar Mantar, New Delhi.

Ticketless Travellers

*174. DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA:
CH. TEJVEER SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether incidents of travelling without ticket have been increasing in some routes;

(b) if so, the routes/trains identified where such incidents are on the increase;

(c) the number of ticketless travellers apprehended during 1999-2000, zone-wise;

(d) the amount of penalty recovered during the said period; and

(e) the steps taken to check ticketless travelling?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, due to vigorous drive undertaken by the Railways, the number of persons apprehended travelling without ticket has gone up from 93.47 lakhs in 1997-98 to 111.10 lakhs in 1998-99 and 118.60 lakhs in 1999-2000.

(c) and (d) The number of ticketless travellers apprehended during the year 1999-2000 and the amount of penalty recovered from them, zone-wise, is as under:

Railway	No. of ticketless travellers apprehended (in lakhs)	Amount of penalty realised (in crores)
1	2	3
Central	19.94	26.12
Eastern	15.74	14.39

1	2	3
Northern	33.82	37.78
N.E.	8.78	10.56
N.F.	1.93	2.74
Southern	4.49	5.97
South Central	8.65	15.82
South Eastern	7.64	8.00
Western	17.61	22.34
Total	118.60	143.72

(e) Regular and surprise checks are conducted frequently to check ticketless/irregular travel in association with Railway Magistrates and Police. In addition, the Zonal Railways also conduct various special types of checks on specific dates and periods at various places and sections prone to ticketless travel.

Security Checks by CISF Personnels

*175. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:
SHRI RAMCHANDER BAINDA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have ordered freeze on the induction of CISF at airports across the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government have received complaints from VIPs about the security check by CISF personnel;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that VIPs are not harassed by CISF personnel at airports?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Performance of CISF already deployed at some of the airports is under review. It has been decided to put further induction of CISF at airports on hold till the review is completed.

(c) and (d) Some complaints against the CISF personnel have been received from VIPs about discrimination in frisking, misbehaviour etc.

(e) The CISF personnel have been instructed to be courteous and maintain polite behaviour while conducting security checks of all air passengers. They have also been advised to keep good liaison about the movement of VIPs.

Court of Inquiry Into Alliance Air Crash

*176. SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Court of Inquiry constituted to probe the Alliance Aircrash on July 17, 2000, has submitted its report to the Government;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken a decision to make the report available for the public scrutiny immediately after it is submitted to the Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government to implement its recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Allocation for Projects

*177. SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ten per cent cut in the allocation of funds to all the projects has been made;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the manner in which the development work will be carried out without being affected by the cut?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Regulation of plan expenditure as a cushion against possible shortfall in internal resources is a regular exercise, which has been carried out this year also. The regulation however, shall be reviewed during the course of current year, should the improvement in expected resources take place.

(c) Adequate care has been taken to ensure that projects targeted for completion during current year are not affected for want of funds.

Asia-Pacific Conference

*178. DR. V. SAROJA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a demand at the Asia-Pacific Conference on "Tourism for persons with disabilities for promoting barrier free tourism"; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Asia-Pacific Conference on Tourism for people with Disability took place in Bali, Indonesia from 24 to 28 September 2000. The Conference, organised by the Community-based Rehabilitation Development and Training Centre, Solo, Indonesia, was co-sponsored by ESCAP, the Nippon Foundation and the Indonesian Society for the Care of Disabled Children. The Conference adopted the Bali Declaration which envisages the promotion of barrier-free tourism for people with disabilities. The recommendations made during the conference have been circulated to various Governmental and other organisations.

[Translation]

Revival Policy for Handloom Sector

*179. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any policy for promotion and revival of handloom sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith participation of the Union as well as State Governments therein;

(c) whether the Government have taken any decision to give subsidy on transportation of ready material from the North Eastern States and other backward areas under Handloom Development Scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The development and promotion of handloom sector is a continuous process.

Recently, Government of India have launched a new Scheme, namely, Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana covering gamut of activities such as basic inputs, infrastructure, design input, strengthening of handloom organizations, marketing incentives, etc. to provide financial assistance in an integrated manner. The grant portion of the project cost is to be shared equally between Central and State Governments except in case of North Eastern States, Sikkim and State of J&K and proposals covering 100% beneficiaries from SC/ST Minority category, where it is 75:25.

(c) and (d) In order to facilitate movement of finished products to other parts of the country, transport subsidy is admissible under the new scheme to North Eastern States, Sikkim and State of J&K for transportation of products to their own outlets outside the State/approved site of exhibitions/fairs organized by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles subject to the condition that the population of the place to which it is transported has over 10 lakhs population.

[English]

Refineries in Joint Sector

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

(a) the details of the private sector and joint sector refineries in the oil sector that have sought permission for marketing of petroleum and diesel products;

(b) whether the Government have outlined some minimum investment criteria for oil companies to enter marketing;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the criteria has been fulfilled by each applicant; and

(e) if so, the reasons for delay in granting permission to them?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (e) The Government of India announced a road map for dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) in November, 1997. The aforesaid announcement inter alia provided for grant of marketing rights for transportation fuels viz. Motor Spirit (MS), High Speed Diesel (HSD) and Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) conditional on owning and operating refineries

with an investment of at least Rs. 2,000 crore or oil exploration and production companies producing atleast three million tonnes of crude oil annually. Full de-regulation of Petroleum Sector is targetted from 1st April, 2002 onwards.

The Government have received request from M/s. Reliance Petroleum Limited, M/s. Essar Oil Limited and M/s Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. for grant of marketing rights for transportation fuels.

Out of these refining companies M/s. Reliance Petroleum Limited and M/s Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. generally fulfil the criteria for grant of marketing rights. Marketing rights will be granted after the APM is dismantled.

Government have already decontrolled all petroleum products except MS, HSD, ATF, LPG (Domestic) and Kerosene (PDS).

Alleged Cowardice Acts of Army Officers during Kargil Conflict

1766. COL (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 40 officers and jawans are reported to be penalised for 'Cowardice' during Kargil conflict whereas the Army Chief totally absolves the top brass as published in the 'Outlook' weekly magazine dated October 2, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the Commanders who not only escaped from Censure but also awarded by the Government;

(c) whether the top leadership accuses the middle and junior level officers who led the battle and selectively targeted to cover up their failure; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to upkeep the morale of the middle ranking officers and jawans?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) Administrative/disciplinary action has been initiated against eight commissioned officers including one Major General, one Brigadier, one Colonel, one Lieutenant Colonel and four Majors and one junior commissioned officer for various acts of omissions and commissions during Kargil Operation. There is no case against any jawan. The morale of the whole Army is as high, as ever.

*[Translation]***Development of Gandhi Memorial**

1767. DR. SANJAY PASWAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any plan to develop and expand the Gandhi Memorial at 5-Tees January Marg in Delhi; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, which looks of Gandhi Memorial at 5-Tees January Marg has plans to redesign and expand the Martyr's Column where Gandhiji fell to assassin's bullet.

*[English]***Anomalies in Short Service Scheme of IAF**

1768. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of various anomalies in the Short Service Scheme of Indian Air Force;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have since decided to rationalise the scheme to remove such anomalies; and

(d) if so, the time likely to be taken to remove such anomalies?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Anomalies are in the areas of training and terms and conditions, particularly, in regard to period of initial engagement/extension, training duration/pattern and option for release/reserve liabilities.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Necessary orders to rationalise the Short Service Commission Schemes are likely to be issued in the near future.

*[Translation]***Comprehensive Scheme in Shipping Yard**

1769. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated a comprehensive scheme to convert two shipping yards of public sector of the country into world level shipping and maintenance yards; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) No Sir. However, in order to ensure level playing field and to improve competitiveness of Central Public Sector Shipyards in the global market. Government has evolved 30% subsidy scheme on Shipbuilding orders, both domestic and export of ocean going vessels. Besides, Shipping Companies placing order on such yards can also raise funds either from External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) or from Indian Financial Institutions. An interest differential subsidy is also admissible to the permissible extent, if funds are raised from Indian Financial Institutions.

*[English]***Freight Rates of Coal**

1770. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a big differences in the freight rates of coal movement in different zones of Railways;

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

(c) whether the Government propose to rationalise the rail freight rates for coal movement; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) No Sir. The freight rates for Coal, varying at different distances, are uniformly applicable over all zonal railways. No further rationalisation is necessary in this regard.

[Translation]

Chaityabhumil as National Monument

1771. SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to convert the "Chaityabhumil" the monument of Baba Saheb Ambedkar in Mumbai into a National Monument; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Government have decided to set up a Memorial for Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in Maharashtra. The modalities are being worked out.

[English]

Bandra-Gandhidham Express

1772. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3091 on August 10, 2000 regarding Introduction of train between Bandra and Gandhidham and state:

(a) whether the Bandra-Gandhidham Express has been started plying;

(b) if not, the reasons for delay; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) 9601/9602 Bandra-Gandhidham Express has been introduced w.e.f. 24.11.2000.

Fare Concession to Passengers of Indian Airlines and Air India

1773. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a fare concession is allowed to passengers, who travel by the flights of Air India, Indian Airlines and Alliance Air, which are scheduled to fly after ten in the night;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Nagpur-Delhi flight (CD 7470) of Indian Airlines which was scheduled to fly at 11.10 p.m. in the night from Nagpur earlier and later it had been rescheduled to fly at 10.30 P.M. in the night;

(d) if so, whether the Nagpur-Delhi passengers were also given concession in the air fare;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Air India provides discounted fares between 8 PM and 8 AM. Indian Airlines/ Alliance Air also give Night fares on eight sectors in India as part of marketing strategy.

(c) Alliance Air operated its flight CD 7470 Ex-Nagpur for Delhi at 2310 hours from 22nd May, 2000 to 14th June, 2000.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Alliance Air Flight CD 7469 operating on route Delhi/Raipur/Nagpur/Delhi is the only air service operating on these sectors. In view of this and there being no justification for providing concession on this route without diluting revenue, no such concession has been provided.

Reservation Counters at Durgapur Railway Station

1774. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to open more computerised reservation counters at Durgapur Railway Station;

(b) if so, the time by which these centres are likely to be opened; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) At present one enquiry and two booking counters are being operated in two-shifts at Durgapur Railway

Station. This arrangement is adequate to deal with the workload at present.

Special Tourism Zone

1775. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have included Kerala State in the list of Special Tourism Zone to promote tourism in the Southern State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other States selected for inclusion in the said zone?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Bekal in the State of Kerala has been identified as a special Tourism area. Kerala State have formed Bekal Development Authority for this purpose.

(c) In addition to Bekal, the following areas have been identified as Special Tourism areas,

- Muttakadu-Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu.
- Puri-Konark in Orissa.
- Sindhudurg in Maharashtra.
- Diu in Union Territory of Daman & Diu.

[Translation]

Cases Against Defence Personnel

1776. MOHD. SHAHABUDDIN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of soldiers/officers court martialled by the Army for misuse of their powers and duties during the last three years;

(b) the number of complaints received by the Army, the number of soldiers/officers found guilty and the number of complaints found baseless during the said period;

(c) whether the Government have received any suggestion from the National Human Rights Commission to amend the procedure being adopted for hearing of such cases;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) the concrete steps taken by the Government to prevent such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) During the three year period between January, 1997 to December, 1999, the total number of complaints received by the Army Headquarters on human rights violations, allegedly committed by the Army personnel is 593. While the number of complaints, found baseless was 561; 26 complaints were found to be true, and 6 complaints are still under investigation. Total number of convictions on account of human rights violation by way of Court Martial is 38 and through Administrative Action, 5.

National Human Rights Commission, in their Annual Report for the year 1996-97, had observed that the Commission be allowed to observe the proceedings, when Army enquiries into the allegations of human rights violation are in progress. However, the Government is of the opinion that since the cases of alleged human rights violations are being investigated expeditiously and appropriate disciplinary action taken against those, found guilty, there is no need to amend the existing procedure.

Besides awarding exemplary punishments to those found guilty of human rights violation, all ranks are regularly sensitized on the human rights aspects. A formal, standardised Operating Procedure has also been formulated for the conduct of the counter-insurgency operations to minimise inconvenience to the civilians.

Non-Payment of Salary

1777. KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated total number of employees working in various textile mills in Surat (Gujarat), mill-wise;

(b) whether the labourers working in the said mills are not getting their salaries regularly;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) As per records of the Office of the Textile Commissioner, the estimated number of employees working in various Cotton/ Man-made Fibre Textile Mills (Non-SSI) at Surat in Gujarat are 4017. The Mill-wise number of workers on roll are as follows:

S. No.	Name of the Mill	Workers on roll
1.	Niranjan Mills (A divn. of Piramal Spg. & Wvg. Mills Ltd.)	680
2.	The Surat District Co-op Spg. Mills Ltd.	1853
3.	Hanjer Fibres Ltd.	93
4.	Standard Industries Ltd. (Surat Cotton Mills)	927
5.	Garden Cotton & Yarns Ltd. (The Surat Textiles Mills Ltd.)	324
6.	Garden Cotton & Yarns Ltd. Unit No. 2 (The Surat Textile Mills Ltd.)	140
Total		4017

• Mills at S. Nos. 2 & 4 in the above table were closed as on 31.10.2000.

(b) to (d) Government has not received any representation regarding non-payment of workers' salaries regularly.

[English]

Use of Natural Gas as Fuel

1778. SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the industrial organisations are allowed to use natural gas as fuel at subsidised rate;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the price of natural gas is lower by 50-60% in comparison to that of in the international market; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to fix the prices of natural gas at the international price?

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) With effect from 1.10.1997, the consumer price of natural gas has been linked to the international price of fuel oil with the linkage increasing from 55% in 1997-98, 65% in 1998-99 and 75% in 1999-2000. It was also decided that the prices would be reviewed with the objective of reaching 100% parity with the international prices of fuel oil by 2002. However, for the North Eastern region, the consumer price of gas has been linked to the international price of fuel oil at 30% parity in 1997-98, 40% in 1998-99 and 45% in 1999-2000. Over and above this, a discount of Rs.300 per thousand cubic meters is

permitted on a case by case basis for the consumers in the North Eastern region.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Unlike in the case of crude oil and other petroleum products, there is no standard international price in respect of natural gas as the price varies from country to country depending upon the supply and demand situations. However, as mentioned above, action has already been taken to link the consumer price of gas with the international price of an alternate fuel.

Purchase of Bofors Guns from Sweden

1779. SHRI C.N. SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to purchase more Bofors guns from Sweden in view of its performance in the Kargil war; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the deal is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The guns purchased from Bofors, Sweden earlier are 155 mm Artillery guns. It is proposed to trial evaluate 155 mm Artillery guns offered by various vendors of the world on "no cost no commitment" basis. No final decision has yet been taken in this regard.

Land of AAI under Encroachment

1780. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether 65 acres of land valued at Rs. 260 crores belonging to Airports Authority of India is under encroachment by about 5300 families in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether the State Government has agreed to allot 158.41 acres of land at Lothukunta and Kukapalli valued at Rs.25 crores for rehabilitation of encroachers;

(c) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the AAI to provide 17.74 crores for early removal and rehabilitation of encroachers; and

(d) if so, the action taken or being taken by the Union Government on the request of the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) About 97 acres of land belonging to Airports Authority of India (AAI) is under encroachment in Andhra Pradesh. No valuation of the land in question has been carried out, so far.

(b) The State Government has drawn rehabilitation plan by identifying 149.56 acres of land at Kukatpalli and Lothukunta.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The AAI has already contributed Rs. 4.58 crores towards rehabilitation. The State Government has now revised the estimate to Rs. 17.74 crores. The AAI feels this is too high a cost to bear as the land is not required immediately for operational purposes and a new airport of international standards is likely to come up in Hyderabad in near future.

Replacement of out dated fleet of helicopters

1781. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to replace out-dated fleet of helicopters for Pawan Hans;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken in that direction along with the agreement for supply of Helicopter has been negotiated or signed; and

(d) the details of terms and conditions thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (d) Augmentation/fleet renewal is a continuous process. Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited (PHHL) has plans for immediate acquisition of two medium type helicopters for augmentation of its fleet. This proposal is under examination. PHHL also has plans to acquire ten more medium helicopters for replacement of its

Dauphin fleet in due course, after detailed techno-economical evaluation.

Telephone Facilities to Senior Civilian Staff Officers in Armed Forces

1782. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all commissioned Naval Officers of the rank equivalent to Deputy Secretary and above are entitled for residential telephone facility;

(b) if so, whether the scale of pay of Senior Civilian Staff Officers in Armed Forces Head Quarters (AFHQ) is also equivalent to Deputy Secretary;

(c) if so, the details of Senior Civilian Staff Officers in Army/Naval/Air Headquarters who have not been provided with residential telephone facility as on October 31, 2000 alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which the Government propose to remove this irregularity?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) All Senior Civilian Staff Officers working in the Services Headquarters promoted on regular basis in the pay scale of Rs. 12000-375-16500 (pre revised pay scale of Rs. 3700-150-5000) hold posts equivalent to that of Deputy Secretary are normally entitled to residential telephones. However, officers promoted on in-situ basis in the same scale and not given duties and responsibilities corresponding to that of Deputy Secretary are treated otherwise.

[*Translation*]

Aviation Training Centre in Ujjain

1783. SHRIMATI REENA CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been received from the Yash Air Limited to open an aviation training centre at Ujjain;

(b) if so, whether this proposal has been cleared; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) This proposal was not approved due to safety requirements of flying training at Ujjain.

HBT Gasline Project

1784. SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in 1989 the then Prime Minister made an announcement of setting up of a HBT Gas Air Pipe line project in Bihar under the Bihar Development Package;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the initiatives being taken by the Government to set up the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[English]

Lifting Ban on Inter-state Movement of Petroleum Products

1785. SHRI KALAVA SRINIVASULU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received representations from consumers and oil companies to lift the ban on inter-state movement of the petroleum products; and

(b) if so, the reaction taken by the Government 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) The ban on inter-state movement of petro-products has since been relaxed.

Proposal to Explore Oil/Gas

1786. SHRI THIRUNAVUKARASU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to explore oil and gas in Adiramapattinam Muthukadu coastal stretch in Tamil Nadu as there is a considerable potential there;

(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) to (c) Adiramapattinam-Muthukadu coastal stretch is covered by a thin layer of sediments, with the least prospectivity from hydrocarbon point of view. However, ONGC initiated hydrocarbon activities in mid-sixties in certain areas near Adiramapattinam. The area has been covered by seismic surveys amounting to more than 2000 Line Kilometre. In addition, about ten prospects have been drilled in this sector leading to a gas find at Vadatheru in Pudukkottai district. The area around the gas find is under active exploration. Based on the evaluation of geoscientific data of the area, one more prospect, namely Therukuthuru has been identified and scheduled to be taken up during 2000-01. Further, exploratory drilling will depend on the drilling results of this prospect. Exploration work in the offshore area adjoining Adiramapattinam is being carried out by Private/Joint Venture Companies.

Investors Protection Act

1787. SHRI JAI BHADRA SINGH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to enact the Investors Protection Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government have asked the Government of Uttar Pradesh to bring the Investors Protection Act; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the State Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) No Sir. The Central Government has, in exercise of powers conferred by sub-section 4 of section 205C of Companies Act 1956 (1 of 1956), has constituted a committee under Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Company Affairs with ten other members to administer the Investor Education and Protection Fund

and to maintain separate account and other relevant records in relation to that fund in such form as may be prescribed in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. These rules will be notified in the Gazette of India as and when approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India/Ministry of Finance. The money from the fund shall be utilized for promotion of investor awareness and Protection of the interest of investors in accordance with such rules as may be prescribed.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Demurrage Charges on Petroleum Products

1788. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether demurrage charges is a part of import cost of petroleum products and included for the purpose of assessing the import duty;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some cases are pending in the court of Custom Commissioner, Calcutta in respect of import of kerosene oil by Indian Oil Corporation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) In terms of interpretation by CEGAT, New Delhi, demurrage charge is not a part of import cost of petroleum products and is therefore not to be included for purposes of assessing the import duty.

(c) and (d) Presently, no cases are pending adjudication by the Commissioner of Customs, Calcutta in respect kerosene oil, imported by Indian Oil Corporation.

Goods/Cargo Service from Haldia to Allahabad

1789. SHRI K.E. KRISHNAMURTHY:
SHRI DHARM RAJ SINGH PATEL:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the waterway from Haldia port to Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh has been opened for ships for ferrying goods/cargo on commercial basis;

(b) if so, the items which are being shipped on this waterway route;

(c) the names of other waterways which are under consideration to be opened;

(d) the total expenditure likely to be incurred in this scheme;

(e) whether there is any scheme to attract tourists on this route via Haldia to Allahabad; and

(f) if so, the time by which this scheme is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The Haldia-Calcutta-Patna stretch of NW-1 is open for navigation for passenger and goods traffic by vessels upto 1.8 m draft for about 330 days in a year. Action has been initiated to provide the waterway in Patna-Allahabad reach for vessels with 1.8 m draft for operation of 300-330 days in a year.

(b) The items which are transported on National Waterway No. 1, include cement, jute bags, silica sands, coal/coke, fertilizers, over dimensional cargo etc.

(c) The National Transport Policy Committee have identified following ten waterways having potential for development and declaration of National Waterway.

1. Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system
2. The Brahmaputra
3. The West Coast Canal
4. The Sunderbans
5. The Godavari
6. The Krishna
7. The Mahanadi
8. The Narmada
9. The Mandovi, Zuari rivers and Cumberjua Canal in Goa
10. The Tapi

Besides these techno-economic feasibility studies have also been conducted on Barak River, East Coast Canal, DVC Canal and Kakinada-Mercanum Canal which indicated that these waterways have the potential for development of inland water transport.

Three waterways namely the Ganga from Haldia to Allahabad (1620 km), the Brahmaputra from Sadiya to Dhubri (891 km) and West Coast Canal including Champakara and Udyogamandal canals (205 km) have already been declared as National Waterways and are in the process of development by providing infrastructural facilities; such as navigational channel, terminals and navigational aids subject to availability of resources.

The declaration of other waterways as National Waterways and thereby undertaking development thereof by IWAI will depend on availability of resources.

(d) The development of National Waterways is a continuous process and carried out by IWAI through various Plan Schemes. The outlays for the development of 3 (three) National Waterways provided in the 9th Five Years Plan is to the tune of Rs. 264 crore.

(e) Waterway once developed with adequate depth can be used for cargo, passenger transportation as also for tourism purpose. At present, there has been no specific scheme with IWAI in regard to attracting tourists on Ganga between Haldia and Allahabad.

(f) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Water Transport System

1790. SHRI RAMSHAKAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any scheme for water transport system like the rail and Road transport;

(b) if so, whether the Government are contemplating participation of private companies in this sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) constituted under IWAI Act, 1985, inter-alia, is to carry out surveys and investigations for development, maintenance and better utilisation of National Waterways

and the appurtenant land for shipping and navigation and prepare schemes in this regard.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Action has been initiated for evolving policy framework, envisaging certain fiscal and financial incentives for private participation in inland water transport.

[English]

Projects Under S.C.I.

1791. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) the details of projects taken up by the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) during the Ninth Plan;

(b) the amount of investment involved in those projects; and

(c) the efforts being made to implement those projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The SCI had proposed to acquire 53 vessels aggregating 23.87 lakhs DWT during the 9th Plan period. However, in view of the various difficulties faced by SCI, the acquisition programme was subsequently revised and now SCI propose to acquire 25 vessels during 9th plan period.

(b) The total investment involved for acquiring 25 vessels is about Rs. 3479 crores.

(c) The SCI has made adequate efforts to implement these projects and already acquired 4 vessels aggregating 1.29 lakhs DWT and also placed orders for acquisition of 8 vessels aggregating 5.34 lakhs DWT. Efforts are also in hand to acquire/place order for the balance 13 vessels during the plan period.

Development of Inland Water Transport System in A.P.

1792. SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plans to develop Inland Water Transport System in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to curtail the losses of Central Inland Water Transport Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Inland Waterways Authority of India have conducted techno-economic feasibility study for integrated canal system between Kakinada and Mercaunum in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu which include Kakinada canal, Eluru Canal, Commamur Canal, North Buckingham canal alongwith parts of Godavari and Krishna rivers. As per the study conducted, this Integrated waterway system is viable for IWT development. However, declaration of the waterway system as a National Waterway and subsequent development thereof depends upon the availability of funds.

(c) M/s A.F. Ferguson & Co., a management consultant, identified the reasons for losses incurred by CIWTC as unremunerative routes, low productivity, grossly inflated staff level etc. The rehabilitation package of CIWTC, which is in hand, Inter-alia, envisages phasing of unproductive activities, rationalisation of manpower, strengthening the viable activities and cutting of transition period by providing night navigational facilities etc.

Hospitals for Port Trust Employees

1793. SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the different port trust proposes to set up hospitals for their employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof; port-wise;

(c) whether World Bank has been funding for the construction of hospitals for the port workers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have set up any hospital at Paradip;

(f) if so, the progress thereof; and

(g) the fund made available from World Bank for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) All the eleven Major Port Trusts of India have hospitals for their employees.

(c) No World Bank funding has been involved in the construction of these hospitals except in the case of Mumbai Port Trust Hospital.

(d) The cost of Mumbai Port Trust Hospital Project was Rs. 50.77 lakhs in 1962 and only Foreign Exchange Component of the expenditure was covered by International Development Agency credit from World Bank.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) A hospital for the port employees already exists in Paradip Port which is running since 1964.

(g) No World Bank funding was involved in the construction of this Hospital.

Appointment/Posting of SCs/STs.

1794. SHRI RAMESH C. JIGAJINAGI:
SARDAR BUTA SINGH:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to post/appoint adequate number of persons from SCs/STs community as Heads/Chief Executives/CMD and Directors, Official/ Non-Official Members of the Boards of Management of various Autonomous Bodies/Enterprises/Undertakings under his Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of persons appointed/posted to the said referred posts/assignments under various Port Trusts and National Shipping Board during the last three years, year-wise; and

(d) the number of SCs/STs persons among them and their percentage as compared to the total number of persons appointed during that period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

Photo Exhibition

1795. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Lalit Kala Akademi recently organised a photo exhibition on the Prime Minister;

(b) if so, whether this represents a break from the past precedent, not to organise exhibitions on political persons by the Akademi;

(c) if so, whether the exhibition was aimed to serve the objective of the Akademi to foster activities relating to the creative visual arts; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the names of the sponsor of the exhibition and the fee charged by the Akademi?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No Sir. According to the information furnished by the Lalit Kala Akademi, the exhibition on the visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to United States of America was organized by Delhi Study Group a Non-Governmental Organisation and the Lalit Kala Akademi had provided free gallery space for the exhibition.

(b) to (d) Do not arise

[Translation]

Terrorists Freed from Police Custody in J&K

1796. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Army Jawans are reported to have attacked a police station in Jammu and Kashmir and taken four hard-core terrorists from their lock-up who were charged of car theft and had already surrendered before the State Police as published in *Hindustan* dated October 23, 2000; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the action taken by the Government against the persons found responsible?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The information is being collected.

[English]

Setting up of Laboratories by A.S.I.

1797. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBHA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India has set up/propose to set up laboratories to carry out the Scientific Studies;

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

(c) the amount sanctioned for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) A laboratory for conducting scientific studies relating to different areas of conservation is located at Dehradun, the headquarter of the Science Branch of Archaeological Survey of India. The Budget for this branch in the year 2000-01 is Rs. 1.75 crores.

Construction of Temple in Sher Shah Suri Premises

1798. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the grave concern expressed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) over the ongoing construction of a temple in the premises of Sher Shah Suri in Sasaram, Bihar; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The ongoing construction of the temple has been stopped.

Admission of SCs/STs Students in National School of Drama

1799. SARDAR BUTA SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Dr. Ambedkar Birth Centenary Celebrations Committee headed by the Prime Minister recommended for ensuring admission of students from STs/STs community to the fullest extent of the quota of seats reserved for this community;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(c) the total number of seats offered in different faculties/disciplines in the National School of Drama (NSD) in all the courses during the last three years, year-wise and the number of SCs/STs among them; and

(d) the reasons for not implementing the said recommendations in toto?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) One of the recommendations of the Dr. Ambedkar Birth Centenary Celebrations Committee was to ensure Admission of SCs & STs in colleges and Universities to fullest extent of Reservation.

(b) Dr. Ambedkar Foundation, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has informed that they have communicated the recommendations for allow up action to the Department of Secondary Education and Higher Education.

(c) and (d) Every year the National School of Drama admits 20 students to their three year Diploma Course in Dramatics. This selection is by way of a two tier interview. Four seats out of twenty are earmarked for SC/ST candidates, preferably those hailing from families traditionally connected with performing arts. Only if suitable candidates are not available the seats are offered to suitable general category candidates. Four SC/ST candidates were selected for admission in 1996-97 two each in 1997-98, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 and three in 1998-99.

[*Translation*]

Vacation of Santushti Complex

1800. SHRI AKHILESH YADAV:
SHRI RASHID ALVI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi High Court has given a verdict regarding the vacation of Santushti complex near Prime Minister's House;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the time given for vacation;

(c) the progress made so far to comply with the court order; and

(d) the time likely to be taken in getting the premises fully vacated?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The Hon'ble High Court of Delhi has been monitoring proceedings against the unauthorised occupants/shopkeepers in the Santushti Complex, under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. However, it may not be possible to specify a time limit for finalisation of such judicial proceedings.

[*English*]

Competition Law Bill

1801. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce a Competition Law Bill during the winter session of the Parliament;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time by which the said bill is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) The Government would like to introduce the Competition Bill in Parliament at the earliest available opportunity. However, the Government has not given a final shape to the Bill as yet.

The Government has, at the moment, only prepared a Draft Concept Bill on Competition Law. A copy of the Concept Bill has been made accessible on the Internet (at www.nic.in/dca, the web-site of the Department of Company Affairs), inviting comments from all concerned.

The Concept Bill broadly speaking, deals with the following aspects;

1. To prohibit agreements among enterprises which cause or is likely to cause an appreciable adverse effect on competition within India.
2. To prohibit abuse of dominant position by enterprises.
3. To investigate acquisitions, mergers and amalgamations (collectively called "combinations") of enterprises when they exceed the prescribed threshold limits so that such combinations do not result in anti-competitive situations.
4. To establish a Quasi-Judicial Body by the name, the Competition Commission of India (CCI), to investigate and adjudicate on these matters.
5. To repeal the existing Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 and to wind-up the MRTP Commission.
6. To transfer the pending cases the MRTP Commission to the CCI and to the Consumer Fora established under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

Opening of more Reservation Counters

1802. SHRI BHERULAL MEENA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that passengers have to wait for a long for getting railway reservation at all the railway stations of Delhi;

(b) if so, whether a comprehensive scheme is being formulated to open more reservation counters for the convenience of passengers; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) During the peak season such as Summer rush, Pooja rush and Christmas vacations, waiting time at all reservation offices including in Delhi area for purchasing the ticket is relatively more as compared to other periods of the year.

(b) and (c) Provision and expansion of reservation facilities is a continuous process. Additional counters at the existing reservation centres are provided to deal with the heavy demand during the peak seasons. Besides, new reservation centres are opened in the major cities to decongest the existing reservation centres. The details of reservation centres already operating in Delhi area are given in enclosed Statement. Besides, reservation centres are also proposed to be provided at Tughlakabad, Subzi Mandi, Shakurbasti, Sena Bhavan and Gopinath Bazar.

Statement

Details of Reservation Centres operating in Delhi Area.

S. No.	Location
1	2
1.	IRCA BUILDING (NEW DELHI)
2.	DELHI STATION
3.	PARLIAMENT HOUSE
4.	NIZAMUDDIN
5.	SAROJINI NAGAR
6.	KIRTI NAGAR
7.	DELHI SHAHDARA
8.	NEW DELHI STATION

1

2

9. BARODA HOUSE (NEW DELHI)
10. RAIL BHAWAN (NEW DELHI)
11. KARKARDOOMA
12. NOIDA
13. NEW AZADPUR
14. DELHI CANTT.
15. TOURIST BUREAU NEW DELHI STATION
16. NEW DELHI (OKHLA)
17. NEW DELHI (SUPREME COURT)
18. NEW DELHI (I.G.I. AIRPORT)
19. NEW DLEHI (LAJPAT NAGAR)
20. DELHI SARAIROHILLA STATION
21. PRESS CLUB OF INDIA (NEW DELHI)
22. DELHI TOURISM (NEW DELHI)

VRS Scheme in Air India and Indian Airlines

1803. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided on any wage cut or VRS Scheme for the employees of Air India and Indian Airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the likely impact on its operational cost?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) The proposals of Voluntary Retirement Scheme in respect of employees of Air India and Indian Airlines have been approved by their respective Board of Directors and is under consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

Defence Land in Bihar

1804. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that a large area of defence land in Katihar district of Bihar is lying unutilized;

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

(c) whether the Government propose to open a military school on that land; and

(d) if not, the manner in which this land is proposed to be utilised?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) An area of 683.31 acres of Defence land is available at Katihar. The land is under the management of Army and is proposed to be utilised for the key Location Plan for establishing Army units. There is no proposal for setting up of a military school on the said land, at present.

[English]

Appointment/Posting of SCs/STs in Autonomous Bodies

1805. SHRI RAJIAH MALYALA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to post/appoint adequate number of persons from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe community as Heads/CMD and Official/ Non-Official Members of Board of Management/Governing Councils of the Public Sector Undertakings, Autonomous, Statutory, Subordinate and attached Offices of the Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total number of posts in the rank of Head/ CMD/Official/Non-Official Members of Himalayan Tourism Advisory Board of the Ministry of Tourism and number of persons from SCs/STs community working against such posts on January 1, 1996 and January 1, 2000?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) The information is being collected.

[Translation]

Allotment of Petrol Outlets and LPG Dealerships to SC/ST

1806. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the last three years cases pertaining to allotment of petrol outlets, retail sale counters, and LPG dealership made on fake SCs/STs certificate, have been detected;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of outlets and LPG dealerships cancelled as a result 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 Marketing Companies have reported that during the last three years (i.e. 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000), no case pertaining to allotment of retail outlet dealerships/LPG distributorships/SKO-LDO dealerships made on fake SC/ST certificate has been finally established.

[English]

Cases of Senior Citizens

1807. SHRI RASHID ALVI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to USQ No. 3811 on August 17, 2000 regarding cases of senior citizen and state:

(a) whether information in the matter has since been collected;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons for delay; and

(c) the time by which the information is likely to be collected?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) The information received from Supreme Court of India and seven High Courts is given in enclosed Statement. Information from other High Courts is still awaited.

(c) No fixed time-frame can be given.

Statement

Supreme Court of India The Supreme Court has expressed its inability to furnish the exact number of cases pending in this Court. However, the Supreme Court Registry has been requested to make efforts to identify the matters relating to older persons and get them disposed of on priority basis.

HIGH COURTS

Name of the High Court	No. of cases pending in High Courts & Subordinate Courts (in August 2000)	Further details
1	2	3
1. Gauhati	617	The High Court have issued instructions to all outlying Benches of the High Court and the Subordinate Courts under the jurisdiction of Gauhati High Court to dispose of cases in which persons above 65 years of age are involved on priority basis.
2. Himachal Pradesh	725 (District & Subordinate Courts only)	The High Court has issued instructions to all the Subordinate Courts in the State of H.P. to take up the cases of the persons above the age of 65 years on priority basis.
3. Jammu and Kashmir	1631	The High Court has directed all Subordinate Courts to dispose of speedy cases involving persons above 65 years of age.
4. Kerala	31586 (as on 1.4.2000 in District & Subordinate Courts only)	The High Court has issued instructions to subordinate courts to dispose of cases of senior citizens on priority basis. Such cases are being periodically monitored by the High Court.
5. Madhya Pradesh	8635 (In High Court Only)	The High Court is following the Order of the Chief Justice of India in this regard.
6. Patna	10077 (In District/ Subordinate courts as on 1.1.2000)	The High Court has directed the Judicial Officers to identify the cases involving older persons more particularly those who are more than 65 years old,

1	2	3
		and dispose of the cases on priority basis during the year 1999 and these officers who dispose of such cases should be given extra credit of 10% of the units for final disposal of cases in normal course.
7. Punjab & Haryana	8033 (In District/ Subordinate Courts of Punjab, Haryana and UT of Chandigarh)	The High Court has issued necessary instructions to all the District and Session Judges to identify and dispose of cases in which persons above 65 years of age are involved on priority basis.

*[Translation]***Funds Released for Upgradation of Airport**

1808. SHRI PUSP JAIN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have released funds to Airport Authority of India for upgradation of various airports;

(b) if so, the details of funds allocated during each of the last three years and the details of actual amount spent on each airport;

(c) the details of airport upgraded so far;

(d) whether the Government have received any report regarding misuse of funds allocated for upgradation/development of various airports; and

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Budgetary Support of Rs. 0.79 crores was given only during 1999-2000, for the development of Amritsar Airport, whereas Airports Authority of India (AAI) has spent Rs. 1 crore in 1998-99 and 0.79 crores in 1999-2000 for the purpose. A sum of Rs. 10 crores in 1997-98, Rs. 19.92 crores in 1998-99 and Rs. 20.50 crores in 1999-2000 was released for the development of airports in North East Region and other crucial areas like Jammu and Kashmir. But an expenditure of Rs. 29.53 crores in 1997-98, Rs. 42.09 crores in 1998-

99 and Rs. 42.32 crores in 1999-2000 has been incurred by AAI far in excess of the budgetary support extended. For the development of Port Blair and Leh airport, budgetary support to the tune Rs. 5.08 crores and Rs. 3.71 crores each during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 was given and AAI has spent Rs. 5.24 crores and Rs. 9.01 crores respectively.

(c) The details of airports upgraded so far are strengthening of runway and associated pavements at Dibrugarh airport and installation of radar at Guwahati in April, 1997; construction of new Terminal Building complex at Dimapur in July, 1997; expansion of Arrival Hall of Terminal Building and of apron and allied works at Guwahati airport in May, 1998; expansion Terminal Building for 300 passengers at Silchar in June, 1999; expansion of Terminal Building for 650 passengers at Imphal in November, 1999; construction of new civil enclave for 500 passengers and Technical Block at Port Blair and Imphal respectively in October, 2000; construction of new civil enclave for 400 passengers at Tezpur in November, 2000.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps

1809. SHRIMATI JAS KAUR MEENA:
SHRI BRIJLAL KHABRI:

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

(a) the number of petrol pumps allotted in the country during the last three years, State-wise; and

(b) the number of such petrol pumps allotted to persons belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes?

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 last three years (i.e., 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000), 334 retail outlet dealerships were allotted all over the country including 106 retail outlet dealerships belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes.

[English]

**Joint Venture for Manufacturing
of IL-214 Aircraft**

1810. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
SHRI RAMCHANDER BAINDA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia and India have jointly decided to manufacture IL-214 aircraft having capacity of 100 passengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the cost likely to be incurred on this aircraft and the time by which it is likely to be manufactured;

(d) the details of purposes for which this aircraft is likely to be manufactured; and

(e) the extent to which it is likely to remove the shortage of passenger aircrafts in the country?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (e) In accordance with the recently signed protocol between the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL), India and Illyushin Design Bureau, Russia, the two sides have, inter-alia, agreed to continue discussions on the possibility of joint design and production of 100 seater Illyushin IL-214 aircraft. The cost details are being worked out in consultation with Russian partners. The aircraft is planned to meet the defence requirements of tactical transport aircraft (TTA) of capacity 15 to 20 tonne category as well as 100 seater passenger aircraft for Civil airlines transport.

Encroachment on Defence Land

1811. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Standing Committee on Defence in their latest report has expressed anxiety over the illegal encroachment on defence land, improper use of land resources and on wastage of defence land;

(b) if so, the details of defence land under encroachment, location-wise alongwith the date of encroachment;

(c) whether the defence land situated in village Ghitorni, Delhi is also under encroachment by way of constructing a road; and

(d) if so, the action taken to protect that land?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The Standing Committee on Defence (Thirteenth Lok Sabha), in their latest Report, has stressed the need to bring about comprehensive amendments in the Cantonment Act, to empower the Cantonment administration to deal with the removal of encroachments, effectively and to secure adequate coordination between Cantonment Administration, State Government and State Police for removal of encroachers from the Defence land, besides providing a separate mechanism to oversee the progress.

The Committee has also recommended that in order to guard against misuse and wastage of land resources, all the defence land policies, existing in various Government of India orders, should be consolidated into statutory proposals and be included as amendments to the Cantonment Act, 1924.

(b) The Statewise details of Defence land, under encroachment are given in enclosed Statement. Most of these lands are under encroachment/illegal occupation of various individuals/State Governments etc. which have occurred over a period of time.

(c) and (d) No encroachment on the Defence land at Ghitorni village in Delhi has come to the notice of the Ministry.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of State/ Union Territory	Land under encroachment (in acres)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1558.48160
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	—
3.	Assam	833.52000
4.	Bihar	341.75500
5.	Delhi	150.41830
6.	Goa	—
7.	Gujarat	717.82490
8.	Haryana	268.70820
9.	Himachal Pradesh	26.01100
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	317.08225
11.	Karnataka	144.88387
12.	Kerala	24.92766
13.	Madhya Pradesh	270.23100
14.	Maharashtra	1957.66570
15.	Manipur	3.91000
16.	Meghalaya	21.27570
17.	Mizoram	—
18.	Nagaland	—
19.	Orissa	—
20.	Punjab	3930.96680
21.	Rajasthan	428.95450
22.	Sikkim	0.52300
23.	Tamil Nadu	124.56162
24.	Tripura	—
25.	Uttar Pradesh	2063.37900
26.	West Bengal	546.81680
27.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	2.00000
28.	Chandigarh	52.97100
29.	Daman and Diu	—
Total		13786.86790

Child Marriages

1812. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

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

(a) whether the Government are aware of the continuance of illegal child marriages;

(b) if so, the number of cases detected by the Government during the last three years, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to effectively check such marriages?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) A copy of the reply given to a similar question, namely, Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 138 on 28th November, 2000 is given in the Statement enclosed.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes Sir. The unfortunate practice of child marriage is still continuing in some parts of the country. According to the information available with the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the number of cases registered in the country under the Child Marriage Restraint Act during the years 1997, 1998 and 1999 were 78, 56 and 44 respectively. The State-wise break-up of these statistics is enclosed.

(c) By an amendment carried out in 1978 in Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, the minimum age for marriage was raised to 21 years for boys and 18 years for girls; the offences under this Act were also made cognizable. The administration and implementation of this Act is however, the responsibility of the State Governments.

The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 was also amended in 1976 to legally enable a girl to repudiate a child marriage whether the marriage has been consummated or not.

Besides the aforementioned legal provisions, the following measures have been taken to curb the social evil of child marriage:

- (i) Under a National Plan of Action, which focuses on survival, protection and development of the girl child, awareness is being created against child marriages through the electronic and print

media. Social awareness is also being generated, through voluntary agencies and universities, about the ill-effects of early marriage and consequent early pregnancy on the health of the girl child.

- (ii) The State Governments and UT Administrations have been asked to formulate a specific scheme to raise the status of the girl child, with one of its objectives being the postponement of marriage of girl child beyond the legal age for marriage.
- (iii) The Department of Women and Child Development implements a Centrally Sponsored

Scheme entitled "Balika Smridhi Yojana" under which funds are released to the State Governments and the UT Administrations to provide financial assistance to the girls born on or after 15th August, 1997. The financial assistance is in the nature of a periodic deposit in the account of the girl child, including a scholarship for successful completion of study in each class. The accumulated value of deposits becomes payable to the beneficiary on attaining the age of 18 years and having remained unmarried till then. Under the scheme, a sum of Rs. 40 crore has been released during the year 1999-2000 to benefit 8 lakh girl children.

Annexure

Incidence of Child Marriage Restraint Act During 1997 to 1999

Sl.	State/UT	1997	1998	1999
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	0	1	1
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0
3.	Assam	0	0	0
4.	Bihar	23	5	0
5.	Goa	0	0	0
6.	Gujarat	29	30	14
7.	Haryana	0	3	0
8.	Himachal Pradesh	6	4	3
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0
10.	Karnataka	1	2	0
11.	Kerala	4	1	11
12.	Madhya Pradesh	0	1	1
13.	Maharashtra	0	0	7
14.	Manipur	0	0	0
15.	Meghalaya	0	0	0
16.	Mizoram	0	0	0
17.	Nagaland	0	0	0
18.	Orissa	0	0	1
19.	Punjab	1	2	4

1	2	3	4	5
20.	Rajasthan	10	5	2
21.	Sikkim	0	0	0
22.	Tamil Nadu	1	0	0
23.	Tripura	0	0	0
24.	Uttar Pradesh	1	0	0
25.	West Bengal	0	0	0
Total (States)		76	54	44
26.	A & N Islands	1	2	0
27.	Chandigarh	0	0	0
28.	D & N Haveli	0	0	0
29.	Daman & Diu	0	0	0
30.	Delhi	0	0	0
31.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
32.	Pondicherry	1	0	0
Total (UTs)		2	2	0
Total (All-India)		78	56	44

Source: 1. 1997, 1998 = Crime in India Data
2. 1999 = Monthly Crime Statistics.

Note: Figures for 1999 are provisional

[Translation]

Insurance Scheme for Passengers

1813. SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide insurance facility for all the rail passengers in view of the rail accidents;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Rail Passenger Insurance Scheme has been in operation since 1-8-1994 and insures bonafide passengers against death or injury in train accidents or untoward incidents as defined under Sections 124 and 124-A of the Railways Act, 1989.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Situation on Indo-Pak Border

1814. SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:
SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE:
SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH:
DR. BALIRAM:
SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:
SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI:
SHRI BRAHMANAND MANDAL:
SHRI B. VENKATESHWARLU:
SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:
SHRI P.R. KHUNTE:
KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI:
SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Pakistani activities currently noticed by Indian Armed Forces on various places of Indo-Pak border;

(b) the details of places and Army camps where Pakistani forces resorted to fire on various points of Line of Control and elsewhere since August till date, place-wise and date-wise;

(c) the details of casualties suffered on both sides amongst civilians and jawans of Armed forces in each of the firing incidents; and

(d) the concrete steps taken/proposed to be taken to safeguard the national security and to prevent such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) Pakistani activities in the Indo-Pak border comprise activities along the Line of Control (LC) in Jammu & Kashmir and activities along the International Border (IB). Activities along the LC include artillery and small arms firing, infiltration of militants and attempted raids on isolated vulnerable posts. There are reports of Pakistan army formations conducting Winter Collective Training opposite International Border in their known training areas and operation locations.

As Pakistan resorts to unprovoked firing as a regular day-to-day phenomenon to abet infiltration and inflict casualties on our troops, it is not practical to give datewise and placewise details of places and army camps where Pakistan has resorted to firing since August.

The details of fatal casualties suffered by Indian Army due to hostile activities from Pakistan side from August to 31st October 2000 are as under, as per available information:-

Officers	JCOs	Other Ranks	Total
05	—	21	26

Estimated Pakistani casualties between August and October, 2000 are around 410. The number of civilian casualties on our side in being ascertained.

All developments having a bearing on India's national security are constantly monitored and all necessary steps are being taken from time to time to maintain appropriate defence preparedness to thwart any attempt of misadventure on the part of elements hostile to India.

[Translation]

Supply of LPG Through Pipeline in U.P.

1815. SHRI RIZWAN ZAHIR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to supply gas to vehicles and industries through pipelines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the districts of Uttar Pradesh likely to be benefited in the first phase; and

(d) the details of prices fixed for it by the Government?

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) M/s Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL), a Joint Venture company of Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), is supplying natural gas to domestic/commercial consumers through pipelines in certain areas in Delhi. IGL is also supply Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) at 51 CNG outlets in Delhi. Similarly, Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL), a Joint Venture company of GAIL and M/s British Gas is supplying natural gas through pipelines for domestic, industrial and commercial use in certain areas in the city of Mumbai and also to automobile sector running on CNG at 21 CNG outlets.

(c) The UP State Industrial Development Corporation Limited (UPSIDCL), a UP State Government Undertaking, has submitted the Techno-Economic Feasibility Report on the City Gas Distribution Systems at Lucknow and Bareilly seeking allocation of gas.

(d) Government does not fix prices for city distribution of piped natural gas and CNG.

[English]

Oil Price Threaten World Economy

1816. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "Oil prices continue rise; threaten world economy" as reported in the 'Times of India' dated September 21, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the IMF have warned the rising of fuel costs which may affect global economic outlook;

(c) whether the European Union and OPEC have decided to take steps to boost oil production in the world; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government on such development?

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) Yes, Sir. As per International Monetary Fund (IMF) web-site, there were two press conferences of the IMF, one on September 19, 2000 on the occasion of release of IMF's latest World Economic Outlook and the other one by the Managing Director of IMF on September 20, 2000 at Prague. Both the conferences contained references to the oil price increase and its impact on the World Economy. The World Economic Outlook (October, 2000) also contained references to the oil price rise.

(c) The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries has announced increase in production of crude oil in various rounds of their scheduled meetings during 2000.

(d) The Government continuously monitors the developments in the international market so as to make suitable adjustments in prices of petroleum products in the country.

Retirement Age in N.T.C.

1817. SHRI BHIM DAHAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have decided to reduce the retirement age of NTC employees from 60 to 58 years;

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

(c) the estimated number of employees likely to be retired immediately as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir. It was decided to rollback retirement age of Board and Below-Board level employees working in NTC from 60 years to 58 yrs.

(b) In view of the mounting losses of NTC mills which stood at Rs. 1019 Cr. for the year 1999-2000, Government had taken this measure after a detailed exercise to control the expenditure. The measure is to bring down the administrative expenditure and to improve the viability of mill and is therefore in the long-term interests of the organisation.

(c) No employee is retired based on this decision yet. First batch of employees will retire on 31st Jan 2001.

Expansion of Old Delhi Railway Station

1818. SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to expand/augment the capacity of Old Delhi Railway Station;

(b) if so, the estimated cost of the project; and

(c) the stages of expansion and the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir. The existing operational facilities at Delhi Main Railway Station are adequate for present and projected levels of traffic at this station.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Pending applications for Dealership of LPG, Petrol and Kerosene

1819. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications for allotment of wholesale dealership of LPG, petrol, kerosene and diesel pending at present in Maharashtra;

(b) the time by which these applications are pending alongwith the reasons for their pendency; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to dispose of the pending cases?

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) At present, 212 retail outlet dealerships, 305 LPG distributorships and 66 SKO-LDO dealerships are pending for allotment in the State of Maharashtra.

The selection of dealers/distributors for some of the locations could not take place owing to the non-functioning of the Dealer Selection Boards on account of the announcement of General Election 1999 and enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct and the dissolution of these Boards subsequently. For early selection of dealers/distributors, 59 new DSBs have been set up, which include 4 for Maharashtra. Selection is made in a phased manner, and it may not be possible at this stage to

indicate the exact time frame for completion of selection of dealers/distributors for the pending locations.

**Future Plan for Exploration of
Oil and Natural Gas**

1820. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:

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

(a) whether the ONGC has launched its improved oil recovery programme for its eight major Oilfields;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the expected tonnes of oil likely to be yielded as a result thereof by the last five years and ten years, oilfield-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) and (b) Schemes for improved recovery of crude oil and gas in 14 major fields are proposed to be implemented by ONGC in stages, out of which the following eight fields have been taken up in the initial stage;

- (i) Kalol
- (ii) North Kadi
- (iii) Sanand
- (iv) Santhal
- (v) Balol
- (vi) Gandhar
- (vii) Neelam; and
- (viii) Heera

These are in addition to the Scheme formulated by ONGC for redevelopment of Mumbai High field for improvement in ultimate recovery.

(c) The tentative estimates by ONGC indicate the possibility of obtaining incremental production of about 10 million tonnes (MMT) cumulative over the next five years and 22 MMT cumulative over a ten year period.

[Translation]

**Opening of Petrol Pump Outlets
and LPG Agencies in U.P.**

1821. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to open petrol pumps and gas agencies in Mau and Azamgarh districts of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these agencies are likely to be opened?

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) In order to meet the increased demand, in addition to the locations pending from the previous marketing plans, 1 retail outlet and 6 LPG distributorships for Mau and 3 retail outlets and 4 LPG distributorships for Azamgarh in the State of Uttar Pradesh have been included in the Marketing Plan 1996-98.

The locations included in the Marketing Plans are advertised by the Oil Companies, and the selection of dealers/distributors is made in a phased manner by the Dealer Selection Boards as per prescribed procedure. It generally takes 6-12 months for commissioning the dealership/distributorship after the date of interview.

Madgalla Airport In Private Sector

1822. SHRI MANSINH PATEL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made by the Government to re-start Madgalla airport at Surat by handing it over to the private sector for its development; and

(b) the reasons for restarting it?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The Surat Airport belongs to the State Government who has indicated that they have plans for development of the airport with private sector participation, in view of the traffic potential due to large presence of industries in the region.

[English]

**Amendment in Representation
of Peoples Act, 1951**

1823. SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR:
SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO:
SHRI SURESH KURUP:
SHRI SWADESH CHAKRABORTY:

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

(a) whether the Government propose to amend the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951 to make it mandatory for every recognized Political Party to nominate women candidates for election in one-third of the constituencies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said bill is likely to be introduced in Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Acquisition of Aircraft by Indian Airlines

1824. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:
SHRI KAMAL NATH:
DR. MANDA JAGANNATH:
SHRI UTTAMRAO PATIL:
PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines proposes to acquire aircraft under wet lease or dry lease agreements;

(b) if so, the advantages of securing aircrafts under lease agreements rather than buying such aircrafts;

(c) whether successful airlines like Singapore Airlines has offered a number of planes on dry lease;

(d) if so, the number of planes presently acquired on lease agreements by the Indian Airlines; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken to meet the demands of Indian public by Indian Airlines?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. On dry lease.

(b) The lease of aircraft are considered to meet the capacity requirement till the proposals for purchase of new aircraft are completed and new aircraft are available for operations.

(c) and (d) Presently there is no offer received from Singapore Airlines or any other airline for dry lease of aircraft. However, Indian Airlines had taken two A300 B4 aircraft on dry lease for a period of three years effective May/June, 1998. The lease period is being extended for another two years.

(e) For the immediate capacity requirement, Indian Airlines is in the process of acquiring on dry lease basis five B-737 and two A320 aircraft. Further, Indian Airlines proposes to purchase three A300 B4 aircraft from Air India.

**Over-Pricing of Woollen Socks By Ordnance
Factories**

1825. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:
SHRI D.V.G. SHANKAR RAO:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are losing Rs. 1200 crores annually on account of procurement of woollen socks, jerseys and blankets etc. purchased for soldiers from ordnance factories;

(b) if so, the reasons for overpricing when private Ludhiana manufacturers are offering at more less price with better quality; and

(c) the action taken for causing such a heavy loss on this score?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) It is factually not correct that Government are losing Rs. 1200 crores annually on account of procurement of woollen socks, jerseys and blankets etc purchased for soldiers from Ordnance Factories. The annual value of the clothing and general stores items purchased for soldiers from Ordnance Factories is around Rs. 475 crores (average of last four years) only, out of which the annual average value of woollen socks, jerseys and blankets is less than Rs. 35 crores. The question of incurring loss of Rs. 1200 crores annually against annual procurements worth Rs. 35 crores only, therefore, does not arise.

(b) It has been found that there is differential in the cost of items purchased from Ordnance Factory as against those from private Ludhiana manufacturers and others. Ordnance Factory Board have a scientific system of cost compilation based on cost input data. Any cost reduction due to technology upgradation is passed on to the Army. However, as a model employer, the Ordnance Factory Board is required to pay wages to workers in accordance to the scales fixed by the Government, which is often not the case with the civil sector. Capacities in Ordnance Factories have been created to cater to the demand from the services and mainly the Army. Fluctuating demand and non-utilization of full capacity adds up to the cost of the product. Moreover, the provision to meet sudden increase in demands is also a contributing factor for higher cost. The stringent quality control norms set by the Director General Quality Assurance, who is the common authority for inspecting and certifying the clothing and general stores, supplied to the Army are applicable to the supplies made by Ordnance Factories and private manufacturers alike.

(c) Constant endeavours are made the Ordnance Factories to reduce the unit cost of production by updating technologies. The average price of clothing and general stores items during 2000-01 has been reduced by 3.75% compared to average price of 1999-2000.

Merger of Companies

1826. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the recent moves of some companies for their merger and acquisition;

(b) if so, the details of those companies in which merger and acquisition taken place or proposed during the last three years;

(c) the loss caused to small investors as a result thereof;

(d) the price at which the share value of the merged companies are fixed; and

(e) the manner in which the odd lot of shares of the new companies are sold in the market?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (e) The prices of the shares of the merged companies are fixed on the basis valuation reports prepared by the Chartered Accountants/Professionals. These schemes of merger are approved by majority shareholders and are duly approved by the Hon'ble High Courts. The manner in which the odd lot of shares of the new companies are priced are part of the scheme and are guided by the guidelines issued by SEBI and Stock Exchanges. Normally, such mergers are advantageous for the shareholders including small investors. 1285 cases of merger and acquisition have taken place during the last three years. These include, 120 cases in the Northern Region, 455 cases in the Eastern Region, 527 cases in the Western Region and 183 cases in the Southern Region.

Development of Railway Stations

1827. SHRI SAHIB SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for development of new railway stations at Anand Vihar/Patparganj, Barthal, Madanpur Khadar/Tuglakabad and Narela/G.T. Road as per Master Plan of Delhi-2001;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these four stations are proposed to decongest the Old/New Delhi railway stations; and

(d) if so, the reasons for investing Rs. 1500 crores in the development/renovation of New Delhi Railway Station?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) Railways have acquired land for development of coaching facilities at Anand Vihar. Facilities will be developed at this station as and when required. At present, the terminals at Delhi, New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin are considered adequate for the traffic needs of Delhi. Development of other terminals to decongest the existing terminals will be considered when warranted by traffic.

The ongoing works at New Delhi Station are considered necessary for handling the present as well as projected levels of traffic at this station.

Marshalling Yard at Kanyakumari

1828. DR. A.D.K. JAYASEELAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to improve and increase the marshalling yard at Kanyakumari railway station so as to enhance its capacity to handle more trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The facilities at Kanyakumari and Nagercoil including those under execution at Nagercoil are adequate to handle the present and projected traffic at Kanyakumari.

Agreement between India and UK for Removal of Restrictions

1829. SHRI GUNIPATI RAMAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have been pressing for removal of restrictions on Air India for picking up passengers from London to US and Canada;

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been signed between India and UK in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) At the Inter-Governmental talks between India and U.K. held in February, 2000, an agreement has been reached to remove the various restrictions earlier applicable on the exercise of traffic

rights by Air India beyond London to USA and Canada. According to the new agreement, Air India is entitled to operate 16 frequencies per week either as transits or terminators to London with beyond 5th freedom rights to USA and Canada.

Railways Cases Pending in Consumer Courts

1830. SHRI R.S. PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of cases against Railway are pending in Consumer Courts;

(b) if so, the details thereof, zone/division-wise;

(c) the details of cases lost by the Railways in the Consumer Courts during the last three years, year-wise;

(d) whether Railways have made any study to resolve the disputes; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) The details are given in Statement-I

(c) The details are given in Statement-II

(d) After analysing the causes, the Zonal Railways take remedial steps to improve the services due to the rail users, so that the recurrence of similar type of complaints is avoided to the extent possible.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement-I

Details of pending cases zone/division-wise.

Central Railway

Division	No. of Cases	Division	No. of Cases
Mumbai	21	Bhusawal	24
Bhopal	23	Nagpur	15
Sholapur	18	Jhansi	64
Jabalpur	34	Pune	08
Head Quarter	45	Other Railway	18

Total No. of cases pending on Central Railway-270

Eastern Railway

Division	No. of Cases	Division	No. of Cases
Howrah	27	Sealdah	23
Asansol	18	Dhanbad	60
Mughalsarai	21	Malda Town	53
Danapur	202	Head Quarter	252

Total No. of cases pending on Eastern Railway-656

Northern Railway

Division	No. of Cases	Division	No. of Cases
Allahabad	73	Bikaner	30
Delhi	160	Firozpur	19
Jodhpur	25	Lucknow	118
Moradabad	69	Ambala	33

Total No. of cases pending on Northern Railway-527

N.E. Railway

Division	No. of Cases	Division	No. of Cases
Lucknow	106	Izatnagar	44
Varanasi	31	Sonpur	50
Samastipur	15	Other Railway	18

Total No. of cases pending on N.E. Railway-264

N.F. Railway

Division	No. of Cases	Division	No. of Cases
Tinsukhia	20	Lumding	25
Katihar	30	Alipurduar	42

Total No. of cases pending on N.F Railway-117

Southern Railway

Division	No. of Cases	Division	No. of Cases
Chennai	90	Tiruchchirappalli	35
Madurai	30	Bangalore	25
Mysore	15	Palghat	50
Trivandrum	60	—	—

Total No. of cases pending on Southern Railway-305

South Central Railway

Total No. of cases pending on South Central Railway—151

South Eastern Railway

Division	No. of Cases	Division	No. of Cases
Chakradharpur	09	Khurda Road	15
Bilaspur	25	Sambalpur	13
Kharagpur	18	Nagpur	07
Visakhapatnam	14	Adra	02
Calcutta	26	—	—

Total No. of cases pending on South Eastern Railway—129

Western Railway

Division	No. of Cases	Division	No. of Cases
Mumbai Central	116	Baroda	34
Ratlam	14	Kota	86
Jaipur	66	Ajmer	44
Bhavnagar	20	Rajkot	05

Total No. of cases pending on Western Railway—385

Total No. of cases pending on all Zonal Railways—2808

Statement-II

Appendix — II referred to in reply to part (c) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1830 for 30.11.2000.

Railway-wise detail of cases lost during last three years.

Railway	No. of cases
Central	157
Eastern	17
Nothern	189
N.E.	46
N.F.	46
Southern	144
South Central	45
South Eastern	04
Western	95
Total	743

[Translation]**Modernisation of I.T.D.C. Hotels**

1831. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the hotels under India Tourism Development Corporation modernised during the last three years and proposed for thier modernisation during the current year alongwith the expenditure incurred thereon, hotel-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal for renovating and upgrading the I.T.D.C. Hotels, particularly Delhi based Lodhi Hotel, Janpath Hotel and Ranjit Hotel as five star hotels 2000-01;

(c) the details thereof and the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon, hotel-wise; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) A statement showing details of expenditure incurred on modernisation of ITDC hotels during the last three years and proposed

expenditure during the current year is enclosed.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Statement

Statement showing Hotel wise Details of Expenditure incurred during the Last Three Years (1997-98 to 1999-2000) and Proposed During Current Year (2000-01) on Modernisation

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sr. No.	Name of the Hotel	Expenditure Incurred during 1997-2000	Proposed Expenditure for 2000-2001
1.	Ashok Hotel New Delhi	155.14	0.50
2.	Samrat Hotel, New Delhi	151.27	—
3.	Kanishka Hotel, New Delhi	14.63	3.00
4.	Janpath Hotel, New Delhi	33.59	6.00
5.	Qutab Hotel, New Delhi	13.38	4.00
6.	Lodhi Hotel, New Delhi	0.77	—
7.	Indraprastha Hotel, New Delhi	13.81	—
8.	Laxmi Vilas Palace, Udaipur	11.45	—
9.	Hotel Madurai Ashok	2.23	—
10.	Hotel Patliputra Ashok	0.57	—
11.	Hotel Varanasi Ashok	10.03	—
12.	Hotel Bodhgaya Ashok	6.21	—
13.	Hotel Khajuraho Ashok	1.55	—
14.	Kovalam Ashok Beach Resort	3.68	—
15.	Hotel Hassan Ashok	5.20	—
16.	Hotel Jaipur Ashok	10.76	—
17.	Lalitha Mahal Palace Hotel, Mysore	5.98	—
18.	Hotel Agra Ashok	9.22	—
19.	Hotel Aurangabad Ashok	1.25	—
20.	Hotel Ashok Bangalore	6.54	—
21.	Hotel Manali Ashok	0.69	—
22.	Temple Bay Ashok Beach Resort, Mamallapuram	2.34	—
23.	Hotel Airport Ashok, Calcutta	1.98	—
24.	Hotel Kalinga Ashok, Bhubaneshwar	1.80	—

*[English]***Hike in Oil Prices**

1832. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether earlier the price hike announcements were always made sudden giving no opportunity of stocking of petroleum products;

(b) if so, the reasons which compelled the Government for the first time in the history to hike oil prices much in advance and thereby providing an opportunity both to the pump owners and the consumers particularly the industrial consumers to stock the petroleum products; and

(c) the steps taken to avoid such situation in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Price revision of controlled petroleum products is undertaken by the Government from time to time. Announcement is made following the revision.

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

*[Translation]***Visit of Tourists in Maharashtra**

1833. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of tourists including foreign tourists who have visited Shirdi in Maharashtra during the last three years; and

(b) the details of assistance given to be given for the development of Shirdi during the year 2000-2001?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Information on place-wise tourist visits is not maintained by the State Government of Maharashtra. However, the estimated tourist visits to the State as a whole for the last three years are as given below.

Year	Domestic	Foreign
1997	6974453	977691
1998	7183687	980850
1999	7542871	1033816

(b) The development of tourism is undertaken by the State Governments/U.T. Administrations. However, the Department of Tourism, Government of India provides Central Financial Assistance for the projects identified every year in consultation with them. An amount of Rs. 27.00 lakhs has been sanctioned for expansion and upgradation of tourist Bungalow at Shirdi and Rs. 25.00 lakhs for upgradation of the restaurant, tourist reception area, etc. at Pilgrim Inn, Shirdi.

*[English]***Survey of Buddhist Ruins in Orissa**

1834. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister for TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is undertaking any survey of Buddhist ruins in Orissa and other parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such a survey has been conducted earlier by ASI;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the plans of the ASI to expand knowledge on the subject in the country and the other steps taken for their conservation?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No archaeological survey exclusively oriented towards Buddhist studies has been conducted.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Conservation of protected monuments, including Buddhist monuments, is a continuous process. In the last three years Archaeological Survey of India has conducted excavation of Buddhist sites as mentioned in the Statement. Studies of these sites and various existing publications serve to disseminate knowledge on this subject.

Statement

Statement Showing the Details of Buddhist Site Excavated During the last three years, by the Archaeological Survey of India

Sl. No.	Name of the Site
1.	Udayagiri, Distt. Jaipur, Orissa
2.	Ratnagiri, Distt. Jaipur, Orissa
3.	Kanganhali, Distt. Gulbarga, Karnataka
4.	Sannati (Benagutti), Distt. Gulbarga, Karnataka
5.	Ambaran at Akhnur, Distt. Jammu, J & K
6.	Kanispur, Distt. Baramulla, J & K
7.	Barhat (Deorkothar), Distt. Rewa, Madhya Pradesh
8.	Sanchi, Distt. Raipur, Madhya Pradesh
9.	Satdhara, Distt. Raipur, Madhya Pradesh
10.	Kesariya, Distt. East Champaran, Bihar
11.	Asokan Pillar site, Kolhua, Distt. Muzaffarpur, Bihar
12.	Sankisa, Distt. Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh
13.	Chowkhandi Stupa, Distt. Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

[Translation]

Acquisition of Aircraft Carrier

1835. SHRI UTTAMRAO PATIL: Will the Minister DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Armed Forces are facing shortage of aircraft carriers;

(b) if so, the total number of aircraft carriers available with the Armed Forces;

(c) whether aircraft carriers are proposed to be purchased from abroad; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) (a) and (b) Currently the Indian Navy has one aircraft carrier, viz, INS Viraat in its service against

the requirement of two operational aircraft carriers. The Government have approved the indigenous construction of an Air Defence Ship for the Indian Navy in 1999.

(c) and (d) The Government of the Russian Federation have offered to gift Admiral Gorshkov, an Aircraft Carrier, to India. However, it will require to be repaired, modified and modernised before it can be inducted into service of Indian Navy. An Inter-Governmental Agreement in this regard has been signed between Indian and Russian sides on 4.10.2000.

MRTP Commission

1836. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN:
SHRI ANADI SAHU:

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

(a) the number of enquiries have been conducted by the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTP Commission) in respect of unfair trade practices from 1997 to 1999 (year-wise); and

(b) the steps the Government propose to take to penalise the unfair traders in terms of the provisions of MRTP Act, 1969?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) The number of Unfair Trade Practices (UTP) enquiries instituted by the MRTP Commission for the years from 1997 to 1999 are as under:

S. No.	Year	No. of UTP Enquiries instituted
1.	1997	479
2.	1998	297
3.	1999	206

(b) The MRTP Commission, which is a quasi-judicial body, enquires into any unfair trade practice in terms of Sec. 36D of the MRTP Act, 1969. If, after such enquiry, the Commission is of the opinion that the charge of unfair trade practices during the course of the enquiry has been established and the practice is prejudicial to public interest or to the interest of any consumer or consumers generally, it may, by order, direct that:

(i) the practice shall be discontinued;

- (ii) any agreement relating to such unfair trade practice shall be void or shall stand modified in respect thereof in such manner as may be specified in the order;
- (iii) any information, statement or advertisement relating to such unfair trade practice shall be disclosed, issued or published, as the case may be, in such manner as may be specified in the order.

The MRTD Commission is also empowered to grant temporary injunction against the delinquent party during the pendency of an enquiry. Besides, it can also award compensation to an aggrieved person for the loss/damage caused as a result of monopolistic/restrictive/unfair trade practices under Section 12A and 12B of the MRTD Act, 1969.

Laying of Railway Line in Madhya Pradesh

1837. SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction/survey work of Maksi-Bina, Sironj-Biyavra-Rajgarh and Ujjain-Jhalawar-Agar-New Delhi railway lines has been started;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the construction/survey work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) The surveys undertaken for construction of Ujjain-Jhalawar-Agar-Ramganj Mandi and Biyavra Rajgarh-Sironj-Bina new lines revealed that the projects would be grossly unremunerative. In view of this and acute constraint of resources being faced by the Railways, it has not been found possible to take up these projects for the present.

BG line already exists for Maksi-Biyavra Rajgarh and Ramganj Mandi-New Delhi.

[English]

Development Schemes for Textiles Sector

1838. SHRI SAVSHIBHAI MAKWANA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the name of schemes for development and expansion of textile industry which have been implemented by the Government;

(b) the total annual plan outlay sanctioned by the Union Government to various State Government under each scheme during each of the last three years and the current year, Scheme-wise and State-wise;

(c) the amount utilised by each State Governments on such scheme during the said period; and

(d) the details of schemes implemented to increase the production of textiles and the targets achieved during the same period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (d) Government of India is implementing various schemes for development and expansion of textile industry. Important schemes are as under:

1. General Schemes

(i) Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC):

Government has launched the Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC) on 21.2.2000, with the objectives - to improve the productivity and quality of cotton, ensuring the availability of quality cotton to the textile mills. It has four Mini Missions, viz., MM-I & II relating to research and dissemination of technology to farmers, are being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and MM-III & IV relating to improvement in market infrastructure and modernization of ginning & pressing units are being implemented by the Ministry of Textiles.

(ii) Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS):

Government of India, Ministry of Textiles has launched a Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) for Textile and Jute Industries which is in operation since 01.04.1999 for a period of 5 years, i.e., up to 31.03.2004. IDBI, SIDBI and IFCI have been appointed as nodal agencies. They have co-opted other financial institutions/banks. Loans under the scheme are extended by the nodal agencies/co-opted institutions to the identified segments of the industry for the projects in conformity with the scheme and financial norms of the concerned Financial Institutions. Government funding is limited to reimbursement of interest at 5% point on the interest charged by the lending agency on a project of technology upgradation in conformity with the scheme.

(iii) Modernisation/upgradation of laboratories:

In order to provide textile testing facilities, Government has set up five laboratories, and modernized twenty one laboratories during 1997-98 and 1998-99.

2. Segment wise Schemes

- (i) **Powerlooms:** Establishment of Powerloom Service Centres and Computer Aided Design Centres; Modernisation of Powerloom Service Centres (PSCs); Upgradation of PSC labs; Group Insurance Scheme for powerloom workers; etc.
- (ii) **Handlooms:** Workshed-cum Housing Scheme; Project package Scheme Handloom Development Centres/Quality Dyeing Units; Group Insurance Schemes, Mill Gate Price Scheme, Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana, etc.
- (iii) **Silk:** Project for Development of Sericulture; Action Plan for Sericulture Development in North East States; Catalytic Development Programmes etc.

(iv) **Wool:** Integrated Sheep and Wool Development Project; Area Based Project for Wool and Woollens Development; Wool Testing Centres and Weaving and Design Training Centre etc.

(v) **Handicrafts:** Training for upgradation of skill of the existing craft-persons and imparting skills to new craft-persons; Design and Technological Development; Marketing and Market Development Support; Setting up of Craft Development Centres and Common Facility Service Centres in identified pockets etc.

The details of total amount sanctioned by the Government under these schemes during the last three years and current year upto October, 2000 are as follows:

					Rs in Lakhs
S. No.	Name of the Scheme/Sector	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01 upto 31st Oct. 2000
1.	Tehnology Mission on Cotton (TMC)	N.A.	N.A.	500	500
2.	Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS)	N.A.	N.A.	100	2800
3.	Modernisation/upgradation of laboratories:	1799	1000	Nil	Nil
4.	Powerlooms	288	363	931	161
5.	Handlooms	9939	8335	8169	2893 upto Nov.
6.	Silk	52	858	745	1040 upto June
7.	Wool	430	450	500	300
8.	Handicraft	1605	1541	1535	917

*Under Handloom, Silk, Wool and Handicrafts segments, funds are also released to the State Government departments/organizations for implementation of the schemes on need basis.

[Translation]

Joint Venture with State Governments

1839. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the State Governments with whom the Union Government have set up joint venture to

expedite the process of providing railway-based transport system for urban and rural areas during the last two years;

(b) the details of progress made by such joint ventures; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Union Government to improve the railway amenities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The Ministry of Railways have entered in MOU to set up Joint Ventures with the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka to expedite the process of providing railway-based transport system.

(b) **Karnataka:** A Joint Venture Company named K-RIDE will be formed to mobilize funds to be guaranteed by the State Govt. alone, for certain identified rail projects in the States. The Ministry of Railways, Govt. of Karnataka, FIS/Banks/others will be the equity partners. An MOU has been signed.

Maharashtra: MRVC (Mumbai Rail Vikas Corporation) has been formed to execute certain identified suburban projects at an estimated cost of Rs. 5618 Cr. Government of Maharashtra has agreed to share 50% of the cost of the project. Ministry of Railways & Government of Maharashtra are 51:49 equity partner in the venture.

Andhra Pradesh: The purpose of MOU is to strengthen the existing suburban rail infrastructure and services in the city of Hyderabad and its suburbs as a part of comprehensive multimodal suburban commuter transportation system for the Hyderabad Urban Agglomeration and its neighbourhoods. Ministry of Railways and the Government of Andhra Pradesh shall initially upgrade the fixed rail infrastructure on an equal cost sharing basis. A joint Task Force has been constituted. It will decide the role and structure of the joint venture company.

(c) Provision and augmentation of amenities at station is a continuous process. However, 209 stations have so far been selected as model station for the purpose of providing upgraded passenger amenities which include provision of Standardised Signages, National Train Enquiry System and Self Printing Ticket Machines, improvement in Waiting Rooms/Booking Offices, Toilets and in the deficiencies of infrastructure facilities/passenger amenities, conversion of stalls into modular stalls and provision of Automatic Vending Machines, improvement of circulating area, extension of foot-over bridge upto circulating area and computerisation of complaints.

[English]

Construction of Yatri Niwas

1840. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal for construction of Yatri Niwas;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and location-wise; and

(c) the extent to which financial assistance is proposed to be given to each State for the said purpose?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) In consultation with the State Governments/UT Administrations, the Department of Tourism, Government of India has prioritised 8 projects amounting to Rs. 4.79 crores for construction/renovation of Yatri Niwas during 2000-2001 out of which 4 projects are in Karnataka and one each in the States of Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, J & K and Arunachal Pradesh.

Setting up of Food Craft Institute

1841. SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up Food Craft Institute in the country, particularly at Nasik;

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

(c) the expenditure incurred/proposed to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Earning By Railways

1842. SHRI G. GANGA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an increase in railways earning from the passengers and the goods traffic during the first six months of the current year as compared to corresponding period of the previous year;

(b) if so, the percentage of increase registered during the said period; and

(c) the steps taken to attract more passengers and goods traffic?

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

(b) Percentage of increase during April 2000 to September 2000 as compared to corresponding period of

the previous year is as under:

Passengers Traffic	9.82
Goods Traffic	6.73

(c) Following are some of the measures taken to attract more passenger and goods traffic:-

(i) Passenger Traffic:-

- (a) Waiting list analysis was done on regular basis, additional coaches were attached and special trains were run to clear the extra rush as and when required. This has resulted in increased occupancy and Earnings.
- (b) Wide publicity has been given through various media about the availability of accommodation.
- (c) Intensive ticket checking drive, reviewing of train timings, Tatkal scheme and customer friendly measures like Tele booking handling of complaints through computer and National train enquiry system have been introduced to attract more passengers.

(ii) Goods Traffic:-

A number of measures have been taken to attract bulk and non-bulk goods Parcel traffic. These include.

- (a) Volume Discount Scheme
- (b) Simplification liberalisation of rules for bulk customers having sidings.
- (c) Identification of Premier Customers for special care.
- (d) Facilitating Warehousing at rail terminals.
- (e) Running of fixed schedule container trains.

Losses by Air India

1843. DR. B.B. RAMAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India has suffered a loss during the first six months of the current financial year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) As per provisional results for the period April-September, 2000, Air India has incurred net loss of Rs. 4.31 crores.

Funding of Major Projects

1844. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposed to allow the Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) to fund major projects;

(b) if so, whether there is any guidelines for the OIDB to extend short term funding to PSUs and Joint Sector units;

(c) if so, the details; 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) to (d) Section 6(1) of Oil Industry (Development) Act, 1974 and the rules made thereunder, empowers Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) to provide financial and other assistance for promotion of measures that are conducive to the development of oil industry in such manner, to such extent and on such terms and conditions as it may deem fit.

While granting loans to oil industry, OIDB accords priority to plan projects approved by the Government. Since requirement of Oil PSUs for long term funds from OIDB are more than the funds available with OIDB, no short term funding has been provided by OIDB during the last three years.

Decisions regarding the funding of projects by Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) are taken by the Board which comprises inter-ministerial representation such as Petroleum, Chemicals and Finance in addition to industry representation.

[Translation]

Setting up of Railway Technology Cell

1845. SHRI PADAM SEN CHOUDHRY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Technology Cell has been set up in Indian Institute of Technology at Kanpur.

(b) if so, the funds provided by the Government therefor;

(c) whether any information regarding new technology has been provided by Rail Technology Cell;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to adopt new technology; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The Ministry of Railways have decided to set up a Railway Technology Cell at Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur.

(b) The Railway Technology Cell will be set up with a corpus fund of Rs. one crore to be provided by the Ministry of Railways.

(c) to (e) The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is yet to be signed with Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and as such the Technology Cell has not started functioning so far.

[English]

Gauge Conversion of Kolar and Chikkaballapur Rail Line

1846. SHRI R.L. JALAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the railway line between Kolar and Chikkaballapur in Karnataka is most essential for connecting Bangalore-Bangarpet;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Bangalore-Bangarpet are already directly connected by rail. The line between Kolar to Chikkaballapur if connected would provide another, albeit longer alternative route between these points.

(b) Representations have been received for restoration of the railway line after conversion to B.G.

(c) A survey for gauge conversion of Chikkaballapur to Kolar has recently been completed. The survey report

revealed that the cost of the 85 km B.G. line would be Rs. 53.54 cr. with negative rate of return. In view of the grossly unremunerative nature of the line and acute constraint of resources it has not been found possible to consider the project for the present.

Increase in the Market Share of Jet Airline

1847. SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the market share of Jet Airlines has gone up in comparison to Indian Airlines during the last three months;

(b) if so, the reasons for fall in traffic of the Indian Airlines; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to bring back the traffic to the Indian Airlines?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) The market share of Indian Airlines and Jet Airways during the last three months was as follows:-

Month	Percentage of Market share of domestic passengers	
	Indian Airlines/ Alliance Air	Jet Airways
August, 2000	44.08	51.41
September, 2000	45.17	50.21
October, 2000	47.68	46.93

(b) The lower market share of IA in comparison to Jet Airways during August/Sept. 2000 had been due to (i) induction of capacity by Jet Airways (ii) unfortunate crash of Alliance Air flight at Patna in July, 2000 that had an adverse impact on public confidence.

(c) Indian Airlines have taken various initiatives to bring about improvement in market share viz. executive class upgrade, improvement in the departure control system (check-in); dissemination of flights information; tie-up with hoteliers, Tourism Development Corporation offering attractive holiday packages and improvement in facilities offered and Frequent Flier programme, etc. Holding back the increase of air fare despite ATF price hike in April, 2000 and October, 2000 has also been a contributory factor in this regard.

*[Translation]***Development of Worships places as Tourist Centre**

1848. PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of places of worship approved as tourist centre in the country State-wise;

(b) whether the Union Government have received any proposal to provide tourist centre facility to any place of worship in Bihar;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government in this regard and the funds allocated therefor, place-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) In May 1992, a committee on the development of pilgrim tourism identified 19 centres and 2 circuits in the country for tourism development in the first phase. Later a number of centres were added to the list in consultation with the State Governments. The pilgrim centres identified at present for tourism development in the country State-wise is given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) to (d) The Department of Tourism, Government of India has sanctioned two schemes for Rs. 7.50 lakhs for third Bauddha Mahotsav and Rs. 3.15 lakhs for Rajgir Festival in the State of Bihar during current financial year. In addition, in consultation with the State Government of Bihar a proposal for construction of Tourist Reception Centre at Patna for Rs. 75.00 lakhs has been prioritised for Central financial assistance during 2000-2001.

Statement*List of Pilgrim Centres identified State-wise*

Sl. No.	State	Pilgrim Centre
1.	Assam	Kamakhya
2.	Andhra Praesh	Nagarjuna Konda, Srisailam, Tirupati
3.	Bihar	Bodhgaya, Nalanda, Patna Sahib, Rajgir, Vaishali
4.	Delhi	Nizamudin
5.	Gujarat	Dwarka, Palitana, Somnath, Odwada
6.	Goa	Goan Churches
7.	Himachal Pradesh	Paonta Saheb, Jwalaji
8.	Haryana	Kurukshetra
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	Vaishno Devi
10.	Kerala	Guruvayoor, Sabarimala, Varkala
11.	Karnataka	Gulbarga, Sringeri
12.	Madhya Pradesh	Ujjain
13.	Maharashtra	Shirdi, Nanded, Jyotiba
14.	Orissa	Puri
15.	Punjab	Amritsar, Anandpur Sahib, Damdama Sahib, Sirhind
16.	Rajasthan	Ajmer Shareef
17.	Tamil Nadu	Rameshwaram, Madurai, Nagapatanam, Negaur, Palani, Velan Kanni, Tanjore, Tiruchairapatty, Thiruvannamalai
18.	Uttar Pradesh	Badrinath, Barsana, Brindavan, Gangatori, Gokul, Gowardhan, Haridwar, Hemkund, Kedamath, Kushinagar, Mathura, Nandgaon, Rishikesh, Sarnath, Srawasti, Varanasi, Yamunotri

Modern Aircrafts for Training

1849. DR. ASHOK PATEL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to purchase modern aircrafts for training;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total amount likely to be spent thereon; and

(d) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (d) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (Dte. GCA) has taken steps to procure 40 'Swati' Light Trainer aircraft from M/s. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Hardwar to allot these aircraft to flying clubs for training purposes. An amount of Rs. 6.00 crores has been advanced to M/s. BHEL for this purpose and 17 'Swati' aircraft have been delivered so far.

Approval has also been given to the Dte. GCA to acquire one 'Hansa-3' trainer aircraft, developed by M/s. National Aerospace Laboratories, Bangalore at an estimated cost of Rs. 43.5 lakhs. Dte. GCA has plans to acquire more 'Hansa-3' trainer aircraft, subject to availability of funds.

[English]

Status of L.C.A.

1850. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made so far in the production of the Light Combat Aircraft;

(b) the salient features of the project, its cost and expenditure incurred thereon so far;

(c) whether in the meantime before LCA is ready, there is any plan for procurement of such aircraft from abroad; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in pursuance thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) (a) and (b) The two Technology Demonstrators (TD-1 & TD-2) and the first prototype (PV-1) of the LCA have been fabricated. Structure and system modifications after High Speed Taxi Trials (HSTT) Phase I have been completed on TD-1. System integration checks are in progress to undertake the next phase of high speed taxi trials. Structure and system modifications on TD-2 (in line with TD-1) are nearing completion. Equipping of PV-1 is also in progress. A sum of Rs. 1816 crore have been spent against Rs. 2854 crore sanctioned.

(c) and (d) Till such time the LCA is available, the shortfall is expected to be made up by MiG-Bis upgrade version which is being upgraded jointly by Mikoyan Design Bureau, Russia and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.

[Translation]

Oil Reserves in Jaisalmer District (Rajasthan)

1851. SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH RAJUKHEDI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are huge deposits of petroleum and natural gas in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the study conducted by the Government in this regard; and

(c) the time by which the work of explorations is likely to be started there?

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) During the period 1967 to 1997, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) had discovered six gas bearing structures viz. Manhera Tibba, Ghotaru, Khartar, Bakhri Tibba, Bankia and Sadewala, falling in Jaisalmer District with a 2.44 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM) of in-place volume of gas. Currently, Manhera Tibba field is on production and is producing gas at the rate of 0.043 Million Metric Cubic Metre (MMSCUM) per day. The feasibility of production from the remaining fields will depend on consumers' demand and techno-economics. ONGC is continuing exploration activities in area of its operation. In 1988, Oil India Ltd. (OIL) had struck gas in Tanot field. Subsequent to that OIL discovered gas at Dandewala and Bagitibba fields. The total gas in-place of these fields is 9.29 BCM. Gas is being supplied from these fields to the Rajasthan State Electricity Board through Gas

Authority of India Ltd. at an average rate of 0.42 MMSCUM per day. Future exploration activities will be decided by OIL if the Basin Modelling Study results so predicate.

[English]

Demand of Gas by Ceramic Manufacturing Unit

1852. SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a demand to provide natural gas as a fuel has been made by ceramic manufacturing units of Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government 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) Yes, Sir.

(b) Presently, the total allocation of onshore natural gas to various consumers in Gujarat including ceramic industries is to the extent of 11.12 million standard cubic metre per day (MMSCMD) and against this allocation, the availability of on-shore natural gas is to the extent of 5.89 MMSCMD only. Therefore, due to less availability of natural gas in the region, it is not possible to consider any fresh demand for supply of gas.

[Translation]

Oil Pool Deficit and Adverse Impact on Economy

1853. SHRI RAMANAND SINGH:
SHRI SUNIL KHAN:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:

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

(a) the oil pool deficit of the Government as on March 31, 2000 and as on date;

(b) the deficit likely to be increased by the end of the current financial year; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken by the Government to check the adverse impact on the country's economy?

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 oil pool deficit on March 31, 2000 was Rs. 6,256 crores. Currently, it is estimated at around Rs. 12000 crores.

(b) The deficit at the end of the current financial year would depend on the consumption pattern of products, prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the international market and dollar-rupee parity.

(c) In consideration of the sharp increase in the international prices of crude oil and petroleum products, Government decided to pass around 1/3rd of the estimated oil pool deficit by the end of current financial year through upward revision in the consumer prices of controlled petroleum products effective 30th September, 2000. Simultaneously, Government reduced duties of customs on crude oil from 15% to 10% and on petrol, diesel etc. from 25% to 20%. Further, duties of excise have been reduced from 16% to 12% on diesel and from 32% to 16% on petrol. Government after considering various representations, have reduced the ex storage point price of kerosene for public distribution system by Re. 0.89/liter and of domestic LPG by Rs. 8.54/cylinder with effect from 22nd November, 2000 resulting into reduction in retail selling prices by around Re. 1/litre and Rs. 10/cylinder, respectively.

[English]

Railway Reservation Counter in Manipur

1854. SHRI HOLKHOMANG HAOKIP: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the return tickets are not booked at the Railway Reservation Counter at MSRTC Complex Imphal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is any proposal to introduce more Railways Reservation Counter in Manipur;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is any Quota of Seats/berths for Manipur in trains which are originated from Guwahati and Dimapur; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Facilities for onward and return journey reservation already exist in computerized passenger reservation system at Imphal.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir. There is no proposal for opening of more computer Reservation Counters in Manipur at present.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Yes, Sir. Emergency quotas have been earmarked under the control of Manipur State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) to meet the last minute demand Ex. Guwahati and Dimapur.

(f) The following emergency quotas have been provided at Imphal PRS under the control of MSRTC:-

Train No.	2 AC	3 AC	SL
4055 Dn. Ex. Dimapur	—	2	2
5960 Dn. Ex. Dimapur	—	—	2
2423 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	2	2	—
2435 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	2	2	—
5621 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	2	—	2
5646 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	—	—	2
5651 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	—	—	2
5624 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	—	—	2
5626 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	—	—	2
5628 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	—	—	2
5630 Dn. Ex. Guwahati	—	—	2

Entrance fee for Monuments in Karnataka

1855. SHRI H.G. RAMULU: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the entry fee being charged for foreign and domestic tourists for each monument in Hampi in Karnataka; and

(b) the steps taken to levy only main entrance fee and discontinuance of charging fee for each monument to promote tourism?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Entry fee of

Rs. 10/- for Indian citizens and \$ 10 for others is charged separately at the Vitthala Temple complex and the Lotus Mahal complex at Hampi. No entry fee is charged for children below the age of 15.

(b) There is no proposal to change the existing arrangement.

Setting up of High Courts

1856. DR. C. KRISHNAN:
SHRI VAIKO:

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

(a) the funds allocated to provide infrastructure facilities for setting up of High Courts in newly created States; and

(b) the strength of Judges sanctioned in those High Courts, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) It is the primary responsibility of the State Governments to provide funds for infrastructural facilities for the judiciary including those for setting up of High Courts. However, the Central Government has written to the Chief Ministers of the newly created States to send project proposals with tentative cost estimates so that the matter could be taken up with the Planning Commission.

(b) The strength of Judges sanctioned in the newly created High Courts is as under:

		Permanent	Addl.	Total
(i)	Chattisgarh High Court	4	2	6
(ii)	Jharkhand High Court	10	2	12
(iii)	Uttanchal High Court	4	3	7

[Translation]

Petrol Pumps Under COCO Scheme in Rajasthan

1857. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of companies running their own petrol pumps in Rajasthan, city-wise; and

(b) the names of persons to whom these coco pumps have been rented out?

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 company-wise number of Company Owned Company Operated (COCO) Retail Outlets and Jubilee Retail outlets being run by the Oil Marketing Companies at different locations in Rajasthan is as under:

Name of the Company	No. of COCO		No. of Jubilee
	Retail Outlets	Retail Outlets	
Indian Oil Corporation Limited	36	02	
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited	10	06	
Bharat Petroleum Corp. Ltd.	02	03	
IBP Company Limited	01	—	

As per the policy, COCO Retail Outlets and Jubilee Retail Outlets are operated on 'Company Owned Company Operated basis'. The outlet is operated with an officer of the oil company as over-all in charge of the outlet. Labour assistance is provided through contractor to the company officer for day to day operation.

[English]

Bottling Plants in Karnataka

1858. SHRI KOLUR BASAVANAGOUD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottling plants of various Oil Corporations in Karnataka, and particularly in Bellary;

(b) the average requirement of LPG cylinders per day in Bellary;

(c) whether there is any proposal to set-up new LPG bottling plant in Bellary during 2000-2001; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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

on 1.10.2000, 7 LPG bottling Plants of Public sector Oil Marketing Companies are operating in Karnataka. However, no LPG bottling plant is existing in Bellary, at present.

(b) Total requirement of LPG cylinders per day for the customers of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies in Bellary is about 1800.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Vacant Posts of SCs/STs/OBCs

1859. SHRI MANJAY LAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officers and staff working on permanent and ad-hoc basis in the Ministry/Departments/Autonomous Bodies and Subordinate offices under the Ministry, State-wise;

(b) the number of SCs/STs/OBCs among them, category-wise;

(c) whether the Government are aware that the reserved posts of steno-typists have been lying vacant during the last three years; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the time by which these posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Joint Venture for Gauge Conversion in Madhya Pradesh

1860. SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways and the Government of Madhya Pradesh are planning to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for Gauge Conversion of Jabalpur-Gondia Railway line; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir. No such proposal has been received.

(b) Does not arise.

Increase of Second Class Boggles

1861. SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN:
SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "for 30,000 Sonapat commuters, journey to Delhi is an ordeal" appearing in "The Hindustan Times" dated October 17, 2000;

(b) if so, the details of points brought out in the news-item;

(c) the action taken to remove the ordeals faced by daily commuters;

(d) whether the sanitary condition at the railway stations, in trains and the lavatories on the platform is horrible without any tangible results;

(e) if so, whether there is an acute shortage of drinking water at the railway stations and in the reserved compartments; and

(f) if so, the measures taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (f) Yes, Sir. The news item has raised the issues of overcrowding and late running of trains on the Sonapat-Delhi section. Introduction of additional trains and augmentation of trains running on the Sonapat-Delhi section is not feasible at present, due to operational and resource constraints including lack of spare maintenance facilities in the MEMU/ EMU car shed and line capacity constraints. Indian Railways make all out efforts to ensure punctual running of trains through intensive round the clock monitoring of trains at all the three tiers of Railway administrations. However, trains some time run late due to various factors including asset failure due to obsolescence, agitation, bad weather, miscreant activity, etc. It is the constant endeavour of Railway to improve the standard of cleanliness on railway stations. Regular checks and special drives regarding cleanliness are conducted and corrective action is taken wherever necessary. Drinking water facility at railway stations, as per scale of minimum essential amenity, is available.

[*Translation*]

LPG Connections Due to Hike in Prices

1862. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of applicants for LPG connection has come down due to the recent hike in cooking gas;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to reduce the prices of LPG in rural areas and small towns; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The ex-storage point price of LPG Domestic was revised downwards with effect from November 22, 2000 as follows:

Ex. Storage point price as on	Rs./Cylinder
30.9.2000	185.00
22.11.2000	176.46

Crash of IAF Helicopter

1863. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "The IAF helicopter crashed on Sunday noon but help came for survivors late on Monday—With salt in our wounds, we waited for help" appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated November 15, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the rescue operation was not provided in time resulting in loss of precious lives of some IAF/BSF officers;

(c) if so, the reasons attributed thereto;

(d) whether the Government have investigated the reasons for the helicopter crash; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) A MI-8 Helicopter crashed at about 1300 hrs. on 12.11.2000 in Sir Creek Area in Gujarat. The helicopter had got airborne from Air Force Station Naliya for Koteswar at 1107 hrs. on 12th November, 2000. The helicopter landed at Koteswar at 1128 hrs. and subsequently, got airborne at 1217 hrs. It was scheduled to land back at Koteswar at 1345 hrs. on completion of task and return to Naliya at 1420 hrs. It was not seen or heard on communication channels after 1300 hrs. Inquiries of whereabouts of the helicopter started being made by Air Traffic Controller, Naliya from 1450 hrs.

A search helicopter was sent from Jamnagar for Naliya at 1820 hrs. on 12th November, 2000. After arrival at Naliya, with due briefing, it departed for search with night vision devices. But the search was unsuccessful because of poor visibility. On 13th November, 2000 second search helicopter was also positioned at Bhuj from Jamnagar but the search was, again, unsuccessful. Thereafter, both search helicopters departed from Bhuj for search on 13th November, 2000 at 1200 hrs. and the wreckage of the missing helicopter was sighted at about 1332 hrs. in water with no place for landing by (Air Sea Rescue) ASR helicopters. Three survivors were, initially, winched up and both the helicopters were then put for rescue operations with additional manpower and necessary devices. Thus, the IAF had undertaken all necessary search and rescue operations in the incident.

A Court of Inquiry has been ordered to find out the cause of the accident. The wreckage has been retrieved at Bhuj. Damaged components have been sent to investigating agencies for analysis. However, the initial investigations do not indicate any signs of explosion.

Extension of Mumbai Suburban Train Service

1864. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any request to extend the existing Mumbai suburban train services to more surrounding cities particularly Vasai-Diva and Dahanu Road;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the progress made on the project and the time by which it is likely to be completed; and

(d) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Virar-Dahanu Road has already been declared as a suburban section. Following representations have been received from:-

- (i) Shri M.T. Shah, Commuter and resident of Dombivli, Mumbai, forwarded through Shri Kirit Somaiya, MP for introduction of EMU trains between Thane and Virar, Kalyan and Boriveli via Bhivandi/Vasai.
- (ii) Passenger Traffic Relief Association for introduction of EMU services between Vasai-Diva-Panvel.
- (iii) Shri Sanjay H. Navik, Commuter and resident of Vasai Road for introduction of local trains from Vasai Road to Panvel.

(c) and (d) Extension of Mumbai Suburban services on Diva-Vasai section is not being considered. However, 4 DMU services, 2 in the morning and 2 in the evening are, running between Diva and Vasai for meeting the requirement of the commuters of this area.

Works connected with running of EMU services on Virar-Dahanu Road section have been approved in 2000-01 budget at a cost of Rs. 25.82 crores.

Unified Intelligence Defence Agency

1865. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for setting up a United Intelligence Defence Agency consisting of Army, Navy and Air Force;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, in way in which the coordination is being maintained amongst the present defence set-up?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Government constituted a Group of Ministers on 17th April 2000 to thoroughly review the national security system in its entirety and in particular, to consider the recommendations of the Kargil Review Committee and formulate specific proposals for implementation. Keeping in view the wide scope of the terms of reference of the Group of Ministers (GoM) and in accordance with its mandate, the GoM appointed four task forces, one each in the area of intelligence apparatus, internal security, border management and defence

management. These Task Forces have since submitted their reports to the GoM. The GoM, would after consideration of various issues including the creation of a DIA, formulate suitable proposals for implementation. In the existing arrangements, regular interaction takes place between the Intelligence Directorates of three Services and other civilian agencies through the Joint Services Intelligence Board (JSIB).

Ground Sensors for Detection of Infiltration

1866. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Line of Control is covered by ground sensors for detection of infiltration by alien elements;

(b) if so, whether there is any perceptible difference in the defence effort thereafter;

(c) whether any further improvement in the system is proposed to be carried out; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Appropriate steps including installation

of electronic devices to detect and control infiltration on the Line of Control continue to be taken.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Efforts continue to augment the existing resources.

Consumption of Cotton

1867. SHRI JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received the report of the Indian Cotton Committee regarding cloth consumption in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the average cloth consumption in metres classified by different income groups?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (c) The per capita purchase/consumption of textiles by different income groups during 1998 as per survey conducted by the Textile Committee is as follows:

(Quantity: Metres)

Income Group	Urban	Rural	All India
Lower Income Group	18.62	13.89	14.33
Middle Income Group	24.54	13.87	16.78
Higher Income Group	23.76	11.98	17.86

Electronic Voting Machine

1868. SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY: SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Election Commission has sought funds for purchase of Electronic Voting Machines for the coming assembly elections;

(b) if so, the number of electronic voting machines purchased by EC so far and money spent on their maintenance;

(c) whether the Government have decided to make compulsory use of EVMs in future elections; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Election Commission had purchased 1,50,000 Electronic Voting Machines in 1989-90. Recently, the Government has allocated Rs. 150 crores for purchase of additional Electronic Voting Machines. The information in respect of money spent on the maintenance of Electronic Voting Machines is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. According to the Election Commission of India, it has decided to use the Electronic Voting Machines in the future elections as widely as possible. This, in Government's view, will generate necessary experience of voting by the Electronic Voting Machines so as to enable the Government to consider compulsory use of Electronic Voting Machines in the future.

[Translation]

New Shipping Policy

1869. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for giving a new direction to the shipping policy;

(b) if so, the details of the new shipping policy framed during the current Five Year Plan;

(c) the details of the expenditure proposed for this purpose; and

(d) the policy to be adopted with regard to the privatisation of transport infrastructure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Based on the recommendations of National Shipping Policy Committee as were considered by the Empowered Committee, steps have already been taken in regard to development of Coastal Shipping, Development of Human Resources, Restructuring of Maritime Administration, etc. Action is also in hand to extend certain fiscal and financial incentives for growth of shipping industry. These incentives relate to:

- (i) Tax relief to Indian seafarers.
- (ii) Enhancement of depreciation rate from 20% to 40%
- (iii) Infrastructure status to Coastal shipping
- (iv) Introduction of Tonnage Tax in lieu of Corporate Tax

(c) The expenditure likely to be involved, as per the said policy measures, can be worked out after the acceptance and implementation of the proposed policy.

(d) With a view to encouraging private participation in transport infrastructure, especially development of roads, action has been initiated to evolve measures for allowing fiscal and financial incentives in this regard.

[English]

Allotment of LPG, Petrol and Kerosene Depots in A.P.

1870. SHRI B.K. PARTHASARATHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases relating to allotment of retail and wholesale dealership of LPG, petrol, kerosene and diesel that are pending in Andhra Pradesh (A.P.) as on date, category-wise; and

(b) the time by which these cases are likely to be cleared?

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, 156 retail outlet dealerships, 197 LPG distributorships and 3 SKO-LDO dealerships are pending for allotment in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Selection of dealers/distributors is made through the Dealer Selection Boards as per procedure in a phased manner and it may not be possible at this stage to indicate the exact time frame for completion of selection for the pending locations.

Supply of Gas through Pipeline in Tamil Nadu

1871. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to start supply of LPG all over Tamil Nadu through pipeline;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the target date fixed to complete the project?

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) Gas Authority of India Limited has a proposal to lay a 670 km. long pipeline from Mangalore in Karnataka to Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu via Mysore with connectivity to Bangalore in Karnataka to transport 1.1 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in bulk to the bottling plants of oil sector companies for further supplies in bottles to the consumers. The total length of the proposed pipeline in Tamil Nadu is 106

kms. The pipeline project is expected to be completed within 36 months from the date of its approval.

[*Translation*]

Fire Incident in Mumbai Port Trust

1872. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fire incident in the store of Mumbai Port Trust on October 31, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof indicating the loss of lives and property in this incident; and

(d) the action being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) An incident of fire was reported to have taken place on 31.10.2000 in compartment no. IV of Mumbai Port Trust structure which was let out on monthly tenancy basis to M/s. Dhirajlal & Co. The Police and Bombay Municipal Corporation Fire Brigade are ascertaining the exact cause of the fire. Only the A.C. Sheets of the roof of compartment no. IV & V of the Mumbai Port structure have been damaged and there was no loss of life.

(d) The cost of reinstatement of the damaged portion of the premises would be recovered by the Mumbai Port Trust from the tenant.

[*English*]

Financial Crisis to A.S.I.

1873. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India is facing problems for maintaining the existing monuments as well as for recently included monuments;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the funds allocated to A.S.I. during each of the last three years, and the current year; and

(c) the measures adopted to generate additional financial resources?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The funds made available to the A.S.I. are not commensurate with its multifarious activities and responsibilities.

The allocation of funds for maintenance, conservation, preservation and environmental developments declared protected under Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites & Remains Act, 1958 during the last three years is as under:-

1997-98	-	Rs. 6465.90 Lakhs
1998-99	-	Rs. 7440.99 Lakhs
1999-2000	-	Rs. 8988.64 Lakhs

The allocation for the current financial year is Rs. 10,087.50 Lakhs.

The allocation made are utilised for maintenance, conservation and development of protected monuments.

(c) Various agencies such as UNESCO, State Governments and its autonomous bodies have given funds for the development of specific monuments. Funds have also been received from Corporate Sector for this purpose through the National Culture Fund.

Setting up LPG Agencies in Rajasthan

1874. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in rural areas of Western Rajasthan, consumers have to collect LPG cylinders from distance ranging from 100 to 150 KM;

(b) if so, the number of LPG agencies proposed to opened in rural areas during the next two years; and

(c) the number of LPG agencies advertised to be opened during the next year in Rajasthan, especially in Barmer and Jaisalmer districts of Thar desert?

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) LPG distributorships have been permitted to open the extension counters up to 30 kms in plains and 75 kms in hills to serve the customers. Further, customers who are enrolled based on incoming Transfer Voucher/against priority connections and are residing outside the normal area of

operation of the LPG distributorship, are allowed to take their LPG refills on Cash and Carry basis after giving an undertaking to that effect. Such customers are entitled to a rebate of Rs. 5/-.

(b) and (c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies have the plan to setup LPG distributorship at 151 locations in Rajasthan.

Joint Ventures

1875. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:
DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have decided to enter into joint ventures with States in order to complete its pending projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the name of the States which have shown interest for joint ventures in rail projects; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to complete pending projects expeditiously in collaboration with States?

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

(b) (i) **Joint Venture with Karnataka Govt.**

It is proposed to form a SPV as Joint Venture Company with equity participation by Ministry of Railways, Government of Karnataka, FIS/Banks/others. Ministry of Railways & Govt. of Karnataka will have 26% of equity each. The company will mobilise funds for the four identified projects in the State of Karnataka. The Govt. of Karnataka will provide State guarantees without any resource or charge on the Ministry of Railways or on the railway assets, to the lenders for the market borrowings by the Joint Venture Company.

(ii) Joint Venture with Andhra Pradesh Govt.

It is proposed to form a SPV as Joint Venture Company with equity participation by the Ministry of Railways & Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.

Ministry of Railways & Govt. of Andhra Pradesh will have equal in the Joint Venture. The Joint Venture will deal with the multimodal suburban transportation in the twin cities of Hyderabad & Secunderabad.

(c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka & Maharashtra have shown their interest for joint venture in rail projects.

(d) Ministry of Railways will welcome financial participation of the State Government on the pattern of the Joint Venture with the Government of Karnataka, in expeditious completion of rail projects.

[Translation]

Computerised Reservation

1876. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway computerised reservation system was affected during the strike by the employees of Telecom Department;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by the Government to handle such situation?

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

(b) Normal working of computerised reservation centers was adversely affected at a large number of centers during the strike. The details are given as under:-

S. No.	Railway	Total PRS centers (No.)	Centers affected (No.)	Centers restored on Railway channel
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Central	63	3	—
2.	Eastern	58	12	6
3.	Northern	103	4	4

1	2	3	4	5
4.	North Eastern	38	4	3
5.	Northeast Frontier	27	11	1
6.	Southern	97	41	14
7.	South Central	65	8	6
8.	South Eastern	49	16	5
9.	Western	58	—	—

(c) PRS data transmission network constitute channels hired from DoT as well as Railway owned Microwave channels. The normal working at the affected reservation centers due to strike was partially restored by using Railway owned channels, wherever available.

A close liaison was maintained right up to the Ministry level to minimize the damage.

[English]

Collection of Funds Through Imposition of Cess

1877. SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any cess has been imposed on oil products during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) 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) Yes, Sir. Effective 2nd June 1998, additional duty (excise and customs) of Re.1/litre was levied on petrol. An additional duty (excise and customs) was levied on high speed diesel effective 28th February 2000. These duties are sometimes referred to as 'cess'.

(c) The amount collected from the levy fo 'cess' on high speed diesel and petrol would be spent for development of rural roads, national highways and State sector roads and for railway over-bridge and railway safety work at unmanned railway crossings.

Compensation to Wards of Deceased Army Personnel of Haryana

1878. SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR) had forwarded a list of Armed Forces personnel of Haryana who killed in Kargil war under Operation Vijay and Rakshak to all heads of Zila Sainik Boards, Haryana with a request to assist the war widows/next-of-kins in completing all formalities for allotment of retail distributorship of LPG/Diesel/Kerosene Oil to them;

(b) whether the respective regiments had also informed the families of Kargil Martyrs about the Government's decision to allot them the said distributorship;

(c) if so, the detail thereof;

(d) whether the DGR, later on, rejected some claims stating that the scheme was applicable to the soldiers who killed in action in Kargil sector under Operation Vijay only;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether the Government are examining any proposal to extend the said scheme to Martyrs of Kargil war irrespective of their place of death in J&K under Operation Rakshak on humanitarian grounds; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (g) In the wake of the Kargil operation, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas announced a special scheme for allotment of 500 LPG distributorships/petrol retail outlet dealerships to the next of kins (NOKs) of the Armed Forces personnel, killed in that operation. The Director General Resettlement

addressed letters to the dependent families of the soldiers, killed in Kargil operations, requesting them to send the completed application forms for allotment of agencies under the scheme. The Director General Resettlement also addressed letters to the Rajya Sainik Boards of the State Governments, including that of Haryana State, requesting them to advise Zila Sainik Boards to provide all possible assistance to war widows/NOKs/dependants in filling up of the application forms and sending them to his office, immediately.

2. As 522 Army Personnel and 5 Air Force personnel were killed during the Kargil operation itself, it has not been possible to extend the special scheme to the NOKs of the Armed Forces personnel, killed in Operation Rakshak in Jammu & Kashmir or in any other operation.

[Translation]

Setting up the Jute Technology Mission

1879. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up a jute technology mission for producing good quality jute;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government proposes to set up a Jute Technology Mission to achieve following objectives;

To improve productivity and quality, transfer cost effective technologies to the farmers, create proper market linkages, and expand the scope of jute products within the country and abroad.

Efforts are being made to launch the Mission during the financial year 2001-02.

[English]

Collection of Tax by Cantonment Board, Secunderabad

1880. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cantonment Board of Secunderabad has served in attachment notice to Airport Authority of India for tax dues;

(b) if so, the total tax dues owed by AAI as on date;

(c) the reasons for not collecting the taxes over the years; and

(d) the steps being taken to ensure that proper and efficient land use is done by Cantonment Board in Secunderabad?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. National Airport Authority of India have not cleared taxes, amounting to Rs. 6,63,61,340/- due to the Cantonment Board, Secunderabad, for the period from 1.4.1995 to 31.3.2000, in respect of their properties, located within the limits of Secunderabad Cantonment, despite a demand notice issued on 9-10-2000 under Section 91 of the Cantonments Act, calling upon them to clear the dues within a period of thirty days.

The matter got delayed because settlement of certain issues with the Airport Authority took time.

(d) The total land under management of Cantonment Board, Secunderabad, classified as 'C' is 271.258 acres and is being used for roads/lanes, parks, hospitals and markets, etc. The assets are maintained to the extent possible within the given resources.

Jubilee and COCO Pumps in Haryana

1881. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indo-Burma Petroleum Company Limited (IBPL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation limited (HPCL) have advertised in the newspapers for setting up eleven and fifty eight Jubilee and COCO pumps sites in Haryana respectively;

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

(c) whether the roaster policy, marketing plan and maximum utilisation of facilities have been considered before making advertisement;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether oil corporations are under heavy debts and still are spending huge amounts on luxurious Jubilee Petrol Pumps without conducting economic study;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(g) the details of the Jubilee and COCO pumps, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (f) The IBP Company Limited and the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited had released advertisements calling offers from land owners for procurement of land for setting up Jubilee Retail Outlets, COCO outlets, outlets allotted under the special Scheme to the widows/next of kins of Defence personnel killed in 'Operation Vijay' in Kargil, etc.

For setting up Jubilee Retail Outlets, the Oil Companies assess whether adequate potential exists.

After a review, the Scheme of Jubilee Retail Outlets has been discontinued.

(g) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Private Sector Oil Refining Companies

1882. DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of private sector oil refining companies entitled for marketing rights of controlled petroleum products;

(b) whether some applications are pending with the Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which these oil companies are proposed to be granted marketing rights to avoid malpractices?

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 Government of India announced a road map for dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) in November, 1997. The aforesaid announcement *inter alia* provided for grant of marketing rights for transportation fuels viz. Motor Spirit (MS), High Speed Diesel (HSD) and Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) conditional on owning and operating refineries with an investment of at least

Rs. 2,000 crore or oil exploration and production companies producing atleast three million tonnes of crude oil annually. Full de-regulation of Petroleum Sector is slated from 1st April, 2002.

The Government have received requests from M/s. Reliance Petroleum Limited, M/s. Essar Oil Limited and M/s Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. for grant of marketing rights for transportation fuels.

Out of these refining companies M/s. Reliance Petroleum Limited and M/s Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. generally fulfil the criteria for grant of marketing rights. Marketing rights will be granted after the APM is dismantled.

Government have already decontrolled all petroleum products except MS, HSD, ATF, LPG (Domestic) and Kerosene (PDS).

Aerosports In the Country

1883. SHRI RAMCHANDER BAINDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is going to start aerosports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these sports are likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) Aerosports activities like gliding, skydiving, hang-gliding, ballooning, microlight flying, parasailing, aeromodelling, paragliding, powered hand-gliding etc. are already being taken up in the country by various flying/gliding clubs under the aegis of Aero Club of India. Ministry of Civil Aviation encourages these activities with financial help, whenever necessary on a case to case basis.

Demurrage Cost of Import of Diesel

1884. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the nation is paying heavily by way of demurrage cost for the import of diesel;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) if so, whether the vessels have been charging demurrage costs \$14,000 to \$ 17,000 per day; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to avoid demurrage cost?

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) No demurrage has been paid on account of diesel import during 2000-01 so far. Further, there are no plans to import diesel during the rest of the current year and hence the question of payment of demurrage does not arise.

Restoration of Direct Flight from Hyderabad-Muscat-Hyderabad

1885. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Union Government to restore direct flight from Hyderabad-Muscat-Hyderabad (A-320 aircraft);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Andhra Pradesh have also requested to operate flight between Hyderabad-Bahrain-Hyderabad; and

(d) if so, the action taken or being taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Due to insufficient loads, a direct flight to Muscat is not feasible at present. However, Indian Airlines is operating three services/week on Hyderabad-Bangalore-Muscat sector with A-320 aircraft.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Sufficient traffic potential does not exist between Hyderabad and Bahrain to warrant a direct air service.

[Translation]

Ban on Export of Cotton

1886. KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested the Union Government to impose a ban on the export of cotton;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken to make up the shortage of cotton thread in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) No, Madam.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise.

(d) There is no shortage of cotton yarn. In fact, India is an exporter of cotton yarn.

[English]

Request to OPEC for Reduction of Oil Prices

1887. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has urged the OPEC to reduce oil prices;

(b) if so, the extent to which the OPEC members have considered the request of the Indian Government;

(c) whether the decision to increase in oil prices by OPEC has forced the Government to consider the increase in prices of petroleum products and gas in the domestic market; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) In the months of March and September, 2000, India had made a request to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) members to increase production level of crude oil which would facilitate bringing down the oil prices to sustainable, stable level. During the World Petroleum Congress held in Calgary, Canada, the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas held a bilateral meeting on this subject with the Secretary General of OPEC. The issue was again taken up by the oil consuming countries including India at the 7th World Energy Forum held at Riyadh from November 17-19, 2000. Various oil importing countries pressed the urgent need for taking immediate steps to bring down the prices of crude oil. Further, Minister of Petroleum and Natural

Gas, in his bilateral discussions with the oil Ministers of OPEC member countries, took up the issue. While appreciating the difficulties faced by the oil importing countries, they agreed to consider the matter within the framework of OPEC.

(c) and (d) On account of the steep increase of more than 3 times in the prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the international market between February 1999 to September 2000, the oil pool deficit which had come down to Rs. 3,408 crore at the end of 1998-99, increased to around Rs. 6,300 crore as on 31.3.2000 and would have gone up to Rs. 23,600 crore by March

31, 2001 at the pre 30th September, 2000 prices. Such a high level of deficit in the oil pool account was not sustainable as it would have affected the liquidity of the oil companies adversely, making it difficult either to import or process crude oil and market products. This necessitated the revision in prices. The prices of petrol, diesel, kerosene for public distribution, and domestic LPG were revised upwards with effect from 30th September, 2000.

Subsequently, prices of kerosene for public distribution and domestic LPG were revised downwards from 22nd November, 2000. The details are as follows:

Name of product	Selling Unit	Ex-storage point price before revision (Rs./selling Unit)	Ex-storage point price after revision as on 30.9.2000 (Rs./selling Unit)	Ex-storage point price after 22.11.2000 (Rs./selling Unit)
Kerosene (PDS)	litre	4.50	7.00	6.11
LPG (Domestic)	Cyl.	154.00	185.00	176.46
Diesel	litre	9.63	11.93	11.93
Petrol	litre	15.40	19.00	19.00
ATF	litre	12.76	14.76	14.76

Arrest of Retired Army Man

1888. SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a retired Indian Army man was among the ISI agents arrested from Lucknow in September, 2000.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the nature of links of the arrested army man with the Army Head Quarters and the nature of the army secrets obtained by him for Pak's ISI; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) An ex-Army personnel who had been court-martialled and dismissed from the Army in 1995 was arrested alongwith two Nepalese nationals at Lucknow on 5.9.2000. The arrest was carried out by

Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the U.P. Police while he was handing over classified defence documents to the two Nepalese. Subsequently, two more persons from whose possession classified defence documents were recovered were also arrested the same day by the U.P. Police.

2. During investigations, the names of three serving Army personnel have come to notice.

3. The five accused were arrested u/s 120B, 121A, 124A IPC and Sections 3/9 of the Official Secrets Act. One accused was also charged u/s 25A of the Arms Act.

4. The modus operandi employed by the accused have been disseminated to all concerned for corrective action.

Health Care of Railways Employees

1889. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to stated:

(a) whether Railways have a scheme of health care for their employees and retired employees;

(b) if so, the salient features of the scheme; and

(c) the allocation made for the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. Railways have a scheme of providing curative, preventive, promotive and rehabilitative services to serving/retired employees and their dependents.

(b) The serving employees are given free medical treatment. Provision exists in the Railway Medical Attendance Rules for those who have rendered not less than 20 years of regular service that they are eligible to join retired Employees Liberalised Health Scheme (RELHS) on payment of an amount equivalent to the last month's basic pay drawn by them (one time payment). No distinction is made between serving and retired employees.

(c) The budgetary allocation for the year 2000-01 is Rs. 574.85 crores.

Oil Bonds

1890. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:

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

(a) whether as a step towards overcoming the pressure of burgeoning oil-bill in the wake of rising international oil prices, the Government have decided to float "Petro-bonds" and cut down the duties imposed on crude oil including the sales tax;

(b) if so, the total amount of bond floated and the terms and conditions appended to these bonds; and

(c) the details of these bonds held by different Banks and the terms, indicating the concessions given to the Banks for the purpose?

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 petro bonds have been floated after March, 1998. However, effective 30-9-2000, duties of customs on crude

oil and petroleum products were reduced from 15% to 10% and 25% to 20% respectively. Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas has appealed to all the Chief Ministers to suitably adjust the sales tax rates so as to neutralize the impact of *ad valorem* sales tax on the revised prices of controlled petroleum products effective 30-9-2000.

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

Development of Ports by European Commission

1891. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the European Commission has decided to assist India for the development of services in the ports;

(b) if so, the details of the ports on which the European Commission has agreed to provide financial help and assistance;

(c) whether the European Commission has also agreed to improve the services in Jawahar Lal Nehru Port in Mumbai and Tamil Nadu;

(d) if so, whether any agreement in this regard has been signed; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in May 1999 between this Ministry and the representatives of European Community for the EU-India Maritime Transport Project. The European Commission has agreed to assist Tuticorin Port and Jawahar Lal Nehru Port to achieve international productivity and service standards. The project will be implemented in a period of 3 years. The stated cost of the Project is 10,000,000 ECU and the EC contribution would be 8,000,000 ECU.

(e) The EU-India Maritime Transport Project aims to:

- improve the conditions for trade and investment in port sector;
- facilitate EU-India sea borne trade by reducing vessel turnaround times at Indian ports;
- provide a model for further reform and structural improvement in the Indian port sector.

The specific objectives of the Project are to:

- assist Tuticorin Port and Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) to achieve international productivity and service standards;
- improve port management and operational efficiency;
- improve ports' organisation and human resources management;
- assist in privatisation/contracting out of selected areas of port services;
- strengthen efficiency in port administration;
- assist in the streamlining of port administration procedures and the introduction of EDI (Electronic Data Interchange);
- assist in the streamlining and simplification of customs administrative procedures;
- assist in the co-ordination of port-interchanges, customs and port-related CFS operations;
- assist in improvements in marine services.

Navigable Service by IWAI in Ganga

1892. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:
MOHAMMAD ANWARUL HAQUE:
DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Inland Waterways Authority of India has not been able to make Ganga Navigable as yet;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Union Government propose to associate the State Governments in this regard; and

(d) if so, the manner in which this project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The Haldia-Calcutta-Patna stretch of NW-1 is open for navigation for passenger and goods traffic by vessels upto 1.8 m draft for about 330 days in a year. Action has been initiated to provide the waterway in Patna-Allahabad reach for vessels with 1.8 draft for operation of 300-330 days in a year.

(c) and (d) The development of National Waterway is the responsibility of the Central Government through Inland Waterways Authority of India. While executing various developmental works, assistance of State Governments is taken based on the specific requirements.

Coal Transport Project at Paradeep Port

1893. SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to build a coal transport project at Paradeep Port with the assistance of Asian Development Bank;

(b) if so, the progress and estimated cost of the project; and

(c) the amount of loan sanctioned by the Asian Development Bank for the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government have a scheme for Creation of Mechanised Coal Handling Facilities at Paradip Port with the assistance of Asian Development Bank.

(b) Out of 17 packages for Creation of Mechanised Coal Handling Facilities at Paradip Port, 6 have been completed. The work in the remaining packages is also nearing completion and it may be operational during next year. The revised cost of this project is Rs. 831.11 crore.

(c) The loan sanctioned by Asian Development Bank for the above Project is US\$ 134.85 million.

Construction of Sea Wall and Break Tower at Paradeep Port

1894. SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to construct a sea wall and break tower at Paradeep Port in Orissa;

(b) if so, the estimated cost of the project;

(c) the fund sanctioned by the Government for the project; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to implement the said proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) No, Sir. As a sea wall from the north of north-breakwater of 5000 mtrs. length is already in existence, there is no proposal for construction of another breakwater at Paradip Port. However, during super cyclone, the sea wall and two existing breakwaters suffered some damage. The Government of India sanctioned Grant-in-aid towards cyclone damage repair and out of this, an amount of Rs. 17.6 crore is earmarked for repair of sea wall and breakwater. The repair works are in progress.

[Translation]

Casual Approach to National Security

1895. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken note of the news-item captioned "Casual Approach to Security Disastrous: Subramaniam" appearing in 'The Hindu' dated October 29, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to bifurcate the Office of the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and the Office of the Advisor of the National Security Council; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps being taken to streamline the functioning of National Security Council?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Government is aware of the views of Shri K. Subrahmanyam on various issues relating to national security management, that have appeared in the media in the recent past. Some of these views have also been included in the Kargil Review Committee Report. The Government has taken note of the views of Shri K. Subrahmanayam on all the issues. It is noteworthy that a Group of Ministers (GoM) has already been set up by the Government on 17th April 2000 to thoroughly review the national security system in its entirety and in particular, to consider the recommendations of Kargil Review Committee and formulate specific proposals for implementation. Keeping in view the wide scope of the terms of reference of the Group of Ministers and in accordance with its mandate, the GoM appointed four Task Forces, one each in the area of intelligence apparatus, internal security, border management and defence management. These Task Forces have since submitted their reports to the GoM. The GoM would after consideration of various issues including those related to the sub-structures of National Security Council, formulate a set of proposals for improving the national security system.

[English]

Proposal to Start International Flight from Cochin Airport

1896. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO:
SHRI P.C. THOMAS:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any foreign airline has submitted any proposal to start flights from Cochin International Airport and vice-versa; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Requests have been received from the Governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Austria, UAE, Sri Lanka, Turkmenistan and Yemen for grant of Cochin as a point of call for their designated airlines.

(b) The designated airline of Turkmenistan has been granted access to Cochin with separate entitlement of 400 seats/week. Cochin has also been offered as a point of call to the designated airline of Saudi Arabia in place of Chennai as requested by them.

Petroleum Projects in Joint Venture

1897. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have proposed to start any Joint Venture Projects in the petroleum and oil sector in collaboration with private sector and foreign companies or Multi National Companies as strategic partners;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is expecting high gain from the Joint Venture Projects with the MNC's; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the Joint Venture Projects already in existence and proposed to be started soon in India?

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) In keeping with the current management practices

world over, public sector undertakings in the oil sector have been forming joint venture companies with private sector and foreign companies including multi-national companies. The purpose of entering into joint venture is to gain access to the latest technology, know-how,

strategies and finance through the Joint Venture partners.

Details of the joint ventures already in operation and also those under implementation in the oil sector are given in enclosed Statement.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of Joint Venture	Promoters	Business
1	2	3	4
1.	Indo-Mobil Limited	IOC and Mobil Petroleum Co. Inc	To import, blend and market Mobil brand lubricants
2.	Avi-oil India Limited	IOC, Balmer Lawrie and NYCO SA, France	For aviation lubricants
3.	Indian Oil Tanking Ltd. (IOTL)	IOC, IBP and Oil Tanking GmbH, Germany	Development of infrastructural facilities for storage of petroleum products
4.	Lubrizol India Limited	IOC and Lubrizol Corporation, USA	Manufacture of lube additives
5.	Petronet India Ltd. (PIL)	IOC, BPC, HPC, ICICI, SBI, EOL, ILFS and RPL	Implementation identified future product pipeline Projects
6.	Petronet Vadinar Kandla Limited	IOC, PIL, and others	Transportation of petroleum products (Vadinar-Kandla)
7.	Petronet Chennai Trichy-Madurai Limited	IOC, PIL, and others	For transportation of petroleum products (Chennai-Trichy-Madurai)
8.	Petronet LNG Ltd. (PLL)	IOC, GAIL, BPC, ONGC and other Strategies partners & FIs	Development of facilities for import and utilisation of LNG
9.	Indian Oil Petronas Ltd. (IPL)	IOC and Petronas, Malaysia	For setting up of LPG Import facilities at Haldia
10.	Indian Oil Panipat Power Consortium Ltd. (IPPCL)	IOC and Marubeni Corporation	Setting up of Power Project at Panipat

1	2	3	4
11.	Indian Oil TCG Petrochem Ltd.	IOC, The Chatterjee Group (TCG)	To own, operate and Manage petrochemicals Business
12.	Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL)	HPCL and AV Birla Group of Companies	Refining of crude oil
13.	Hindustan Colas Ltd. (HINCOL)	HPCL and M/s. Colas, France	To Produce and market bitumen emulsions
14.	Prize Petroleum Co. Ltd. (PPL)	HPCL, ICICI, TDICI and HDFC	For exploration and exploitation of Hydrocarbons
15.	South Asia LPG Co. Ltd. (SALPG)	HPCL & M/s. TOTAL France	To construct an LPG import terminal at Vishakhapatnam
16.	Petronet Mangalore Hassan Bangalore Ltd. (PMHBL)	HPCL and Petronet India Limited	Laying of pipeline from Mangalore to Devangunthi near Bangalore
17.	Hindustan Oman Petroleum Company Ltd. (HOPCL)	HPCL and Oman Oil Company	For setting up a refinery in Western India
18.	Bharat Oman Refineries Ltd. (BORL)	BPCL and Oman Oil Company	Setting up a refinery at Bina (MP)
19.	Bharat Shell Ltd. (BSL)	BPCL and Shell Overseas Investments BV	To market Shell branded lubricants
20.	Mahanagar Gas Ltd. (MGL)	GAIL and British Gas	Supply of piped gas and CNG in Mumbai city
21.	Indraprastha Gas Ltd. (IGL)	GAIL, BPCL and Govt. of NCT of Delhi.	Supply of piped gas and CNG in NCT of Delhi.

[Translation]

**Curb on Smuggling Activities
through Sea Routes**

1898. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Coast Guard has formulated any special action-plan to curb smuggling and other undesirable activities through sea routes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the financial provisions made for execution of this action-plan?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The charter of duties and functions in the maritime zone of India enumerated in the Coast Guard Act, 1978 includes, besides other duties, rendering assistance to the customs and other authorities in anti-smuggling operations and to enforce the provisions

of the enactments. These duties are being performed by the Coast Guard (CG) with the present force level. Provisions have been made in the CG Development Plan 1997-2002 for procuring ships/aircrafts/equipment so as to undertake the operations required for prevention of smuggling and other unlawful activities. The CG ships and aircrafts undertake various missions and operations to keep the maritime zones of India under surveillance for prevention of smuggling and other unlawful activities.

Implementation of Acts

1899. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 262, dated, August, 10, 2000 regarding Implementation of Acts and state:

(a) whether the required information has been collected;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for its delay?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) The Information regarding all the Acts except six Acts has been collected. Except following two Acts the information has already been furnished in answer to Starred Question No. 262 on August 10, 2000 and subsequently on November 9, 2000 (the Statement was forwarded to the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs for laying on the Table of the House). Since then the information has become available in respect of the following two Acts as under:-

1. The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 1991 (44 of 1991)-

Sections 22 and 30 (ii) of the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 1991 (44 of 1991) are under process for enforcement.

2. The National Environment Tribunal Act, 1995 (27 of 1995)-

The exercise for the appointment of the Chairperson has been in process since the enactment of the National Environment Tribunal Act and as required, consultations have been held with the Chief Justice of India a couple of times. However, the main hurdle in the setting up of the Tribunal is the availability of a suitable incumbent to head the Tribunal.

The requisite information about remaining six Acts is being collected from the concerned Ministries/Departments

and will be laid on the Table of the House. These Acts are:

1. The Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act, 1986 (61 of 1986);
2. The National Service Act, 1972 (28 of 1972);
3. The National Library of India Act, 1976 (76 of 1976);
4. The Trade Marks Act, 1999 (47 of 1999);
5. The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 (48 of 1999); and
6. The Designs Act, 2000 (16 of 2000).

Renovation of Vadodara Museum

1900. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vadodara Museum stands fifth in Asia and is full of archaeological treasures;

(b) if so, whether the museum has not been repaired for the last 40 years; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor, and the steps proposed to be taken for its renovation?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) The Vadodara Museum is under the administrative control of the State Government of Gujarat. As per the information furnished by the Government of Gujarat, the Vadodara Museum & Picture Gallery is one of the important State museums having sixty two thousand exhibits of different periods and civilizations. During the last 40 years, the Public Works Department maintained this building and undertook repairs from time to time. During this financial year, the Government of Gujarat proposed to spend Rs. 20 lakhs for the restoration of the building.

Construction of Road Over-Bridge

1901. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether several proposals are pending with the Government to construct road over-bridge on the Bhusawal-Nagpur section of the Central Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these proposals are likely to be cleared?

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

(b) and (c)

S. No.	Name of Work	Present Status
1.	Road Over Bridge at Fekri (NH)	State Govt. is yet to fulfill preliminary pre-requisites like undertaking for closing of level crossing, provision in the State Budget, advance action for acquisition of land and commitment to share the cost. After these are completed the work will be examined for inclusion in Railway Budget.
2.	Road Over Bridge at Nandura	do
3.	Road Over Bridge at Shegaon	do
4.	Road Over Bridge at Akola	do
5.	Road Over Bridge at Badnera (NH)	do
6.	Road Over Bridge at Butti bori (NH)	do
7.	Road Over Bridge at Khapri	do
8.	Road Over Bridge at Narendra Nagar (Nagpur)	State Govt. has planned this work on BOT (Build, Operate and Transfer) basis. General Arrangement Drawing approved. Further initiative to take up the work lies with State Govt./MSRDC
9.	Road Under Bridge at Anand Talkies (Nagpur)	do
10.	Road Over Bridge Santra Market (Nagpur)	do
11.	Road Over Bridge at Murtizapur	Work in progress
12.	Road Over Bridge at Dharangaon	do

[English]

Introduction of Productivity Linked Incentive Scheme

1902. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vijayawada Division under South Central Railway (South Central Railway) is contemplating to introduce productivity linked incentive scheme for workers at its Guntupalli wagon workshop;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any plan to introduce the scheme in other Railway organisations like RITES etc; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. M/s Rail India Technical and Economic Services (RITES) were asked to conduct a study and submit report for implementation of incentive scheme in Raynapadu workshop of South Central Railway. The report has since been submitted by M/s RITES and is presently under examination in the Railway Board.

(c) and (d) RITES is a Public Sector under Ministry of Railways engaged in providing consultancy services. There is no proposal to introduce incentive scheme in such undertakings.

Loan for Development of Kerala Airport

1903. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received a request from Malabar International Airport Development

Society in Kerala to direct the Airports Authority of India to remit the loan of Rs.55 crores taken for the developmental activities of Calicut airport to HUDCO; and

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) will repay the interest free loan received from Malabar International Airport Development Society (MIADS) as per the repayment schedule agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding signed between AAI and MIADS.

Construction of Over-Bridges in Madhya Pradesh

1904. DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of road over-bridge required at present in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether the Government are considering any proposal for construction of road over-bridge in Madhya Pradesh;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) When the traffic density reaches one lakh or more Train Vehicle Units a level crossing become due for consideration for replacement by Road Over/Under Bridge on cost sharing basis. On the basis of this criteria there are 69 level crossings in Madhya Pradesh which are due consideration for replacement by road over/under bridges.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. ROB at Chola Road in lieu of L.C. No. 252/A&252/B on Nishatpura-Ujjain & Bhopal-Ujjain Chord line and another at Bhanapura in lieu of L.C. No. 252/B are being examined for inclusion in the Railway's Budget. Besides this 10 works of ROB/RUBs already sanctioned on cost sharing basis are at various stages of planning & execution as per statement enclosed.

Statement

S. No.	Name of Work	Latest Position
1	2	3
1.	Ratlam-ROB on Jaora Road in lieu of level crossing No. 192 and 193	Work in Progress on Railway portion. Approaches' work awarded by State Govt.
2.	Indore-ROB in lieu of level crossing No. 246A	Work in progress. Super Structure work in progress.
3.	Damoh-ROB in lieu of level crossing No. 59/A	Work on both side approaches in progress.
4.	Khandwa ROB at Km. 567/4-5 on Bhusawal-Khandwa Section.	Substructure completed. Superstructure and approaches are in progress.
5.	Hoshangabad-ROB in lieu of level crossing No. 232/A @ Km. 762/11-12	Railway portion of work completed. Approaches are in progress.
6.	Satna Kotwali-RUB in lieu of level crossing No. 386/A @ Km. 1178/5-6	Diversion of road completed. Approaches are in progress.
7.	ROB at Chuchiapara Bilaspur in lieu of 'A' class level crossing	Tenders for bridge proper awarded, approaches in progress.
8.	Saugar ROB in lieu of level crossing No. 23/A @ Kms. 1048/4-5	Detailed estimate sanctioned. Contract awarded. Foundation work in progress.

1	2	3
9.	Dewas-ROB in lieu of Level crossing No. 29 'A' at Km. 41/2-5	Tender opened on 23.12.98 but cancelled as Administrations approval is yet to be given by State Govt.
10.	Maihar-ROB KT-ALD section Km. 1142/14-15 on N.H.7 on Katni-Ald section.	Detailed estimate under progress.

Probe into Escalator Tragedy at IGIA

1905. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:
SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether another Committee constituted again for the escalator tragedy has submitted its report to the Government;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the Committee; and

(c) to extent to which the recommendations of the Committee differ from the RC Jain Committee?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No other Committee has been constituted for probing into the escalator accident on 13th December, 1999.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Demand of Diesel in the First half of the Year

1906. SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

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

(a) whether the Oil companies have been asked to workout their refinery output plans afresh on the basis of a zero growth rate for diesel due to slowdown in the demand for the fuel during the first six months of the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any survey has been conducted by the Government to identify the reasons for the perplexing decline in the demand of oil; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) The oil industry review the sales performances on monthly basis to identify the associated reasons for the same.

Indian Airlines Package for Indian Tourists

1907. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines has launched package schemes for tourists in the country to capture tourism market in India apart from South-East Asia;

(b) if so, whether besides its foreign packages, Indian Airlines has also made arrangements with various luxury hotels and resorts in South-West India to promote tourism;

(c) if so, the details of the packages; and

(d) the extent to which these arrangements have helped in improving the tourist traffic to India?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. Indian Airlines has launched holiday packages for tourist destinations to Goa, Kerala and Karnataka in the domestic sectors.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Indian Airlines has floated following holiday packages;

(i) Kerala Holiday Packages: Indian Airlines has tied up with four hotels namely KTDC, Sarovar

Park Plaza, Casino Hotel and Acquaserene for four days/three nights packages. It is offered from number of stations in India like Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai, Trivandrum. This package is valid till 31st March, 2001.

- (ii) Goa Holiday Packages: Indian Airlines has tied up with Hotels/Resorts namely Leela Beach Resort, Cidade-de-Goa, Whispering Palms and Majorda Beach Resorts. The packages offered are for four days/three nights from sectors like Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore. This package is valid till 31st March, 2001.
- (iii) Jungle Lodes Holiday Package: Indian Airlines has tied up with M/s. Jungle Lodges (Karnataka) and include stay either at various resorts like Kabini River Lodge, K. Gudi and Cauvery Fishing Camp near Bangalore and Dandeli and Devbagh resorts near Goa. This package is valid till 31st December, 2000.
- (iv) Sleepovers at six major metros with various hotels:
 - Mumbai-Holiday Inn, Hotel Ambassador.
 - Delhi-Hotel Siddarth, Hotel Vasant Continental
 - Calcutta-Hotel Hindustan International.
 - Chennai-Radha Park Inn, The Park.
 - Hyderabad-Grand Kakatiya Sheraton Towers
 - Bangalore-Hotel Ashok, Hotel Atria.

(d) The above packages were introduced for promoting domestic tourism and were available for sale within India. Indian Airlines is also considering to sell packages abroad where Indian Airlines offices are situated to promote tourism to Indian destinations.

Sale of Military Canteen Liquor in Open Market

1908. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the reported arrest of two persons from the Mussoorie Thana area while trying to sell liquor meant for the military canteen situated at Pathankot as appeared in 'Dainik Jagaran' dated June 10, 2000;

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard; and

(c) if so, the outcome thereof and the follow-up action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. As narrated below, this incident does not relate to the Canteen Stores Department or the Ministry of Defence as this liquor was being transported by a private firm for the Canteen Stores Department Depot, Pathankot. It is a matter between the State Police and the Distillery. M/s Bharat Distillery Private Limited, Nasik was given an order by the Canteen Stores Department to supply liquor to the Canteen Stores Department Depot at Pathankot. The liquor was dispatched by the distillery on 29.5.2000. The truck driver, whose services were utilized by the distillery, tried to sell the liquor at Ghaziabad (U.P.) on 9.6.2000 and was nabbed by Ghaziabad Police while doing so. The truck alongwith the liquor was seized by the police.

Refixation of Reserved Constituencies

1909. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

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

(a) whether the Government propose to amend the constitution for refixation of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies on the basis of 1991 census;

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

(c) the time by which the Amendment Bill is likely to be introduced in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Constitution (Ninety-first Amendment) Bill, 2000 has already been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 27th November, 2000.

Demarcation of Hampi as Core Zone

1910. SHRI H.G. RAMULU: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India has demarcated Hampi into Core, Buffer and Peripheral zones;

(b) if so, the total area to be covered under the zones;

(c) whether the Government of Karnataka is authorised to undertake any development activity in the Core and buffer areas;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) Any construction within 100 mt. of a protected monuments or site is prohibited. For construction beyond 100 mt. upto and 300 mt., the permission of the Director General Archaeological Survey of India is required.

Delay in Medical Help

1911. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBHA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of delay made in rushing of medical aid at accident site;

(b) if so, whether any study has been made to improve efficiency in dealing with accidents providing immediate relief;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir. The rescue and relief trains are rushed without delay. However, some times there may be some delay in reaching the spot due to inaccessibility of the site of accident or due to the journey time when the site is far away.

(b) Yes, Sir. For every passenger train accident involving passenger casualties it is mandatory to hold an inquiry by Commissioner Railway Safety (CRS) or by a senior Railway Officer if there is no passenger casualty. No cases are disposed of without an inquiry. It is necessary to record the time of receipt of information, departure of medical team, arrival at the site of accident and details regarding follow up of injured. Corrective measures, if any, are taken after each inquiry and details are circulated to all heads of the departments for needful action whenever necessary.

In addition to above a database of non-railway medical facilities in the vicinity of Railway tracks been compiled which will enable the Railways to seek the help of such organizations in emergencies at the time of need even before the arrival of Railway Rescue and Relief Teams particularly when the accident site is located away from Railway Medical Establishments or, when the same is inaccessible for any reason.

(c) and (d) Improvement of the system is a continuous process and after each accident the details of rescue and relief measures are analysed for their adequacy, promptness etc. and corrective measures; if any, are taken expeditiously.

[Translation]

Allotment of New Petrol Pumps, LPG and Kerosene Agencies in Bihar

1912. SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:
PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT:
SHRI RAJO SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government propose to allot new petrol/diesel pumps/LPG/kerosene oil distributorship in the districts of Bihar during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria adopted for such allotment; and

(d) the time by which these agencies are likely to be allotted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) As per the existing policy, the following criteria are adopted for setting up economically viable LPG distributorships in different parts of the country;

- (i) All urban locations with a population of 10,000 and above by including potential of adjoining villages falling within the radius of 15 Kms.
- (ii) Urban locations having population of 5,000 and above taking into account the potential of adjoining villages falling within 15 Kms radius.
- (iii) Cluster of villages within 15 Kms radius of nucleus villages having a population of 10,000 and above.

- (iv) Villages within 15 Kms radius around towns having population of 1 lakh and above.

Retail Outlet dealerships and SKO/LDO dealerships are set up based on Volume-Distance norms.

In order to meet the increased demand, in addition to the locations pending from the previous marketing plans, 102 locations for retail outlets, 105 locations for LPG distributorships and 18 locations for SKO/LDO dealerships have been included in the Marketing Plan 1996-98 for the State of Bihar. More dealerships/distributorships will be set up on the basis of feasibility surveys.

[English]

Oil and Gas Extracted from Tamil Nadu

1913. SHRI THIRUNAVUKARASU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of oil/gas extracted from Tamil Nadu during the last three years;

(b) whether royalty/compensation has been paid to Tamil Nadu for such extraction of oil/gas;

(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) The production of crude oil and natural gas in the State of Tamil Nadu for the last three years is as under:-

Year	Oil Production (Tonnes)	Gas Production (Million cubic metres)
1997-98	324225	94.962
1998-99	365239	106.519
1999-2000	376633	137.997

(b) and (c) Yes Sir. The amount of royalty on oil and gas accrued/paid to Tamil Nadu for the last three years is as under:-

(Rs. in crores)

	Oil	Gas	Total
1997-98	18.54	0.95	19.49
1998-99	20.99	0.66	21.65
1999-2000	26.59	1.94	28.53

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Freight Operation Information System

1914. SHRI AKHILESH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have introduced freight operation information system (FOIS);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the expenditure incurred thereon along with the name of the company which has awarded the contract for setting up the FOIS;

(c) the present status of the FOIS;

(d) the amount of losses suffered by Railways so far; and

(e) the names of the persons/authority held responsible for such losses and the action contemplated to be taken by the Government against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) of the Indian Railways is an on line system for management and control of freight movement. The system assists managers to optimise asset utilisation. Once fully implemented, it will enable freight customers to have instant access to information regarding the current status of their consignments in transit. There are two core modules of the FOIS — Rake Management System (RMS) for management of rakes and Terminal Management System (TMS) for management of the loading/unloading freight terminals. The contract for developing the software has been awarded to M/s CMC Ltd., an undertaking under Ministry of Information Technology (MIT), after a partnership was set up between Ministry of Railways and MIT for executing this work through their respective technical arms, Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) and CMC. The total expenditure on the project so far is about Rs. 216 crores.

(c) One core module for monitoring the movement of rakes has already been implemented successfully on the Northern Railway. This is likely to be extended over all Indian Railways by March 2001. The other core module for management of terminals is likely to be implemented by the end of March 2003.

(d) There is no financial loss suffered by the Railways.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Modernisation of N.T.C. & B.I.C.

1915. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have approved a turn-around strategy for the National Textile Corporation Limited and British India Corporation Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent to which it is likely to be helpful to NTC and BIC;

(d) the funds provided for the modernization of the said corporations during each of the last three years and the current year and the achievements, made so far, corporation-wise;

(e) whether the Government had approved the allocation of funds for the modernization of units under these corporations during the Eighth Plan; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (c) The Government has approved the following broad approach for all the mills of the eight sick subsidiaries of NTC:-

- (i) There will be a unit by unit assessment to decide whether a unit is revivable or non-revivable;
- (ii) All revivable units will be revived;
- (iii) Non-revivable units will be closed and attractive VRS option(s) will be made available to the employees.

NTC have made necessary submission before BIFR on the above lines.

As regards the British India Corporation Ltd (woollen mills), Government have decided to request the Hon'ble High Court of Allahabad to refer the case to BIFR for revival.

(d) Funds could not be released for modernisation. However, the following amounts were released to NTC and BIC as non-plan loans;

(In Rupees Cr)		
Year	NTC	BIC
1997-98	499.64	20.30
1998-99	408.00	25.30
1999-2000	494.00	26.20
Total	1401.64	71.80

Since most of the mills are running in losses, the amount released was used for meeting the shortfall in salaries and wages.

(e) and (f) Government had approved a Plan allocation of Rs. 88.96 Cr for NTC during 8th Plan period as its contribution for a modernisation package led by Financial institutions. The allocated amount however, could not be released, as Financial Institutions did not come forward for financing these losing concerns.

[Translation];

Declaration of National Monuments in Uttar Pradesh

1916. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of sites in Uttar Pradesh which have been declared as National Monument under Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rule 1959;

(b) whether these sites are proposed to be declared as tourist spots;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the amount allocated for the development of these monuments during 2000-01?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) In Uttar Pradesh 785 monuments/site have been declared as national monuments under Ancient Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 and Rules 1959. The details are available in the Parliament Library.

(b) and (c) Declaration of tourist spots is the prerogative of the State Government concerned.

(d) The Archaeological Survey of India has made an allocation of Rs. 308.35 lakhs in this regard during 2000-2001.

Recognition of Radars

1917. SHRI MANSINH PATEL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Radars installed at various airports do not have international recognition;

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

(c) whether any responsibility has been fixed in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir. All the radars in use by Airports Authority of India at different airports fully conform to Standards and Recommended Practices laid down by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Vacant Posts

1918. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:
SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:

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

(a) whether Delhi High Court has suggested that the strength of judges in Delhi High Court Judicial Service and Delhi Judicial Services should be raised to 820;

(b) if so, whether the Government has considered the views of the Supreme Court and Delhi High Court in this regard; and

(c) the time by which the appointment of more Judges are likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) The Supreme Court in its order of 18.8.2000 passed in the CWP No. D9509 of 2000 — Delhi Bar Association Vs. Union of India & Ors, has inter alia directed the Union of India to indicate as to what should be the desired ideal strength of the subordinate judiciary in Delhi and what steps should be taken to achieve this.

This Department had requested the Delhi High Court to work out the same. The Delhi High Court had suggested that the ideal strength of the Delhi subordinate judiciary should be 818 i.e. 252 posts for Delhi Higher Judicial Service and 566 posts for the Delhi Judicial Service. The number of judges in Delhi subordinate courts was increased by 33 in the month of June, 2000 raising its strength to 385. The Central Government has submitted before the Supreme Court of India that out of these 385 posts, 248 are currently in position. If all the 385 posts are filled up, it would be able to take care of pending as well as current cases.

[Translation]

Train Accident

1919. SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some railway labourers were crushed to death by 2553 up Vaishali Express at Ujjarpur Railway Station in Samastipur-Barauni section of Central-East Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for the accident; and

(d) the compensation paid to the families of the victims of the said accident?

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

(b) and (c) On 5.11.2000, Gangmen belonging to Broad Gauge Gang No. 4 were working at kilometre No.

25/11-13 in between Ujjarpur and Samastipur stations of Sonapur Division. At about 10.02 hrs, a down Goods Train passed through the Up line. So the workers working on the Up line went towards the down line. Meanwhile, the 2553 Up Vaishali Express passed through the down line. Due to this, three Gangmen were killed and two were seriously injured.

(d) Compensation is being arranged to the families of the victims.

[English]

Development of Multi-Model Transport Services

1920. SHRI KALAVA SRINIVASULU:
DR. RAJESWARAMMA VUKKALA:
SHRIMATI D.M. VIJAYA KUMARI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway authorities have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Andhra Pradesh for setting up a joint venture for development of multi-model transport services in twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether private sector will also be invited to join the project;

(d) the estimated cost of the project;

(e) the percentage of amount shared by the participants in the project; and

(f) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

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

(b) The purpose of MOU is to strengthen the existing suburban rail infrastructure and services in the city of Hyderabad and its suburbs as a part of comprehensive multimodal suburban commuter transportations system for the Hyderabad Urban Agglomeration and its neighbourhood.

The Ministry of Railways & the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh shall initially upgrade the fixed rail infrastructure on an equal cost sharing basis. The routes of Falaknuma-Secunderabad, Secunderabad-Lingampally, Secunderabad-Nampally shall be taken up on priority for these

upgradations. Thereafter, a Joint Venture Company will be set up with equal equity contribution from the Ministry of Railways & Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.

(c) Private entrepreneurs may also be inducted at a subsequent stage, if considered desirable and by mutual consultations.

(d) The estimated capital cost of the Phase I of the project is Rs. 60 crores.

(e) Cost of fixed infrastructure will be shared equally. In the Joint Venture company to be set up, equal equity contribution will be made by Ministry of Railways & Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.

(f) The Ministry of Railways & the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh propose that within 12 months, the requisite fixed infrastructure shall be in position.

TTE in Trains

1921. SHRI C.N. SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government are aware that the TTEs and TS in trains after checking the tickets disappear to some other compartment and neglecting the comforts of the passengers in trains; and

(b) if so, the details of cases come to light during the last one year and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) A Travelling Ticket Examiner (TTE) is normally required to man more than one coach and Train Superintendent wherever provided is incharge of the entire train. For checking and other duties they have to move to other coaches giving a feeling to the passengers that Travelling Ticket Examiners are not available though they are present on trains. The manning of trains and coaches is monitored at supervisors' and officers' levels.

Rescue Facilities at Submarines

1922. SHRI R.S. PATIL:
SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the Submarines purchased by India lack rescue facilities;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to remove those shortcomings taking into account the Russian Submarine disaster;

(c) whether India has purchased some highly sophisticated submarines from abroad; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHIR GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) All Indian Navy submarines have the capability to allow escape of crew from about a depth of 120 meters, using escape suits. Submarines have rescue hatches, which are standard fit and are designed to mate with Deep Submergence Rescue Vessels (DSRVs)/diving bells. Indian Navy does not have a DSRV. Induction of DSRV together with its associated infrastructure is being progressed.

(c) and (d) Indian Navy has recently procured a submarine from Russia. It will not be in the interest of national security to divulge further details.

[*Translation*]

Refund of Unused Railway Tickets

1923. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the refund of unused railway tickets is not made within a scheduled time;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to simplify the procedure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The tickets offered for cancellation within the stipulated period are refunded instantly across the counter.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[*English*]

Construction of Rail bridge over River Kathjori

1924. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to construct a second rail bridge over river Kathjori in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

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

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Kumaramangalam Birla Committee Report

1925. SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:
SHRI SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE:

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

(a) whether Indian accounting standards are compatible with international norms;

(b) if so, the recommendations of Kumaramangalam Birla Committee on code on corporate governance for listed companies alongwith the action taken thereon; and

(c) the steps the Government are contemplating to adopt internationally accepted accounting practices by companies and to enhance the shareholders value?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report of the Committee was considered and adopted by SEBI Board at its meeting on January, 25, 2000. The recommendations in the report have been grouped into two categories, namely, mandatory and non-mandatory. The mandatory recommendations are to be implemented through amendments to the listing agreements of stock exchanges. These include, inter-alia, the composition of the board of directors with an optimal mix of executive and non-executive independent directors; board procedure, compliance report on corporate governance, constitution of an audit committee to oversee the company's financial reporting and disclosures and adequacy of internal control.

Other recommendations such as setting up of a remuneration committee of the board of directors and option of postal ballot in some matters have been classified as non-mandatory recommendations with which compliance is voluntary.

On February 4, 2000, SEBI issued directions to stock exchanges to amend their listing agreements to implement the mandatory recommendations of the Committee.

The amendments to the listing agreement are to be implemented in a phased manner by:

- Companies seeking listing for the first time, at the time of listing.
- Group 'A' companies in the BSE or in S&P CNX Nifty Index as on 1.1.2000 latest by 31.3.2001.
- Presently listed companies with paid up share capital of Rs. 10 crore and above, or net worth of Rs. 25 crore or more, latest by 31.3.2002.
- Listed companies with paid up share capital of Rs. 3 crore and above, latest by 31.3.2003.

(c) Pursuant to the provisions of Section 210A of the Companies Act, 1956, the steps are being taken by the Government for constitution of National Advisory Committee on Accounting Standards which would advise the Government on the formulation and laying down of accounting policies and accounting standards for adoption by companies or class of companies.

Delay in Flights of Indian Airlines

1926. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether flights of Indian Airlines are being delayed/withheld due to non-availability of pilots;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to recruit more pilots; and

(c) the details of vacancies of pilots exist at present?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) A few flights have been delayed in the recent past due to Flight and Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) of the crew.

(b) and (c) To meet the operational requirement, Indian Airlines has notified 24 posts of Trainee Pilots for which recruitment process is on.

Inclusion of Places of Mythological Significance with UNESCO

1927. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of places of mythological significance registered with the UNESCO till date; and

(b) the number of proposal rejected or awaiting clearance from UNESCO for inclusion in the said list?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Sixteen monuments protected by the Archaeological Survey of India have been inscribed as World Heritage sites by UNESCO only on the basis of their outstanding historical and archaeological significance; namely (1) Ajanta Caves, (2) Ellora Caves, (3) Agra Fort, (4) Taj Mahal, Agra, (5) The Sun Temple, Konark, (6) Mahabalipuram Group of Monuments, (7) Goa Churches & Convents, (8) Khajuraho Group of Monuments, (9) Group of Monuments at Hampi, (10) The Mughal City of Fatehpur Sikri, (11) Group of Monuments at Pattadakal, (12) Elephanta Caves, (13) Brihadishwara Temple, (14) Qutb Complex, Delhi (15) Humayun's Tomb, Delhi and (16) Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi.

(b) Proposal for inclusion of eleven monuments of outstanding historical significance have been submitted to the UNESCO for their inscription as World Heritage sites.

Proposal for Exploration

1928. SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE:
SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:
SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:

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

(a) the number of new oil exploration wells dug up during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(b) the result achieved therefrom?

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) Details of Exploratory Wells drilled during last three years by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd., Oil India Limited and the Private/Joint Venture Companies are given below:

State	1997-98 No. of Exploratory Wells drilled	1998-99 No. of Exploratory Wells drilled	1999-2000 No. of Exploratory Wells drilled
Andhra Pradesh	22	22	18
Arunachal Pradesh	—	—	1
Assam	25	24	27
Gujarat	43	47	51
Madhya Pradesh	1	—	—
Rajasthan	5	2	4
Tamil Nadu	17	19	19
Tripura	3	2	6
Uttar Pradesh	—	—	1
Total*	116	116	127

*This does not include offshore wells drilled from onland.

(b) Out of the total 359 exploratory wells drilled during the last three years, 176 wells were found to be hydrocarbon bearing.

Lack of Hygiene at Railway Stations

1929. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether railways have not paid much attention to hygiene in trains and railway stations;

(b) if so, whether any survey has been conducted by the railways to find out the causes of such lack of hygiene;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to upgrade such facilities in trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) It is the constant endeavour of Railway to keep trains and station premises clean and hygienic. Cleanliness is regularly monitored and causes and factors which affect cleanliness are identified and correct measures are taken for improvement. Some of the factors which constrain the quality of cleanliness of trains and stations are:

- i) Large number of passengers and intensive use.
- ii) Inadequate consciousness amongst users towards public hygiene.

(d) Railways constantly strive to improve their system and methods for better cleanliness in trains and stations. Some of the measures taken are as under:

- i) Provision of adequate time for upkeep.
- ii) Monthly intensive cleaning of coaches.
- iii) Use of high pressure jet cleaning plants at coaching depots and mobile jet cleaning machines at enroute stations.
- iv) Use of improved and eco-friendly cleaning agents.
- v) Pest control on coaches through specialized agencies.
- vi) Deployment of travelling safaiwalas on selected trains.
- vii) Introduction of pay and use scheme of toilets at stations.
- viii) Provision of washable aprons, additional dustbins, repairs to drains, removal of garbage etc. at stations.
- ix) Frequent announcement to seek cooperation of passengers to keep railway areas and trains clean.
- x) Regular inspections and surprise checks to monitor the condition.

[Translation]

Payment to Ganesh Sugar Mill, Anandnagar

1930. SHRI PADAM SEN CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees of Ganesh Sugar Mill, Anandnagar are not being paid pay and gratuity etc.;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken for early payment of arrears to the workers;

(d) whether the Government propose to introduce Voluntary Retirement Scheme for the workers of the said mill;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) and (b) The employees of Ganesh Sagar Mills are not being paid pay and Gratuity after 29.9.99 on which date the Hon'ble High Court, Allahabad passed winding up order and appointed Official Liquidator. As per the provisions of the Companies Act 1956, the company is not liable to make any payment including salary and wages from this date.

(c) The official Liquidator appointed by the High Court will settle the claims of the employees as per the provisions of the Companies Act.

(d) to (f) Since the company has been ordered for winding up by the Hon'ble High Court and Official Liquidator has been appointed there is no proposal to introduce VRS for the workers of the company.

Renewal of Railway Lines

1931. DR. SANJAY PASWAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria followed by the Railways for introducing Express trains and renewal of rail lines and other infrastructure;

(b) whether there is any proposal to develop Kiul-Gaya line under Danapur division of Eastern Railway; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) Express trains are introduced subject to traffic demand, availability of resources and operational feasibility including condition of the track structure, terminal capacity, line capacity etc. Track is renewed on age-cum-condition basis subject to availability of funds. The life of track is normally based on several criteria such as quantum of traffic carried, wear of track components, proneness to fracture of rails condition of sleepers and maintainability of track, etc. Railways undertake modernisation and upgradation of assets as and when required by traffic and safety needs. At present, track is not being further developed on the Kiul-Gaya line. Amenities on the various lines are augmented from time to time depending on growth of traffic and availability of funds. However, a provision for foot overbridge at Kiul has been made costing Rs. 31.19 lakhs.

[English]

Locomotive Orders

1932. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the orders for manufacturing of locomotives has come down in Chittaranjan Locomotive works as compared to the previous year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the comparative cost price of three phase Engine manufactured by Chittaranjan Locomotive Works and the imported engine; and

(d) the annual demand of such engines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The initial budgeted programme for the year 2000-2001 was for 93 Electric Locos at Chittaranjan Locomotive Works. On a review of the requirement, production of 130 Locos has been projected recently.

(b) The target for production is decided based on traffic projection. The production target at CLW has reduced due to drop in originating revenue freight traffic i.e. traffic materialisation being lower than the target for IXth plan.

(c) The projected average cost of three-phase electric locomotives being manufactured by Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) during the year 2000-2001 is Rs. 13.41 crores inclusive of all taxes and duties as against Rs. 22.00 crores for imported locomotive excluding custom duty.

(d) The demand for locomotives is based on the traffic requirement projected each year.

Flight from Delhi-Raipur-Nagpur

1933. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is only one flight (No. 7469) on Delhi-Raipur-Nagpur Route;

(b) if so, whether the route of this flight earlier was Delhi-Nagpur-Raipur;

(c) if so, the reasons for which the route of this flight has been changed;

(d) whether the departure timing of this flight from Delhi has been changed from evening to morning;

(e) if so, whether there is proposal to review the departure time of this flight from Delhi; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) In the present schedule, Alliance Air operates CD 7469 service on Delhi-Raipur-Nagpur route with B-737 aircraft daily.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Due to operational reasons, the routing of this flight was changed to Delhi-Raipur-Nagpur-Delhi.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Due to constraints of aircraft capacity and non-availability of operating slots, there is no proposal at present to review the timings of this flight.

Appointment/Posting of SCs/STs in Autonomous Bodies

1934. SARDAR BUTA SINGH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred question No. 3080 dated August 10, 2000 regarding Appointment/Posting of SCs/STs in autonomous bodies and state:

(a) whether the relevant information has so far been collected by the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time by which it is likely to be laid on the Table of the House?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (c) The collection of information, as referred to in the reply given to the earlier Unstarred Question No. 3080 dated 10.8.2000, is not complete as yet and as such, an extension of time upto 9.2.2001 has been sought for fulfilling of the assurance thereto.

Proposal For Export of Diesel

1935. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to export diesel; and

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

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 export of diesel would depend upon the indigenous availability and demand position in the country.

(b) The export of Diesel has been decanalised.

[Translation]

Preservation of Monuments/Museums in Maharashtra

1936. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of historical monuments/museums being preserved in Ahamadnagar (Maharashtra) by the Archaeological Survey of India;

(b) whether the maintenance being provided in those monuments/museums are sufficient;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the time by which the maintenance work of these monuments/museums are likely to be completed; and

(e) the amount spent on the preservation of each monument/museum during each of the last three years and the current year?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) The list of centrally protected monuments in Ahmadnagar District is given in Statement-I. The Archaeological Survey of India does not have any museum in Ahmadnagar District.

(b) to (d) The maintenance and conservation of the centrally protected monuments is a continuous process, subject to the overall availability of funds.

(e) The expenditure incurred on the maintenance/conservation of the centrally protected monuments during last three years and the allocation for the current year is given in Statement-II and III respectively.

Statement-I

Sl. No.	Name of Monument	Locality
1.	Damri Masjid (within the limits of Cantonment)	Ahmadnagar
2.	Gate near Niyamat Khan's Palace	Ahamadnagar
3.	Kotla of Twelve Imams	Ahamadnagar
4.	Mucca Masjid	Ahamadnagar
5.	Old Tomb near Changiz Khan's Palace	Ahamadnagar
6.	Tomb of Nizam Ahemedshah	Ahamadnagar
7.	Hemadpanthi Temple	Bamini
8.	Dhokeshwar Caves	Dhoke
9.	Building known as Fariah Baug	Bingar Cantonment
10.	Jain Temple	Ghotan
11.	Mallikarjun Temple	Ghotan
12.	Caves & Temple	Harischandra Garh
13.	Jarasangh Nagari	Jorve
14.	Mallikarjun Temple	Karjat
15.	Shiva Temple called as Naktichadeul	Karjat
16.	Old Temple	Kokamthan
17.	Devi Temple	Mandavgaon Katrabad
18.	Salabat Khan Tomb	Mehkari
19.	Temple of Shiva on further side of the stream	Parner
20.	Baleshwar Temple	Pedgaon
21.	Lakshmi Narayan Temple	Pedgaon
22.	Amriteshwar Temple	Ratanwadi
23.	Triple Shrined temple of Bhavani	Tahakari
24.	Five stone gate	Tisgaon
25.	Devi Temple	Toka
26.	Siddheshwar Mahadev Temple	Toka
27.	Vishnu Temple & Five Ghats attached thereto	Toka
28.	Ancient Sites and Remains at Daimabad	Daimabad Village
29.	Ancient Site locally known as Ladmod	Newasa

Statement-II*Expenditure on Conservation/Maintenance*

S. No.	Name of Monument	Locality	Expenditure 1997-1998	Expenditure 1998-1999	Expenditure 1999-2000
1.	Dhokeshwar Caves	Dhoke	1,73,680/-	4,227/-	9,999/-
2.	Building known as Fariah Baug	Bhingar Cantonment	—	14,424/-	10,270/-
3.	Caves & Temple	Harishchandragarh	—	25,000/-	10,000/-
4.	Jarasangh Nagari	Jorve	4,980/-	—	—
5.	Old Temple	Kokamthan	16,002/-	2,306/-	—
6.	Devi Temple	Mandavgaon	1,14,000/-	—	—
7.	Salabat Khan Tomb	Mehkari	—	7,691/-	15,000/-
8.	Lakshmi Narayan Temple	Pedgaon	—	2,351/-	—

Statement-III*Allocation of Funds 2000-2001*

S. No.	Name of Monument	Locality	Allocation 2000-2001
1	2	3	4
1.	Damri Masjid (within the limits of Cantonment)	Ahmadanagar	1,000
2.	Gate near Niyamat Khan's Palace	Ahmadanagar	1,000
3.	Kotla of Twelve Imams	Ahmadanagar	1,000
4.	Mucca Masjid	Ahmadanagar	1,000
5.	Old Tomb near Changiz Khan's Palace	Ahmadanagar	1,000
6.	Hemadpanthi Temple	Bamini	1,000
7.	Dhokeshwar Caves	Dhoke	10,000
8.	Building known as Fariah Baug	Bhingar Cantonment	30,000
9.	Jain Temple	Ghotan	1,000
10.	Mallikarjun Temple	Ghotan	1,000
11.	Jarasangh Nagari	Jorve	13,000
12.	Mallikarjun Temple	Karjat	1,000
13.	Shiva Temple called as Naktichedul	Karjat	1,000

1	2	3	4
14.	Old Temple	Kokamthan	5,000
15.	Devi Temple	Mandavgaon Katrabad	1,000
16.	Salabat Khan Tomb	Mehkari	21,500
17.	Temple of Shiva on further side of the stream	Pamer	10,000
18.	Baleshwar temple	Pedgaon	1,000
19.	Lakshmi Narayan Temple	Pedgaon	10,000
20.	Amriteshwar Temple	Ratanwadi	5,000
21.	Triple shrined temple of Bhawani	Tahakari	1,000
22.	Five stone gate	Tisgaon	5,000
23.	Devi temple	Toka	1,000
24.	Siddheshwar Mahadev Temple	Toka	1,000
25.	Vishnu Temple & Five Ghats attached thereto	Toka	1,000
26.	Ancient Sites and Remains at Daimabad	Daimabad Village	5,000
27.	Ancient Site locally known as Ladmod	Newasa	1,000

An allocation of Rs. 10 lakhs has been made for the structural conservation of Fariah Baug, Salabat Khan's Tomb and ancient site Newasa.

[English]

Joint Venture with Karnataka

1937. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:
SHRI R.S. PATIL:
SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has signed any memorandum of Understanding with the Railways to set up Joint Venture to expedite development of projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of projects identified for development;

(d) the funds required for their completion;

(e) the manner in which the funds are likely to be mobilised; and

(f) The time by which these projects are likely to be completed?

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

(b) A Joint Venture Company will be formed. Ministry of Railways, Govt. of Karnataka, FI's/Banks/Others will be the equity partners. This company will mobilise finances for certain identified Rail Projects.

- (c)
1. Hubli-Ankola New Lines
 2. Solapur-Gadag Gauge Conversion
 3. Hassan-Mangalore Gauge Conversion
 4. Guntkal-Hospet Doubling

(d) As per the available estimates the cost of the project is Rs. 1639.50 crores.

(e) The funds for these projects will be mobilized by the JV Company in which Ministry of Railways and Govt. of Karnataka will each be 26% equity partners. The Govt. of Karnataka will provide State guarantee with out any resource or charge on the Ministry of Railways or on the railway assets, to the lenders for the market borrowings by the Joint Venture Company. Ministry of Railways, however, will only fund these projects to the extent of 25% of the balance cost of the project and further subject to allocations made in the Railway Budget for these works.

(f) No time frame has been finalised.

[*Translation*]

Expansion of Airports in Rajasthan

1938. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of airports in Jodhpur district of Rajasthan;

(b) whether the Government propose to expand the Salawas airport at Jodhpur;

(c) if so, the time by which it is likely to be expanded;

(d) whether the Government are considering to construct an airport at Falaudi; and

(e) if so, the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) There are six airstrips/airfields in Jodhpur district.

(b) Airstrip at Salawas belongs to Ministry of Defence (IAF). Airports Authority of India (AAI) has no plans to develop it.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[*English*]

Infrastructure for Bangalore International Airport

1939. SHRI KOLUR BASAVANAGOUD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airport Authority of India has agreed to provide finance for infrastructure development for the Bangalore International Airport project;

(b) if so, the funds proposed to be provided by AAI for the said projects; and

(c) the resources of finance being made for the said project?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (c) As per the Memorandum of Understanding between the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Karnataka State Industrial Investment and Development Corporation (KSIIDC), subject to the commercial viability of the project being established, the project is proposed to be implemented by a Joint Venture Company (JVC) consisting of the KSIIDC, AAI and Joint Venture Partner (JVP) at an estimated cost of Rs. 1000 crores in a debt equity ratio of 60:40. The KSIIDC and the AAI would be jointly holding not less than 26% of the equity in the JVC.

Rail Link between Dahanu and Nasik

1940. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government were requested to provide new railway link between Dahanu and Nasik;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government had ordered for a survey report of the project;

(d) whether the survey report of the project has since been received; and

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the time limit fixed to undertake the work on the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (e) A survey for construction of new line between Dahanu Road and Nasik Road is in progress. Further consideration of the project would be possible once the survey report becomes available.

[*Translation*]

Corporatisation of Production Units

1941. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Asian Institute of Transport Development has recommended corporatisation of production units under the Railways in order to improve their efficiency and enhance production;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to implement those recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b): Yes, Sir. The Asian Institute of Transport Development in its Report submitted in Sept'2000, has recommended the corporatisation of Production Units under the Railways.

(c) The corporatisation of Production Units is not being considered at present. However, it is proposed to make these Production Units into separate cost & profit centers within the present structure of Indian Railways.

Damages of Dadar Ratnagiri Express

1942. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of damages caused to the Dadar-Ratnagiri train of Konkan Railway by passengers on October 31,2000;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the value of Government property damaged therein; and

(c) the efforts being made by the Government to check the reoccurrence of such incidents?

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

(b) The engine of Matsyagandha Express train failed in mid section. Accordingly, the Dadar-Ratnagiri passengers train had to be stopped at Veer station till the clearance of track ahead. This delayed the running of the train. Some of the passengers indulged in vandalism at Veer. The passengers again indulged in vandalism at Karanjdi station where the train had to be stopped for about 20 minutes because of brake binding problem. Estimated damage to the Konkan Railway Property is Rs. 1.15 lakhs.

(c) Co-ordination with the local police has been stepped up for taking swift action against passengers indulging in vandalism of Railway property.

Fire Brigade and Ambulance Services at Accident Prone Areas

1943. SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any time frame fixed for providing fire brigade and ambulance services at the accident prone areas of landing areas of airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the instructions issued in this regard till date;

(c) whether any presentation has been received by the Government to improve the relief facilities in emergency cases at short notice;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The Response Time for rescue and relief vehicles like Crash Fire Tenders (CFT) prescribed by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is "within two minutes and not exceeding three minutes". The ambulances are positioned at Fire Station, along with fire tenders and follow the crash fire tenders to reach the crash site.

(c) and (d) All the rescue and fire fighting vehicles at airports conform to the ICAO norm. It is the constant endeavour to improve and upgrade these facilities at the airports. Periodic training is imparted to personnel handling these equipment so as to ensure that the response time prescribed is met during actual emergencies.

(e) Does not arise.

Construction of Moul Morora Railway Station

1944. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Railway Station viz Moul Morora has been constructed without any railway line;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the expenditure incurred on the construction of railway station;

(d) the work for which this station is being used;

(e) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for laying railway line; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Bomb-Blast in Army Headquarters, Mumbai

1945. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an incident of bomb-blast took place on November 1, 2000 in the Army Headquarters in the Navy Nagar area of the Air Force Headquarters situated in Colaba in South Mumbai;

(b) if so, the number of persons killed/injured therein;

(c) whether any compensation has been granted to families of the victims;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any enquiry has been conducted in the incident; and

(f) if so, the outcome thereof and the follow-up action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The blast took place on 01 November 2000 in the unit area of 9 KUMAON located in Navy Nagar, Colaba in South Mumbai during mobilisation training of the Unit.

(b) Details of casualties are as under:

(i) One jawan dead.

(ii) One JCO and two jawans received minor injuries.

(c) and (d) Details regarding compensation to next of kin are being ascertained.

(e) and (f) An FIR has been lodged with the local Police and detailed investigation by Army and Police authorities is in progress.

Setting up of New Stations of Coast Guard

1946. SHRI RAMCHANDER BAINDA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up new stations of Coast Guard at Western and Eastern Coasts and Andaman and Nicobar Islands keeping in view the new challenges of security in these areas; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the work is likely to be started thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Coast Guard proposes to set up new Stations at Jakhau (Gujarat) and Vizhinjam (Kerala) in the West Coast and at Hut Bay in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

65.49 acres of land has been identified for acquisition by the Coast Guard (CG) at Jakhau. Environmental clearance for one acre of land on the sea front has also been obtained. The work at this station is likely to start after handing over of the land by the Gujarat Government.

The CG station at Vizhinjam is approved for being established in the next Coast Guard Development Plan (CGDP), i.e. 2002-2007.

For the proposed CG station at Hut Bay in A&N islands, 10 acres of land has since been handed over the A&N Administration. Further action in the matter is being taken by the CG.

[English]

Increase in Fares

1947. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines has not increased the fare since long;

(b) if so, the details of impact on air traffic;

(c) whether the number of passengers has been increased;

(d) if so, whether the Indian Airlines benefited from more passengers and additional revenues which offset the higher fuel prices;

(e) if so, whether Indian Airlines is likely to reduce after cost of operation; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) There has been no fare increase on North-

East and other sectors within Category-II routes since October, 1997 and other domestic sectors since October, 1998.

(b) to (d) The passenger carriage by Indian Airlines during the first half year of 2000-01 did suffer a set-back in the aftermath of the air crash at Patna on 17th July, 2000 involving B-737 aircraft. The traffic has, however, started picking up in the second half year commencing October, 2000.

Director General of Civil Aviation had recently sent a report in the Ministry regarding the traffic trends on the domestic sector and respective passenger shares of Indian Airlines and Jet Airways. The salient features of this report are;

- (i) During the first 10 months of the year 2000 i.e. upto October, 2000, the average growth rate of the domestic passenger air traffic so far has been 9.8%.
- (ii) The passenger share of Indian Airlines has gradually improved from 42.3% in August, 2000 to 45.5% in October, 2000.
- (iii) The passenger load factor of Indian Airlines has also improved to 63% in the month of October, 2000.
- (iv) The total number of domestic passengers carried by Indian Airlines in the month of October, 2000 has again become more than the passengers carried by Jet Airways.

(e) and (f) The two ATF price hike for domestic operations within a short span of six months have added a financial burden of Rs. 226 crores in the year 2000-01 at the existing level of domestic operations. It would indeed be somewhat difficult for Indian Airlines to off-set the increase in the cost of operation on this account at the existing fare structure. Indian Airlines is, however, examining various options to minimise the impact of cost increase, which inter-alia include concerted marketing/cost cutting measures and continued efforts for enhancement in the market share of Indian Airlines.

Security System In Railways

1948. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has criticised the existing security management system in the Railways and suggested a strong unified overseeing arrangement and better coordination between security related agencies in its report for 1998-99;

(b) if so, the total amount spent by Railways on RPF, RPSF and GRP during the last three years; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed by the Government for unified security management in Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (c) Yes, Sir. However, the CAG has not suggested any unified overseeing arrangement.

(b) The following expenditure was incurred by the Railways for the past three years;

(figs in crores)

Year	RPF & RPSF	GRP
1997-98	Rs. 393.81	96.97 crores
1998-99	Rs. 493.28	109.37 crores
1999-00	Rs. 547.50	139.31 crores (approx)

Restructuring of Management of Railways

1949. DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR:
SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO:
SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to restructure the management of Indian Railways so as to improve its functioning;

(b) if so, the manner in which such restructuring is to be undertaken; and

(c) the extent to which the restructuring of Indian Railways is likely to boost revenue and to check its wasteful expenditure?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Health Care of Defence Employees

1950. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a scheme of health care for working as well as retired defence employees;

(b) if so, the salient feature of the scheme; and

(c) the allocation made for the purpose during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) There are two categories of Defence employees, viz., Armed Forces Personnel and Defence Civilian employees. Each category has a different scheme for health care facilities, as given below:-

I. The Armed Forces personnel are provided with health care facilities as per the provisions contained in the Regulations for Medical Services of Armed Forces - 1983. Under this, the serving Armed Forces personnel are provided with the following medical facilities:

Professional advice and treatment is provided by the authorised medical attendant to all armed forces personnel during sickness/injury:

- as out patients at armed forces hospitals, dispensaries and medical inspection rooms or at their quarters
- treatment in hospitals, subject to the recovery of such hospital stoppages, as stipulated
- in case, the required treatment facility is not available in the services medical establishments, the same is provided from the civil government/private hospitals, located within the country, and, occasionally, even from hospitals located outside the country, depending on the need and severity of the case.

II. The retired Armed Forces personnel are provided with limited medical facilities from within the available resources of Armed Forces Medical Services, as given below:-

(i) Free outpatient treatment in the nearest Armed Forces Hospital, including the supply of medicine necessary for their treatment.

(ii) In-patient treatment in the Armed Forces Hospitals, subject to the following conditions:

- that the disease is not incurable.
- the hospital accommodation could be made available within the authorised number of beds and without detriment to the needs of serving personnel and the treatment will be limited to the facilities available locally.

the scope of the above concession will not include treatment of Pulmonary tuberculosis, leprosy, malignant disease or any other disease for which the treatment is not, ordinarily, available from local military hospital.

III. The civilian employees of the defence services are provided with health care facilities like any other Central Government civil employees under Central Services (Medical Attendance) Rules/Central Government Health Scheme.

Funds allocation for the health care of Armed Forces Personnel for the current financial year, towards the revenue budget, is Rs. 170 crores, and towards capital budget it is Rs. 70 crores.

Agreement for Security Arrangements in Flights

1951. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have signed any agreement for security arrangements to make air travel safer with any other countries like Nepal; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) No separate agreement pertaining to security arrangements has been signed with Nepal at Government-level. However Indian Airlines have reached an understanding with the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal regarding measures for ensuring security of Indian Airlines flight taking off from Kathmandu. Also an article on aviation security forms part of some of our air services agreements with different countries.

Interview for Allotment of Retail Petrol Outlets and LPG Distributorships

1952. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have finished the oral interview for the allotment of retail petrol outlets and LPG distributorship;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Oil Coordination Committee's decision is the final in fixing up of the location for the Retail Outlets and LPG distributorship;

(d) if so, the details of such petrol retail outlets and LPG Distribution outlets already in existence and proposed to be started very soon in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka;

(e) whether the Government have received any requests from the owners and dealers of the already existing retail outlets and LPG Distributors to minimize the number of such new outlets and distributorship; 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 (d) As on 1.10.2000, 1612 retail outlets and 467 LPG distributorships in the State of Tamil Nadu and 1073 retail outlets and 375 LPG distributorships in the State of Karnataka were in operation.

The locations for setting up retail outlet dealerships and LPG distributorships are included in the Marketing Plans on the basis of feasibility surveys conducted by the oil marketing companies periodically. The Marketing Plans are prepared by the Oil Companies and finalised with the approval of the Government.

In order to meet the increased demand, in addition to the locations pending from the previous marketing plans, 59 retail outlets and 155 LPG distributorships for the State of Tamil Nadu and 49 retail outlets and 112 LPG distributorship for the State of Karnataka have been included in the Marketing Plan 1996-98. More dealerships/distributorships will be set up on the basis of feasibility surveys.

The locations included in the Marketing Plans are advertised by the Oil Companies, and the selection of dealers/distributors is made by the Dealer Selection Boards as per prescribed procedure. It generally takes 6-12 months for commissioning the distributorships after the date of interview.

(e) and (f) Such requests are received from time to time and appropriate action is taken in the matter.

[Translation]

Completion of Survey

1953. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the survey for Raipur-Jharsuguda via Kharotapalan, Baloda Bazar, Bhatgaon and Sarangah rail line has been completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which the survey is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) The survey for new line from Raipur to Jharsuguda via Kharotapalan, Baloda Bazar, Bhatgaon and Sarangah (310 Kms.) was sanctioned in the Budget 2000-01. The survey is in progress and is likely to be completed by 31.12.2001.

Jute Mills

1954. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN:
SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of Jute Mills in the country and number of employees working therein at present, State-wise;

(b) The profit earned and loss suffered by these mills during each of the last three years and current year, mill-wise;

(c) the names of sick/closed mills out of them, sector-wise and State-wise;

(d) the number of workers affected due to closure of mills and the steps taken for their rehabilitation; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to re-open the closed mills and to revive the sick mills along-with the amount incurred thereon, mill-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) and (b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) Out of the existing 73 Jute Mills, 38 jute mills are sick and two Jute mills namely (i) Jaypur Udyog Ltd, Unit Kanpur, UP and (ii) Katihar Jute Mill, Bihar are lying closed.

(d) and (e) A total number of 1040 and 1300 workers were on the pay rolls of Jaypur Udyog Limited, Unit Kanpur (U.P.) and the Katihar Jute Mills, Bihar respectively at the time of their closure.

BIFR is the competent authority to take a decision on the revival proposals of sick mills under the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act 1985. There are no separate schemes for sick/closed jute mills.

Statement

(Rs. in lacs)

Sl.	Mill Name	PBT/ (Loss) 1996-97	PBT/ (Loss) 1997-98	PBT/ (Loss) 1998-99	PBT/ (Loss) 1999-00	No. of Workers On Roll	Present Status	Referred to BIFR (Year/No)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Mills in West Bengal								
1.	Agarpara Jute Mills Ltd.	-516.32	-437.14	-2.38	-1.23	2196	Sick	Yes
2.	Alliance Mills (Lessees) Ltd.	-7.18	41.47	3.49	3.02	5450		No
3.	Anglo-India Jute Mills Co. Ltd.	215.37	460.04	206.3	201.96	3560	Sick	Yes
4.	Ambica Multi Fibres Ltd.-Ambika }	116.32	136.51	187.88	NS	1489		No
5.	Ambica Multi Fibres Ltd.-Bally }					3427		No
6.	Auckland International Ltd.	86.88	191.74	103.3	NS	1644		No
7.	Birla Corpn. Ltd.-Birla }	737.89	-5135.62	-5355.94	-3833.36	2010		No
8.	Birla Corpn. Ltd.-Soorah }					1977		No
9.	Budge Budge Co. Ltd.	-302.14	85.44	-16.44	101.02	3400	Sick	Yes
10.	The Calcutta Jute Mfg. Co. Ltd.	2.56	31.76	0.38	1.92	923	Sick	Yes
11.	The Champdany Industries Ltd.	306.28	627.68	178.72	122.73	2711		No
12.	Cheviot Co. Ltd.	311.65	709.2	337.44	506.86	4274		No
13.	Dalhousie Jute Co.	2829.69	625.58	-68.57	NS	3160		No
14.	Delta International Ltd.	83.06	114.87	100.11	NS	2432		No
15.	The Empire Jute Co. Ltd.	69.4	26.23	-29.76	NS	2151		No
16.	The Ganges Mfg. Co. Ltd.	50.33	-43.2	-19.22	NS	4360		Yes
17.	Gloster Jute Mills Ltd.	139.66	455.61	224.73	362.29	3961		No
18.	Hastings Jute Mill	-32.91	14.55	-29.85	NS	2740		No
19.	Hooghly Mills Co. Ltd. }	3.82	330.82	NS	NS	2859		No
20.	Hooghly Mills Co. Ltd.- Bowreah }					2378		No
21.	Hooghly Mills Co. Ltd. Gondalpara }					2277		No
22.	Hooghly Mills Co. Ltd.-Weaverly }					1755		No
23.	Howrah Mills Co. Ltd.	69.5	73.11	50.5	NS	2090	Sick	Yes
24.	Hooghly Mills Proj. Ltd.-Hukumch/	223.26	263.08	263.08	NS	3951		No
25.	India Jute & Industries Ltd.	-185.45	-117.92	NS	NS	2804		No
26.	Jagatdal Jute & Industries Ltd.	7.39	6.35	-115.65	0.74	2693		No
27.	Kamarhatty Co. Ltd.	-248.08	145.24	86.12	299.82	2453	Sick	Yes
28.	Kankanarrah Co. Ltd.	-26.55	260.1	131.80	-100.3	1803	Sick	Yes
29.	Aekta Ltd.	-112.51	1.92	-412.04	83.42	4335		No

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
30.	Mahadeo Jute & Industries Ltd.	2.81	16.83	-29.7	-36.51	986		No
31.	The Naihati Jute Mills Ltd.	-41.36	188.37	69.62	9.17	4292		Yes
32.	Naffar Chandra Jute Mills Ltd.	33.41	23.24	33.13	48.47	615		No
33.	New Central Jute Mills Co. Ltd.	-2530.82	-1732.98	-2082.13	-904.96	6651	Sick	Yes
34.	North Brooke Jute Co. Ltd.	-300.65	57.00	-363.12	NS	2955	Sick	Yes
35.	The Nuddea Mills Co. Ltd.	-1206.62	1.1	NS	NS	4129	Sick	No
36.	Prabartak Jute Mills Ltd.	-22.56	277.09	33.99	-0.14	1500	Sick	Yes
37.	RDB Textiles Ltd.	-393.35	-46.68	-722.38	NS	3085	Sick	Yes
38.	Reliance Jute Mills	170.9	270.42	-13.08	NS	3361		No
39.	Shree Gourisankar Jute Mills Ltd.	-38.02	92.82	33.98	-210.86	1383	Sick	Yes
40.	Tirupati Jute Industries Pvt. Ltd.	-8.29	17.25	1.9	NS	1255		No
41.	Tepcon International (India) Ltd.	-53.7	-3.65	-141.32	NS	3315	Sick	Yes
42.	Union General Co. Ltd.	-31.74	91.73	-38.71	NS	1399	Sick	Yes
43.	Vijay Shree Ltd.	-196.4	109.03	64.31	NS	1542	Sick	Yes
44.	The Baranagore Jute Fty. P.L.C.	NS	NS	NS	NS	3031		No
45.	W.B. Agro Textile Corpn. Ltd.-Bhara	-777.4	-52.46	-30.28	NS	658	Sick	R.U.
46.	Meghna Jute Mills	NS	NS	NS	NS	3268	Sick	Yes
47.	Kanoria Jute Industries Ltd.	-120.2	NS	NS	NS	2660	Sick	Yes
48.	Trend Vyapar Pvt. Ltd.-Kelvin	-5.76	16.91	-8.57	NS	2402	Sick	Yes
49.	N.J.M.C.-National }	-10297.60	-22251.55	-27887.12	NS	6299	Sick	Yes
50.	N.J.M.C.-Kinnison }					4378	Sick	Yes
51.	N.J.M.C.-Khardah }					3803	Sick	Yes
52.	N.J.M.C.-Alexandra }					1832	Sick	Yes
53.	NJMC-Union }					1399	Sick	Yes
54.	The Gourepore Co. Ltd.	NS	NS	NS	NS	3495	Sick	Yes
55.	Caledonian Jute & Industries Ltd.	NS	NS	NS	NS	2490	Sick	Yes
56.	Angus Jute Works	NS	NS	NS	NS	3979	Sick	Yes
57.	Premchand Jute Mills	NS	NS	NS	NS	620	Sick	Yes
58.	Aditya Translink Pvt. Ltd.		26.02	26.02	NS	3964		No

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
59.	Titagaurh Jute Mills Mill in Assam	NS	NS	NS	NS	4096	Sick	No
60.	Assam Cooperative Jute Mills Ltd. Mill in Orissa	20.45	27.44	30.47	42.96	685		No
61.	Konark Jute Ltd. Mill in Tripura	-69.75	4.52	-97.73	NS	1319	Sick	
62.	Tripura Jute Mills Ltd. Mill in Madhya Pradesh	-691.14	-874.42	NS	NS	1606	Sick	No
63.	Mohan Jute Mills Ltd. Mills in Andhra Pradesh	11.66	21.74	19.25	NS	3174	Sick	Yes
64.	East India Commercial Co. Ltd.	156.13	214.1	413.72	-75.42	2854		No
65.	Nellimarla Jute Mills Co. Ltd.	NS	NS	NS	NS	2257	Sick	Yes
66.	Sri Bajrang Jute Mills Ltd.	10.61	219.76	160.24	101.21	1450	Sick	Yes
67.	Chitavalsah Jute Mills-Willard Mills in Uttar Pradesh	-814.55	-342.12	-1563.19	NS	3751	Sick	Yes
68.	Juggilal Kamlapat Jute Mills Co. Ltd.	-395.82	-2.61	-99.25	-2.07	3301	Sick	Yes
69.	The Mahabir Jute Mills Ltd.	73.57	56.4	98.33	NS	751		No
70.	The Joypur Udyog Ltd.-Kanpur Jute Mills in Bihar	NS	NS	NS	NS	1040	Closed	No
71.	Katihar Jute Mills	NS	NS	NS	NS	1300	Closed	No
72.	N.J.M.C.-RBHM	Given under N.J.M.C.				1011	Sick	Yes
73.	Winsome International Ltd.	13.53	41.37	28.78	13.66	1193		No

- Note: 1) RU-Relief Undertaking
 2) NS-Not submitted
 3) PBT-Profit Before Tax
 4) No. of Workers on Roll is Furnished as per information given by the Mills.

Increase in Price of Petroleum, Diesel and Kerosene

1955. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times the Government have increased the prices of Petrol, Diesel, Kerosene and LPG during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The changes in the ex-storage point price of petrol, diesel, kerosene and LPG during the last three years are given in Statement.

(b) These revisions were required to bring down the cumulative outstanding claims of the oil companies from the Oil Pool Account.

Statement**Statement Showing Changes in Ex-Storage Point Price**

	HSD	SKO (Domestic)	LPG (Packed Domestic)	(Rs./SU) MS-87/ MS-AKI-84 89 Ron)
1997-98				
As on 01.04.97	6574.87	2001.40	6901.95	16055.43
Revised On:				
02/09/1997	8374.87		7958.29	17055.43
07/11/1997	7918.04	—	—	—
25/12/1997	7996.84	—	—	—
01/03/1998	7839.24	—	—	—
1998-99				
04/04/1998	7645.47	—	—	—
20/05/1998	7536.89	—	—	—
03/06/1998	—	—	—	15495.43
09/01/1999	6722.37	—	—	—
01/02/1999	—	—	8944.21	—
28/02/1999	6621.76	—	8732.87	15399.01
1999-2000				
20/04/1999	6882.15	—	—	—
06/10/1999	9634.60	—	—	—
23/03/2000		4501.40	10845.55	—
2000-01				
30/09/2000	11934.60	7001.40	13028.65	18999.01
22.11.2000		6110.00	12426.76	

Note: Ex-Storage Point Prices are exclusive of duty, Freight and Local levies etc.

MS-AKI (89 RON 0.05% sulphur), MS-AKI (89 RON 0.05% sulphur and 1% benzene) and HSD (0.05% sulp.) with different ex-storage point prices than given above for MS and HSD grades were introduced in metros during 2000-01.

[English]

Expansion of Oil Refineries (Ninth Plan)

1956. SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal for the expansion of some oil refineries during Ninth Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps 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) The details of oil refinery expansions which were identified for completion during the 9th Plan are given below:-

PSU Refinery Expansion Projects

	Capacity in million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA)
IOC, Barauni Expansion (Ph-I)	0.90
HPC, Visakh Expansion	3.00
IOC, Koyali Expansion	3.00
IOC, Mathura Expansion	0.50
<i>JV Refinery Expansion Projects</i>	
RPL, Mangalore	6.00

(c) All the 5 refinery capacity expansion projects as mentioned above have been completed.

**Report of the Investigation on Hijack
of Aircraft to Kandhar**

1957. SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the investigation into the hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane to Kandhar last year has been completed;

(b) if so, the details of the findings and the persons involved and arrests made in this regard;

(c) if not, the present status of the case; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The investigation into the hijacking of Indian Airlines flight IC-814 of 24.12.1999 has been completed. Further investigation u/s 173 (8) of Cr. P.C. is continuing to trace the absconding accused persons and to obtain formal evidence from foreign countries.

(b) Central Bureau of Investigation has filed charge sheet on 21.6.2000 against 10 accused persons including seven Pakistani Nationals (five hijackers and their two associates) in the court of Judge, Designated Court under the Anti-Hijacking Act, 1982. The court issued arrest warrants in respect of the seven absconding Pakistani National accused and the same have been sent to Interpol Head Quarters in France and Interpol Islamabad Pakistan for tracing the accused. Efforts are also being made through Diplomatic Channel to trace the accused.

Accused Abdul Latif of Mumbai (Indian), Yusuf Nepali (Nepali) and Dilip Kumar Bhujel (Indian) were arrested in India and they are in judicial custody.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Second International Airport at Mumbai

1958. SHIR VILAS MUTTEMWAR:
SHRI GUNIPATI RAMAIAH:
SHRI SUBODH MOHITE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to build new International Airport at Revas-Mandava near Mumbai in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the progress made to build up second International Airport at Mumbai;

(c) whether the Government have received any proposal from city and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra for its location and other facilities to be provided for second airport;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (e) The State Government has submitted a revised proposal from City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) for construction of second International airport at Navi Mumbai. It envisages provision of additional land at Navi Mumbai for the construction of Second runway as well. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has been directed to examine the feasibility of the proposal from CIDCO.

Gauge Conversion

1959. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:
SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH RAJUKHEDI:
SHRI V.S. SIVAKUMAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria adopted for the conversion of metre and narrow gauge rail lines into broad gauge:

(b) the length of metre and narrow gauge line exists at present, zone/State-wise;

(c) the details of metre and narrow gauge rail lines converted into broad gauge during the last three years and the expenditure incurred thereon;

(d) the details of the on-going conversion works;

(e) the details of metre and narrow gauge rail lines to be converted into broad gauge lines during the next three years, year-wise; and

(f) the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (f) The position is as under:

(a) The policy followed for sanction of routes to be taken up for gauge conversion under project uni-gauge has been as under:-

- (i) To take up conversion of lines to develop alternative BG routes obviating the need for Doubling existing BG lines in these routes.
- (ii) To establish new BG links between stations connected by other BG lines.
- (iii) To establish BG connection to ports, industrial centres and locations having potential for growth.

(iv) To take up conversion of lines required on strategic considerations.

(v) To minimise transshipment and to improve wagon turn around by avoiding delays at transshipment points.

(vi) To carry out the conversion of lines as per the above policy at least cost yet providing a standard of service not lower than what the rail users were getting on the MG.

(b) At present 15054 km metre gauge lines and 3363 km narrow gauge lines exist on the Indian Railways. Zone-wise details are given below:-

Zone	MG	NG
CR	—	861
ER	—	133
NR	1671	261
NE	2758	—
NF	2105	87
SR	2570	—
SC	1481	—
SE	—	1145
WR	4469	876
Total	15054	3363

(c) The details of metre and narrow gauge lines converted during the last 3 years are contained in the statement enclosed. An amount of Rs. 2632 cr. was spent on gauge conversion during the said period.

(d) The information is already included in the budget documents presented to Parliament.

(e) and (f) The details have not yet been finalised and will depend on the availability of resources.

Statement

Position of gauge conversions in the 9th Plan

1997-98 Completed section	Km	Zone	State	1998-99 Completed Section	Km	Zone	State	1999-2000 Completed Section	Km	Zone	State
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Hassan- Sakleshpur	42	SR	Karnataka	Tambaram- Trichy	309	SR	Tamilnadu	Yeshwantpur- Banyanpalli	17	SR	Karnataka

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Mysore-Holenarsipur	87	SR	Karnataka	Dindigul-Trichy	89	SR	Tamilnadu	Arakonam-Chengalpattu	63	SR	Tamilnadu
Bachwara-Hajipur	71	NE	Bihar	Jorhat-Mariani	17	NFR	Assam	Morbi-Maliya-Miyana and Dahisar to Navlakhi	68	WR	Gujarat
Kolar-Bangarpet NG	18	SR	Karnataka	Sheosagar-Moranhat	38	NFR	Assam	Kashipur-Lalkuan	58	NE	UP
Trichy-Thanjavur	50	SR	Tamilnadu	Narkatangani-Gorakhpur	159	NE	UP/Bihar	Pandharpur-Kurdewadi	54	CR	Maharashtra
Jodhpur-Manwar	103	NR	Rajasthan	Babupeth-Ballarshah	11	SCR	Maharashtra	Total	260 km		
Nagpur-Chandafort NG	111	SER	Maharashtra	Sholapur-Hotgi	15	SCR	Maharashtra				
Hotgi-Bijapur	97	SCR	Karnataka/Maharashtra	Indara-Phephna	52	NE	Uttar Pradesh				
Jorhat-Furkating loop	67	NFR	Assam	Total	690 Km						
Shimalgun-Shivsagar	16	NFR	Assam								
Dronachellam-Mehboobnagar	185	SCR	Andhra Pradesh								
Total	847 Km										

Total converted in last 3 years: 1797 km.

Disparity in Payment of Compensation to Families of Deceased Army Personnel

1960. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are different ways of paying homage to armed forces personnel killed in action against militants, wars against other countries and UN peace keeping operations;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons for such discrimination in honouring the martyrs;

(c) whether there was no military or State-presence at the funeral of an army captain killed in an operation Kashmir Valley on August 22, 2000 at New Delhi as reported in 'Indian Express' dated September 24, 2000; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The mortal remains of the Captain were buried with full military honours, as per the customs and traditions of the Indian Army.

(d) Does not arise.

Widening of Goods Traffic Network in Bangladesh

1961. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering to explore the possibility of widening the scope for goods traffic net work in Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

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

(b) Already following four Railway links are operational between India-Bangladesh;

Gede (India)- Darsana (Bangladesh)-Broad Gauge

Singhabad (India)-Rohanpur (Bangladesh)-Broad Gauge

Radhikapur (India)-Rohanpur (Bangladesh)-Meter Gauge

Mahisasan (India)-Shahbazpur (Bangladesh)-Meter Gauge,

(c) A new rail link with Bangladesh Railway has been opened between Petrapole-Benapole to promote Indo-Bangladesh traffic.

[Translation]

Scandal in Purchase of Mosquito Nets

1962. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the reported scandal in purchase of mosquito nets for armed forces as published in New Delhi edition of *Rashtriya Sahara* dated November 5, 2000;

(b) whether the Government have conducted any enquiry in the matter;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the follow-up action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Orders for 1,25,000 and 1,50,000 Net Mosquito Universal Khaki Square Mesh were placed on M/s Navbharat Vanijya Udyog, Calcutta and M/s Prahlad Rai Satnarain and Coy. Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta having a value of Rs. 2,68,76,250/- and Rs. 3,23,10,000/- respectively on 30.04.1997. Both these firms supplied the complete quantity of stores to the Ordnance Depot, Calcutta between 18.8.1997 and 22.10.1997 after acceptance by the Senior Quality Assurance Establishment (GS), Calcutta. Subsequently, Mosquito nets valued at Rs. 1.80 crores were rejected by the consignee as those did not conform to specification.

The Fact Finding Inquiry conducted by Director General Quality Assurance has brought out certain quality assurance lapses/irregularities in accepting the substandard stores.

(d) Disciplinary proceedings have already been initiated against the concerned officers/and staff responsible for the lapse.

A show cause notice has also been issued to the suppliers for their de-registration and banning/placement of orders in future. The firms have filed cases in the High Court, Calcutta and obtained stay order against de-registration and banning/placement of orders.

[English]

I.A.F. Officer Involved in Bomb-Blast

1963. SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:
SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH:
SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Corps of Detectives investigated the series of bomb-blasts in churches across Karnataka, AP and Goa in May-June this year and arrested a Junior Warrant Officer of IAF for his alleged links with Pakistani ISI and passing some sensitive defence documents to that country;

(b) if so, whether in the past some retired officers of army have been found to have linkage with the ISI;

(c) if so, the total number of such officers arrested so far; and

(d) the action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. JWO, H. Syed was arrested by Karnataka Police (Corps of Detectives) on 8th August, 2000 for this alleged involvement in serial blasts case in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Goa. The JWO, subsequently, after his arrest, confessed having passed classified information to Pakistani agents.

(b) to (d) No involvement of any retired Army Officer with Pak ISI has come to notice and no Army officer has been arrested for having links with Pak ISI, in recent past. However, an Army Officer, who had been court-martialled and dismissed from Army for malpractices, in 1995, was arrested at Lucknow by UP Police/IB for involvement with Pak ISI, on the 5th September, 2000. JWO H. Syed is in judicial custody. Andhra Pradesh Police, which is investigating the case, has filed chargesheet, in the case under the relevant provisions of law.

**Implementation of Railway Projects
in Andhra Pradesh**

1964. SHRI THIRUNAVUKARASU:
DR. A.D.K. JAYASEELAN:
SHRI A. NARENDRA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details and the present status of various Railway projects under implementation in Andhra Pradesh alongwith the funds allocated therefor and the expenditure incurred thereon so far;

(b) the steps taken to increase the allocation for timely completion of the projects;

(c) whether any target has been set for their completion;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is any proposal to double Chennai-Kanyakumari rail line;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken by the Government to construct Pattukottai-Thanjavur rail line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) Details and the present status of various Railway projects under implementation in Andhra Pradesh along with expenditure upto March 2000 and outlay for 2000-2001 are given in enclosed Statement. Steps taken to expedite completion of the project and the target dates where ever fixed have been indicated in the status of each project. Allocation against the projects are constrained by overall availability of funds.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

(g) There is no proposal for constructing a new railway line between Pattukottai and Thanjavur.

Statement

S. No.	Project	Cost	Expenditure up to March 2000 (Amount in Crores of Rs.)	Budget Outlay 2000-01	Status
1	2	3	4	5	6

On-Going Railway Projects In Andhra Pradesh

New Lines

1.	Kotapalli-Narasapur	330.00	0.00	1.00	New work included in the Budget 2000-01. Final location survey is being taken up.
2.	Dhramavaram-Penukonda via Puttaparthi	124.22	15.20	20.00	Work on Ph. I from Penukonda to Puttaparthi completed and commissioned. Ph-II Dharmavaram-Puttaparthi Minor bridge and earthwork is in good progress. The 550 m long tunnel has been completed and lining work is in progress.
3.	Gadwal-Raichur	100.41	4.22	5.00	Necessary clearances have been obtained. Final location survey, has been taken up. Land acquisition work will be taken up once detailed estimate is sanctioned.
4.	Kakinanda-Kotapalli	50.89	0.00	1.00	Necessary clearance are yet to be obtained. State Govt. has to handover the land free of cost in lieu of the land released by dismantled line which has been heavily built upon by them.
5.	Kakinada-Pithapuram	41.66	0.00	0.10	Final location survey is in progress. The work will be taken up after obtaining the requisite clearances.

1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Macherla-Nalgonda	125.09	1.70	0.10	Necessary clearances have been obtained. Final location survey and preparation of land acquisition plan has been taken up. Land acquisition will be regulated as per availability of resources. Work will be taken up once land becomes available.
7.	Munirabad-Mehboobnagar	438.96	4.36	4.00	Final Location Survey has been completed. Land acquisition plans for 26 km have been submitted to State Govt. Tenders for earthwork and minor bridges for doubling portion have been finalised, and work started on these portion.
8.	Nandyal-Yerraguntla	164.36	2.87	2.00	Final location survey has been completed & preparation of land acquisition plans and papers for first 46 km has been submitted to State Govt. Rs. 1.68 cr. has also been deposited with them. The work would be started once the land becomes available.
9.	Peddapally-Karimnagar-Nizamabad	264.14	39.24	20.00	The work is being done in two phases. Phase-I: Peddapally to Karimnagar: Work has been completed, and opened for goods traffic. Telecommunication work is in progress and will be opened to Passenger Traffic after it is completed. Phase-II: Karimnagar-Nizamabad: Work will be progressed as per availability of resources.
<i>Gauge Conversion</i>					
1.	Dharmavaram-Pakala	251.22	0.00	0.10	The work would be taken up after the requisite clearances have been obtained.
2.	Guntur-Guntakal & Guntakal-Kalluru	460.97	438.28	10.50	Guntur to Guntakal completed. In Guntakal-Kalluru modification to alignment and gradients are being worked out.
3.	Katpadi-Pakala-Tirupati	173.50	25.14	12.00	Out of 19 major bridges, 15 have been completed and 4 are in progress. Earthwork and ballast supply is also in progress (60%) in the entire section. Work is proceeding well and will be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.
4.	Mudkhed-Adilabad	117.96	7.75	2.00	The work has been taken up under BOLT scheme. Agency has not been able to progress the work of late due to financing problem. Agency has tied up with M/s HUDCO for financing. In case finance is made available project is expected to be completed in 18 months.
5.	Naupada-Gunupur	66.35	0.04	5.10	CCEA clearance not yet received. The work will be taken up after the necessary clearances have been obtained.
6.	Secunderabad-Dronachellam	343.73	332.59	5.00	The work has been completed.

1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Secunderabad-Jankhampet-Bodhan	287.83	17.52	20.00	The work has been taken up in first phase from Mudkhed-Nizamabad (96 Km.) Earthwork, ballast procurement and minor bridges are in good progress. This phase will be completed in 2001-02 subject to availability of resources.
	<i>Doubling</i>				
1.	Gooty-Reningunta Sec. Doubling of Balapalle-Pullampet sec.	48.00	0.00	1.00	New work included in the Budget 2000-01. Preparation of plans and estimate has been taken up.
2.	Gajapatinagaram-Vijayanagaram	41.92	40.92	1.00	The work has been completed and commissioned.
3.	Gudur-Reningunta	142.55	15.60	17.00	Tenders for earthwork, minor bridges for 4 block sections, two from Gudur and two from Renigunta end have been awarded. Rest are under finalisation. Work will be taken up shortly. The work is presently targeted for completion in 2001-02 subject to availability of resources.
4.	Hospet-Guntakal (Gauge-Conv.)	154.14	17.58	1.00	Final location survey has been completed. This project is being taken up under BOLT with a view is expedite to progress.
5.	Vijaywada-Krishna Canal 3rd line	44.31	17.43	14.00	The third line is proposed between Krishna Canal and Vijaywada by providing a second track on the substructure over Krishna for which superstructure tender have been finalised. Tenders for earthwork and other major bridges are under finalisation.
6.	Vikarabad-Tandur (Wadi Secunderabad Section)	90.56	82.18	1.00	The work has been completed and commissioned.
7.	Whitefield-Kuppam	104.93	75.23	4.00	The work is in progress & the first phase from Whitefield to Bangarapet has been completed and commissioned. From Bangarapet to Kuppam Final Location Survey has been taken up.
	<i>Railway Electrification</i>				
1.	Bhubaneswar-Kottavalasa	293.96	147.40	49.93	Work is in progress and targeted for completion by March, 2003. 260 RKMs have been energised upto Mar'2000.
2.	Renigunta-Guntakal	168.34	4.26	5.08	This work has been defrozen in Nov. 1998. Preliminary works have been taken up. Target date is Mar., 2004, subject to availability of funds.

*[Translation]***Sleeper Scandal**

1965. SHRI AKHILESH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government have ordered a probe into the sleeper scam;
- (b) if so, the findings of the probe;
- (c) the action taken/proposed to be taken against officers held responsible; and
- (d) the names of the person/agency from which the Government recover the scam amount and the manner in which it is likely to be recovered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) On the basis of a complaint received and on the basis of certain reports in the print media involving allegations of corruption in the procurement of sleepers, an enquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation has been ordered in September 2000.

- (b) to (d) The matter is still under investigation.

*[English]***Slow Progress of AAI**

1966. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ:
SHRI KAMAL NATH:
SHRI G. MALLIKARJUNAPPA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Airport Authority of India has been making slow progress in the development of key tourist destinations;
- (b) if so, the destinations earmarked for the purpose and reasons for its delay;
- (c) the total funds sanctioned to the Airport Authority of India during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 and the amount utilized during that period;
- (d) the steps proposed to be taken to expedite progress in the development work assigned to Airport Authority of India;

- (e) whether there has been slow progress of work on the Lucknow airport and prime tourist destinations

including Agra, Jaipur, Leh and Khajuraho by the AAI; and

- (f) the steps taken by the AAI to make decisions on immediate measures on these projects?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The key tourist destination earmarked for development are Srinagar, Jammu, Leh, Gaggal, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Udaipur, Agra and Varanasi in Northern Region, Gaya, Patna, Bhubaneswar and Bagdogra in Eastern Region, Aurangabad and Goa in Western Region and Tirupati, Madurai, Trichy and Pondicherry in Southern Region. The progress of development works is not slow at these airports.

- (c) A budgetary support of Rs. 25 crores only for each of the two years 1998-99 and 1999-2000 was sanctioned for the development of Amritsar, Port Blair, Leh Airports, projects in North Eastern Region and other crucial areas. However, Airports Authority of India (AAI) has spent Rs. 48.33 crores in 1998-99 and Rs. 52.12 crores in 1999-2000. AAI spends from its own resources for other projects.

- (d) A Department for project monitoring has been established in AAI to monitor the progress of implementation of the various project. This department identifies, holds periodic project monitoring meetings and suggests steps for removal of bottlenecks that come in the way of timely completion of the various projects and also gives advance intimation to the concerned Engineering Department for taking appropriate corrective action.

- (e) and (f) No, Sir. Except delays on account of land acquisition and other factors which are beyond the control of AAI, the works under execution are being closely monitored for early completion and as per the target dates. Wherever required, AAI takes up the issues with concerned State authorities through Union Government for providing assistance to AAI in matters relating to land acquisition, removal of encroachments, power supply, diversion of roads, construction of approach roads.

National Human Rights Commission

1967. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:
SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH:

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

- (a) whether some State Governments are yet to set Human Rights Commission in their respective States;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and

(c) the details of Human Rights cases investigated by the Commission in each State during the last three years?

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

Doubling of Bandel-Katwa Rail Line

1968. SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether survey work for doubling of Bandel-Katwa rail line of Eastern Railways has been completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time by which the work is likely to be started?

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

(b) and (c) The results of the survey have revealed cost of doubling of the 105 km. long line is Rs. 208.41 cr.

Anti-LTTE Operation with Indian Aid

1969. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY:
SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sri Lanka has sought India's aid in anti-LTTE Operations as published in the 'Times of India' dated November 6, 2000;

(b) if so, the facts in regard thereto; and

(c) the salient features of discussion held and the decision arrived at in the meeting between Indian Naval Chief and Sri Lankan Navy Vice Admiral?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) There has been no request from Sri Lanka seeking India's aid in anti-LTTE Operations.

2. The visit of Sri Lankan Navy Chief was a routine ceremonial visit. The issues discussed between the two

Naval Chiefs concerned cooperation between the Sri Lankan Navy and Indian Navy in areas such as training, goodwill visits etc.

Company Law Settlement Scheme

1970. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to stated:

(a) whether Department of Company Affairs has issued instruction to all Registrars of Companies to penalize those companies which do not respond to Company Law Settlement Scheme, 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of such companies penalized by the registrars in different States;

(c) whether a little publicity was given to this scheme;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) number of extensions made available to companies for submitting documents under the said schemes?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has introduced a Fast Track Section 560 Scheme which is expiring on 25.12.2000. After completion of the same, prosecutions will be launched.

(c) and (d) Wide publicity was given to the scheme through pamphlets, notices, press releases, campaign meetings through Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India and Institute of Company Secretaries of India and various Chambers of Commerce all over India.

(e) On expiry of Company Law Settlement Scheme, 2000 on 31.8.2000, extension upto 30.9.2000 was given.

Conservation of Monuments in Orissa

1971. SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO:
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have identified the monuments in Orissa which need proper conservation;

(b) if so, the names of those monuments and the funds allocated therefor during 2000-2001;

(c) the steps taken and the amount spent on the renovation/maintenance of Sun Temple, Konark, Lord Jagannath temple, Puri, and Lingaraj temple, Bhubaneshwar during the last three years, year-wise;

(d) whether any foreign country has been invited for thier preservation; and

(e) if so, the detail thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The conservation of the centrally protected monuments is a continuous process. During the current financial year 12 monuments, as per statement have been identified in Orissa for structural conservation, chemical preservation & environmental development with an allocation of Rs. 43.09 Lakhs.

(c) The expenditure incurred on the maintenance, structural conservation, chemical preservation and environmental development of the following monuments during the last 3 years is as under:

Sun Temple, Konark:-

1997-1998 Rs. 8,68,340/-

1998-1999 Rs. 9,95,847/-

1999-2000 Rs. 10,92,113/-

Lord Jagannath Temple, Puri:-

1997-1998 Rs. 11,00,170/-

1998-1999 Rs. 6,12,270/-

1999-2000 Rs. 12,06,303/-

Lingaraj Temple, Bhubaneshwar:-

1997-1998 Rs. 3,43,079/-

1998-1999 Rs. 3,78,212/-

1999-2000 Rs. 3,41,873/-

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of monument	Locality	District	Amount (in Rs.)
1.	Bringeswar Mahadev Temple	Bajrakote	Angul	100,000
2.	Buddhist site	Lalitgiri	Cuttack	200,000
3.	Buddhist site	Udaigiri	Jajpur	300,000
4.	Daksh Prajapati Temple	Banapur	Khurda	270,000
5.	Lord Lingaraja Temple	Bhubaneshwar	Khurda	100,000
6.	Bhaskareswar Temple	Bhubaneshwar	Khurda	100,000
7.	Asokan Rock Edict	Dhauli	Khurda	300,000
8.	Papanashini Tank	Bhubaneshwar	Khurda	770,000
9.	Lord Jagannath Temple	Puri	Puri	795,000
10.	Sun Temple	Konark	Puri	1,024,000
11.	Buddhist site	Ratnagiri	Jajpur	300,000
12.	Udaigiri-Khandgiri	Jagmara (Bhubaneshwar)	Khura	150,000
			Total	4,309,000

24 Hour Railway Reservation

1972. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways propose to open 24-Hour reservation counters at major Railway Stations in the country;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir. There is no such proposal at present.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) On all weekdays the booking & cancellation facility is available from 800 hrs. in the morning to 2000 hrs. in the night. On Sundays this facility is available from 800 hrs. to 1400 hrs. In addition, the facility of refund on the current counters for current day trains is also available from 0430 hrs. to 2330 hrs. at some important stations. This arrangement is considered adequate for the present.

Transparency in Selection norms of Army

1973. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the reported suicide by two cadets at the Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehradun, this year, has brought Indian Army's selection process for officers into sharp focus as published in the *Hindustan Times* dated September 8, 2000;

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

(c) whether the Government propose to streamline Army's selection norms; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The selection system, adopted in the Army, is time-tested and by far, one of the best. This system is constantly evaluated and revised. The interview is based on Psychological Principles and is conducted over a period of five days. The officers posted to Service Selection Boards i.e. Interviewing Officer, Psychologist and Group Testing Officer are, specially,

selected and trained, prior to their posting to the centres. However, an inquiry has been ordered into the matter and corrective measures would be taken, if found necessary, after its completion.

Rationalisation of Taxes

1974. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have recommended rationalisation of taxes in the tourism sector;

(b) if so, whether according to the Union Government, tax rates in various States show extreme variation which impede the growth of the sector;

(c) if so, whether the proposal for rationalisation of taxes has been cleared by the Inter-State Council; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (d) The question of rationalisation of taxes in the tourist transport sector and the hotel industry has been discussed at the State Tourism Ministers Conference, the Transport Development Council, the regional meeting of the Interstate Council and at various other fora, since this is a deterrent to the development and promotion of tourism in India. No consensus has been possible so far with the State Governments.

[Translation]

Delay in Justice

1975. KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the judgements regarding various cases in different High Courts are not delivered for a long period after keeping them reserved;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the people are deprived of justice due to this delay; and

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to prepare rules/act to ensure that judgements are made within a stipulated time after the arguments are over?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (d) Some cases of delayed judgements have doubtless come to notice. As delivery of judgement is a part of the judicial function of judges, Government does not directly intervene in this matter.

As per the provisions of the Civil Procedure Code, every endeavour shall be made by the Court to pronounce the judgement at once or within fifteen days from the date on which the hearing of the case was concluded. If the judgement is not pronounced within 30 days the court shall record reasons for the delay and fix a future day on which the judgement shall be pronounced.

The 'Arrears Committee' also recommended that the reserved judgement by High Courts should ordinarily be pronounced within a period of six weeks from the date of completion of the arguments. The recommendations have since, been forwarded to all High Courts for necessary action.

Cancellation of Flights

1976. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times Jaipur, Jodhpur, Mumbai flights arrived or departed late during the last six months;

(b) the number of times Jaipur-Jodhpur flight has been cancelled and the reasons therefor;

(c) the persons responsible for delay in landing, taking off and cancellation of such flights;

(d) whether the Government are considering to make an inquiry in this matter;

(e) if so, the time by which it is likely to be conducted; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) The number of times Alliance Air flights were delayed on Delhi/Jaipur/Jodhpur/Udaipur/Mumbai route during the period May 2000 to October 2000 is as follows:

	Ex-Delhi			Ex-Mumbai		
	Dep.	Delays	Cancl.	Dep.	Delays	Cancl.
May 2000	31	12	—	31	9	—
June 2000	30	12	—	30	8	—
July 2000	31	12	—	30	8	—
Aug. 2000	31	16	—	31	23	2
Sept. 2000	30	8	—	30	16	—
Oct. 2000	31	2	—	31	19	—
Total	184	62	—	183	83	2

(b) There was no cancellation of flights from Delhi. There were only two cancellations from Mumbai during the period May, 2000 to October, 2000.

(c) The main reasons for delay and cancellation of these flights were technical snags and consequential.

(d) to (f) The Government reviews the performance of Indian Airlines on a regular basis where on the performance of the airline is also examined. Apart from this delays of Indian Airlines are investigated by senior level management of Indian Airlines at the regional level and also at the Headquarters level for the purpose of

ascertaining the cause of delays and for taking remedial action on delays of controllable nature so as to obviate delays. Such reviews are held on daily basis.

[English]

Production Cost of Cotton Mills

1977. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to adopt modern cotton technology; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to reduce the cost of production in the cotton mills, particularly in NTC mills to face competition with the private entrepreneurs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) Government of India has launched the Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, to improve the productivity and quality of cotton, ensuring the availability of quality cotton to the textile mills. The TMC consists of four Mini Missions, viz, Mini Mission I & II with objective of 'Research' and Dissemination of Technology to farmers' are being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, and Mini Mission III & IV with objectives of 'Improvement of market infrastructure' and Modernisation of Ginning & Pressing Factories' being implemented by the Ministry of Textiles.

(b) The Government has taken several steps to enhance the competitiveness and overall viability of the textile industry, including the NTC Mills. Some of the main steps are as follows:

- (i) For modernization of textile and jute industries, the Technology Upgradation Funds Scheme (TUFS) has been launched with effect from 1st April, 1999 for a period of five years.
- (ii) Import of cotton is under OGL to help industry to import requisite quality of raw cotton.
- (iii) A chain of textile testing laboratories has been set up to help industry in assessing the quality of textiles.
- (iv) For import of capital goods, the Export Promotion of Capital Goods (EPCG) scheme has been simplified.
- (v) Efforts are on to rationalize fiscal duty structure in consultation with industry and other organizations concerned.
- (vi) Initiated measures for application of information technology in the textile industry.
- (vii) The performance of the NTC mills has been subjected to studies by Textile Research Associations (TRAs) and short term measures suggested by them to improve the performance of the mills have been implemented.

[Translation]

Cancellation of Flight of IA to Khajuraho

1978. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some flights of Indian Airlines to Khajuraho have been cancelled during the current year;

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

(c) the total loss suffered by Indian Airlines on account of the cancellation of these flights?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Due to shortage of Boeing B-737 aircraft capacity after the accident at Patna in July, 2000, Alliance Air flight CD 7407/7408 operating on the sector Delhi-Agra-Khajuraho-Varanasi and back was suspended from 8.8.2000 to 29.10.2000.

(c) The suspension of flights to/from Khajuraho occurred during the lean occupancy period of the Summer months. Normally operations to Khajuraho do not result in any profit for the airline during the Summers.

[English]

Illegal Units Manufacturing Sub-Standard LPG Cylinders

1979. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that illegal units are engaged in manufacturing of substandard LPG Cylinders bottling process in Northern India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken to check illegal manufacturing and bottling of LPG cylinders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies are procuring cylinders from the approved cylinder manufacturers having

the statutory clearances from CCOE and BIS. However, the Ministry received some complaints relating to illegal manufacturing of mini cylinders in Meerut (U.P.) and State Government was advised to conduct surprise raids on the premises of illegal manufacturers and take appropriate action.

Railway Projects in Karnataka

1980. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken up a number of railway projects for improvement of railway facilities in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any contractor who had been black listed, has been awarded contract for these works/projects;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of Rail projects under implementation in Karnataka are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Statement

(a) and (b) Following Rail projects are under implementation in Karnataka:

New Lines

1. Bangalore-Satyamanglam
2. Gadwal-Raichur
3. Gulbarga-Bidar
4. Hassan-Bangalore
5. Hubli-Ankola
6. Kadur-Chickmagalur-Saklesphur
7. Kottur-Harihar
8. Munirabad-Mehboobnagar

Gauge Conversion

1. Arsikere-Hassan-Mangalore
2. Bangalore-Hubli-Birur-Shimoga
3. Hospet-Hubli-Goa
4. Mysore-Chamarajanagar
5. Mysore-Hassan
6. Solapur-Gadag
7. Yashwantpur-Salem
8. Yelahanka-Chickballapur and Kolar-Bangarpet

Doubling

1. Bangalore City-Krishnarajpuram
2. Bangalore-Kengeri with Elect.
3. Hospet-Guntakal (Gauge-Conv.)
4. Kengeri-Ramnagaram
5. Whitefield-Kuppam
6. Yeshwantpur-Tumkur

Railway Electrification

1. Renigunta-Guntakal

New Policy for Gas Connections

1981. SHRI KALAYA SRINIVASULU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have banned across the counter gas connections in many parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details of the recent circular sent to all oil companies in this regard;

(c) whether the circular adversely affects the States like Andhra Pradesh which are in the forefront of demanding gas connections for domestic use;

(d) if so, whether the Government is contemplating to review the new policy; and

(e) the time by which it is likely to reviewed?

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) No, Sir. LPG connections are being released on demand by LPG distributors of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies throughout the country.

Use of Nasik Defence Airport for Civil Purposes

1982. SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to use defence airport at Nasik for civil purposes; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Sir, presently there are no plans to start civil operations from this Defence Airfield. However, permission to operate civil aircraft is granted by the Defence authorities where considered necessary, under a standard operating procedure.

[*Translation*]

Adulteration of Petrol and Diesel

1983. DR. BALIRAM:
SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI:
SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA:

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

(a) whether petrol pump owners throughout the country are indulging in adulteration of petrol and diesel in connivance with the oil companies;

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

(c) the number of petrol pumps selling adulterated petrol, identified so far, State-wise;

(d) the number of guilty persons against whom action has been initiated during the last three years, till date, State-wise;

(e) whether the Government have taken any steps to break the nexus between oil companies and petrol owners; 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 (f) Government have not received any report of alleged connivance of oil companies with petrol pump owners indulging in adulteration of petrol and diesel throughout the country.

The oil marketing companies carry out regular/surprise checks of retail outlets, to prevent various malpractices including adulteration. In addition, special drives are launched by the oil companies both on their own and also under direction of Government from time to time to check malpractices. Further, to prevent adulteration various steps like blue dyeing of kerosene (Public Distribution System), furfural doping, filter paper test, checking of retail outlets by mobile laboratories, etc. are undertaken by the oil companies.

The results of inspection carried out by the oil marketing companies at the retail outlets during the last three years, the irregularities detected and action taken are given in enclosed Statement.

Statement

Results of Inspections carried out at Retail Outlets and Irregularities/Malpractices Detected During the last Three Years

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
	1	2	3
No. of Inspections Conducted	76734	71824	80613
Irregularities/Malpractices Detected			
1. Discrepancy in Stock	75	45	101
2. Suspected product Adulteration	185	255	442
3. Over Charging	16	7	2

	1	2	3
4. Unauthorised Sale	6	6	6
5. Short Delivery	232	167	272
6. Others	163	85	63
Total	677	565	886
Action Taken			
1. Termination	1	3	1
2. Suspension of Sales & Supplies	435	366	563
3. Explanation Called for/Showcause			
Notice or Warning Letters Issued	204	121	297
4. Fines imposed	35	123	0
Total	675	613	861

Decrease Percentage of Voting

1984. SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware about the gradual decrease in percentage of voting in the country; and

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

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) According to the figures furnished by the Election Commission of India, it is not true to say that there is a gradual decrease in the percentage of voting in the country over the years.

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Share of Indian Ships in Indian Overseas Trade

1985. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) the details of share of Indian Ships on Indian Overseas made during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether the share of Indian Ships is reducing every year;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government are laying emphasis to promote Indian Shipping Industry; and

(e) if so, the incentives granted or proposed for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The details of the share of Indian ships on India's Overseas Trade during the last three years is as under:

Year	Trade (in Million Tonnes)
1996-97	51.28 (29.8%)
1997-98	63.53 (31.4%)
1998-99	62.61 (30.8%)

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The share of Indian lines has not been reducing but it is stagnating in the range of 30-31%. However, in terms of quantity carried, the quantum of cargo has gone up during the decade.

(d) and (e) With a view to promoting the Indian shipping industry, Government has taken various steps. These include:

(i) Introduction of automatic approval for acquisition of ships.

- (ii) Shipping companies have been permitted to retain sale proceeds of Indian ships abroad for utilization for fresh acquisition;
- (iii) Freedom to time charter out Indian ships to foreign companies for employment in international cross trade.
- (iv) Allowing shipping companies to acquire vessels on charter-cum-demise method (similar to hire purchase system).
- (v) Age norms of acquisition of second hand vessels have been further relaxed.
- (vi) Import of large vessels have been placed under open general licence w.e.f. 1.4.1997.
- (vii) Section 33 AC of Income Tax Act has been restored from 1.4.2000 in its original form which benefitted to shipping industry.

In addition to the above, action is in hand to consider to extend further the following fiscal and financial incentives to the Shipping Industry;

- (a) Tax relief to Indian seafarers.
- (b) Enhancement of depreciation rate from 20% to 40%.
- (c) Infrastructure status to Coastal shipping
- (d) Introduction of Tonnage Tax in lieu of Corporate Tax

Subsidise Motor Craft

1986. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a scheme to subsidise motor craft, barges and launches for use in the canals and rivers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any disbursement of subsidy has been made to any person or company in Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard during 1998-99, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV):

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Loan Interest Subsidy Scheme for subsidising the bank/institutional interest for the loans taken for acquisition of vessels to be piled on inland waterways was introduced in June, 1980 and remained in operation till 31.3.1998. The scheme has been revised in 1999. Inter-alia, it envisages payment of loan interest differential subsidy beyond 5.5% of bank/institutional loan interest, subject to availability of funds on acquisition of new dumb barges, mechanized vessels, high powered tugs, new or second hand amphibian crafts, indigenous/imported second hand vessels with functional life of at least 10 years etc. for operation on declared National Waterways subject to laid down conditions in the scheme. It is also available for the purpose of mechanization of existing crafts.

(c) and (d) Under the Loan Interest Subsidy Scheme of 1980 payment of loan interest subsidy of Rs. 5,04,227/- during 1995-1996 was made in relation to a claim received from Andhra Pradesh State Financial Corporation in respect of loan granted to M/s Viya Marine Services for acquisition of vessel Vasishta Godavari. Details of payment made State-wise during 1998-1999 are as under:

(1)	Goa	Rs. 27,01,007.00
(2)	Kerala	Rs. 63,74,822.00
Total		Rs. 90,75,829.00

Night Landing Facility at Visakhapatnam Airport

1987. SHRI GANTA SREENIVASA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether night landing facility at the Visakhapatnam Airport has been introduced to attract foreign tourists; and

(b) if not, the time by which it is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) In view of the obstruction due to surrounding hills, civil aircraft operations cannot be permitted after sunset at Vishakhapatnam airport.

Gas Pipeline Between India and Iran

1988. SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH:
DR. ASHOK PATEL:

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

(a) whether the Government had a proposal to set up a gas pipeline between India and Iran;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in laying the pipeline;

(c) the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred thereon alongwith the capacity of the pipeline; and

(d) the parts of the country through which it is likely to pass?

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 Government of Iran has sent a preliminary proposal to supply natural gas to India through pipeline. An Indo-Iran Joint Committee on transmission of gas consisting of representatives of the Governments of Iran and India has been constituted to examine all aspects of the Iran-India natural gas pipeline. The proposal of the Government of Iran is at a preliminary stage.

Doubling of Mumbai-Chennai Rail Line

1989. SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:
DR. C. KRISHNAN:
SHRI VAIKO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have cleared the proposal for doubling of railway track between Mumbai and Chennai;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the funds earmarked for the purpose; and

(d) the time by which the doubling work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) Double BG line is available on Mumbai-Daund, Gulbarga-Narayanpet Road/Krishna, Chennai-Renigunta-Balapalle, Mancherla-Guntakal-Gooty -Royal Cherutu and in patches for Yermaras-Matmari, Kosi-Kupgal, Kondapuram-Muddanuru and Cuddapah-Bankarapetta sections.

Work on doubling of the Daund-Bhigwan section is in progress. An amount of Rs. 5.00 cr. is provided in the

budget 2000-2001 and this work will be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

Doubling of Balapalle-Pullampet (Phase-I) of Gooty-Renigunta section has also been included in the budget 2000-2001. An amount of Rs. 1.00 cr. is provided for this work. This work will be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

A survey for doubling of Bhigwan-Gulbarga section is in progress. Further consideration for doubling of this section would be possible once the survey report becomes available.

Doubling of rest of the sections on Mumbai-Chennai route will be considered in the coming years as per availability of resources.

Request of USA to OPEC to Cut Oil Prices

1990. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken up the question of continued rise in oil prices with the oil producing countries to bring down the prices at the reasonable level;

(b) if so, whether OPEC members have considered the request of the Indian Government;

(c) whether USA has also urged the OPEC countries to cut oil prices and increase the oil output; and

(d) if so, the decision of the OPEC countries 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 (d): In the months of March and September, 2000, India had made a request to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) members to increase production level of crude oil which would facilitate bringing down the oil prices to sustainable, stable level. During the World Petroleum Congress held in Calgary, Canada, the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas held a bilateral meeting on this subject with the Secretary General of OPEC. The issue was again taken up by the oil consuming countries including India and USA at the 7th World Energy Forum held at Riyadh from November 17-19, 2000. Various oil importing countries including USA, pressed the urgent need for taking immediate steps to

bring down the prices of crude oil. Further, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, in his bilateral discussion with the oil Ministers of OPEC member countries, took up the issue. While appreciating the difficulties faced by the oil importing countries, they agreed to consider the matter at the level of OPEC.

Permission to ONGC for taking Exploration Works in Other Countries

1991. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has decided to allow all oil companies like ONGC to take up exploration and drilling activities in other countries as well;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent to which this decision is likely to help the Indian Government; and

(d) the countries where exploration of oil has been undertaken?

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) With a view to reduce the present gap between the domestic production and demand for petroleum, the Public Sector Undertakings of the oil sector are being encouraged to take up exploration and production activities in the country and abroad.

ONGC-Videsh Limited has carried out exploration activities in Tunisia (1995-96), Egypt (1996-97), Yemen (1996-97) and Vietnam.

Pak Convicts Offered Road to Freedom

1992. SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pak convicts are reported to have been offered road to freedom through Kashmir as published in the 'Hindustan Times' dated November 12, 2000; and

(b) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken to counter the Pakistani move?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) There are inputs to indicate that a

certain agency in Pakistan is making efforts to enrol criminals lodged in Pakistani jails to join terrorist organisations for carrying out acts of terrorism and sabotage in India.

(b) Issues impinging on our national security concerns are being constantly monitored. Our security forces are alert to thwart any such infiltration and to deal with any mischief that may be attempted.

Payment of Excise Duty on Scrap

1993. SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether aluminium and ferrous waste and scrap at Integral Coach Factory, Perambur (ICF) was exempted from payment of excise duty upto 1993-94;

(b) if so, whether the exemption was withdrawn in the budget of 1994-95 but ICF continued to clear waste and scrap without declaring these to excise authorities of paying the excise duty;

(c) whether ICF failed to collect these amounts from the buyers; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto and the action taken in the matter?

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

(b) Yes, Sir. ICF has paid an amount of Rs. 39.63 lakhs as excise duty on scrap sold from 10.3.1994 to 15.3.1995 under 'KAR VIVAD SAMADHAN SCHEME'.

(c) ICF sold the scrap during the period in question, without reference to levy of excise duty. The bid price is, therefore, deemed to be inclusive of excise duty wherever leviable.

(d) No action is required as clarified in part (c) above.

Proposal by Sri Lankan Airlines to Start Air Services from Kerala

1994. SHRI A.P. ABDULLAKUTTY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sri Lankan Airlines has proposed to start new air services connecting important cities of Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of services are operating at present from cities of Kerala to Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) During the last round of bilateral air services negotiations in February, 2000, Sri Lankan Government had requested for removal of existing restrictions on Sri Lankan Airline's operations to Trivandrum. During the discussions, it was decided that the designated airlines of Sri Lanka would be allowed to operate a maximum 1050 seats/week to /from Trivandrum as against the then existing upper limit of 870 seats/week.

(c) Sri Lankan Airlines is presently operating 6 services/week between Colombo and Trivandrum. Indian Airlines operates twice weekly services on Trivandrum-Colombo-Trivandrum sector by using A-320 aircraft.

Sale of New Items As Scrap

1995. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways Board has admitted that the new items purchased by the railways have been sold as 'scrap';

(b) if so, whether the matter has been investigated; and

(c) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken thereon?

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

(b) and (c) However, during last six months Vigilance Organisation of Indian Railways conducted more than 400 checks in the area of scrap disposal at various places in regards to prevention to leakages and to tighten the administrative set up. During these checks no case of sale of new serviceable material as scrap has come to light.

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:

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

- (a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bangalore, for the year 1999-2000.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bangalore, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2464/2000]

- (b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Bharat Dynamics Limited, Hyderabad, for the year 1999-2000.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Bharat Dynamics Limited, Hyderabad, for the year 1999-2000 along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2465/2000]

- (c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited, Hyderabad, for the year 1999-2000.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited, Hyderabad, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2466/2000]

- (2) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited and the Department of Defence Production and Supplies, Ministry of Defence for the year 2000-2001.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2467/2000]

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:

- (1) A copy of the Notification No. S.O. 793 (E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 1st September, 2000 seeking to extend the Company Law Settlement Scheme, 2000 under sub-section (3) of section 637 of the Companies Act 1956.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2468/2000]

- (2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (3) of section 642 of the Companies Act, 1956:-

- (i) The Companies (Central Government's) General Rules and Forms (Fourth Amendment) Rules, 2000 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 836 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th October, 2000.
- (ii) The Companies (Particulars of Employees) (Amendment) Rules, 2000 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 839 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 27th October, 2000.
- (iii) The Cost Accounting records (Polyester) Amendment Rules, 2000 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 692 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 31st August, 2000.
- (iv) The Cost Accounting records (Textiles) Amendment Rules, 2000 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 693 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 31st August, 2000.
- (v) The Cost Accounting records (Rayon) Amendment Rules, 2000 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 694(E) in Gazette of India dated the 31st August, 2000.
- (vi) The Cost Accounting records (Nylon) Amendment Rules, 2000 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 695 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 31st August, 2000.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2469/2000]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:

- (1) A copy of National Textile Policy—2000 (Hindi and English versions).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2470/2000]

- (2) A copy of each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:-
- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Cotton Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 1999-2000.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the Cotton Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 1999-2000, along

with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2471/2000]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Apparel Export Promotion Council, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Apparel Export Promotion Council, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2472/2000]

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, on behalf of Shri Hukumdeo Narayan Yadav, I beg to lay on the Table:

- (1) A copy of the Notification No. G.S.R. 711 (E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 8th September, 2000 directing that with effect of the day following the expiration of thirty days from the 8th September, 2000, Light-dues shall be payable at all the ports in India in respect of all Ships and Vessels at the rates prescribed in the notification, under sub-section (4) of section 10 of the Lighthouse Act, 1927.
- (2) A copy of the Lighthouse Accounting and Financial Powers (Amendment) Rules, 2000 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 712 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 8th September, 2000, under sub-section (e) of section 21 of the Lighthouse Act, 1927.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2473/2000]

- (3) A copy of the Inland Waterways Authority of India (Amendment) Rules, 2000 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 311 in Gazette of India dated the 12th August, 2000, under section 36 of the Inland Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2474/2000]

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

- (a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Cochin Shipyard Limited, Perumanoor, for the year 1999-2000.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Cochin Shipyard Limited, Perumanoor, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2475/2000]

- (b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Dredging Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Dredging Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1999-2000, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2476/2000]

12.01 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, Rajya Sabha:

- (i) "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 Judicial Administration Laws (Repeal) Bill, 2000, which has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 29th November, 2000."
- (ii) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 127 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 29th November, 2000 agreed without any amendment to the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2000 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 23rd November, 2000."
- (iii) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 127 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 29th November, 2000, agreed without any amendment to the Punjab Municipal Corporation Law (Extension to Chandigarh) Amendment Bill, 2000, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 23rd November, 2000."

- (iv) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 127 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 29th November, 2000 agreed without any amendment to the Aircraft (Amendment), Bill 2000, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 23rd November, 2000."

2. Sir, I lay on the Table the Judicial Administration Laws (Repeal) Bill, 2000, as passed by the Rajya Sabha on the 29th November, 2000.

12.02 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS

Fourth and Fifth Action Taken Reports

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Railways (1999-2000):

- (i) Fourth Report on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the First Report of the Standing Committee on Railways (1998-99) (Twelfth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (1998-99) of the Ministry of Railways'.
- (ii) Fifth Report on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/observations contained in the Twelfth Report of the Standing Committee on Railways (1997-98) (Eleventh Lok Sabha) on 'Procurement of Wagons by Railways'.

12.03 hrs.

MOTION RE: FIFTEENTH REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Fifteenth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 29th November, 2000."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House to agree with the Fifteenth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 29th November, 2000."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI M.O.H. FAROOK (Pondicherry): Sir, a heavy storm has hit Pondicherry and Cuddalore last evening at a speed of 175 kilometres. It has brought forth havoc in that territory. Many deaths have occurred in Pondicherry due to this storm. About 40 people have been admitted in hospitals so far. Many trees have been uprooted. Coastal villages all over Pondicherry have been affected by intrusion of seawater following the heavy storm. Around 40,000 houses have been blown away. Electricity and water supply is completely affected. Telecommunication facilities are disrupted to a certain extent. Extent of damage to crops has not been assessed so far. Field Officers of the State Government are going round the affected areas and doing the relief work. All educational institutions have been closed due to the disaster. Normal life in Pondicherry, Cuddalore and other places is completely disrupted. Roads connecting these areas have been completely cut off. Rough estimates to the damage caused is about Rs. 300 crore.

Sir, through you, I urge the Government of India to sanction immediately an amount of about Rs.30 crore as Central assistance for undertaking immediate relief work in Pondicherry and in the adjoining territory. I urge the Central Government to send a team to assess the situation and do the needful.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Sir, it is a serious matter. We associate with the Member on this. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have called Shri Samar Choudhury.

**RE: PROBLEMS BEING FACED BY THE
FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS**

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, today, more than five lakh *kisans* and agricultural labourers from all over the country have come to Delhi are holding a rally at Ramlila Maidan for their demands to be fulfilled.

Today *kisans* are committing suicide because there is no market for their agricultural produce. Sir, the Government of India have opened up and liberalised the import. They have already decided to import 1,415 articles affecting the farmers' community very badly. Sir, today the prices of the agricultural produce of the *kisans* have been crashed with the result peasants are suffering.

So, Sir, we demand that the Government of India should give protection to the peasants. The Government should not allow and liberalise the import of the agricultural commodities because it is affecting your farmers' community very badly.

Sir, we also demand that a comprehensive law should be enacted to protect the interest of thousands and thousands of agricultural labourers of our country. They are not getting their minimum wages. They are not getting jobs.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia, please cooperate with the Chair.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Samar Choudhury and Shri Baju Ban Riyan, you can also associate yourselves with Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): Sir, the farmers are committing suicide. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anil Basu, you can also associate yourself with Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA (Damoh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Manisana Committee was constituted for the journalists and non-journalists. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia, let the other Members also raise their issues. Please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Dr. Ramkrishna Kusmaria.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA: Hon. Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to mention a very important thing regarding the Committee constituted to report on the facilities to be provided to the journalists and non journalists. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, today we are also taking up discussion under Rule 193 on floods and droughts in different parts of the country. There also, you can raise your point. So, please take your seats now.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anil Basu, please cooperate with the Chair.

SHRI ANIL BASU: Sir, the Government should respond. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia, we are having discussion under Rule 193 also. There also, you can speak about them.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, that is a different subject. But here, we are highlighting the problems of farmers and agricultural labourers of the country. But the Government is not responding. The Government should respond....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia, please allow other Members also to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except what Dr. Ramkrishna Kusmaria says.

(Interruptions)...*

[Translation]

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to say that Manisana Singh Committee was constituted to submit a report over the problems being faced by journalists and non journalists. Six years after its constitution, this committee have submitted its report wherein some favourable recommendations have been made for the journalists and non journalists and the Government of India is yet to

issue a Notification in this regard. Through you, I would like to submit to the Union Government to immediately issue a notification and thereby act for the welfare of the journalists and non-journalists.

SHRI RAMJILAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have submitted a Notice in regard to the farmers.

MR. SPEAKER: I have given an opportunity to your leader to speak.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a matter of concern that the Government has not taken seriously the constant efforts made by the hon. leaders of both the ruling party as well as the opposition party to draw the attention of the Government towards the problems being faced by the farmers in the country. Today, lakhs of farmers will gather in Delhi. The situation has reached such a point that even the farmers of Uttar Pradesh have threatened to commit self immolation after the occurrence of such incidents in some States like Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Punjab. Five lakhs bags of potatoes are lying in cold storage at Hapur near Delhi. Now the owners of cold storages have decided to cut off the power supply. A large quantity of potato will be damaged while new crop of potato has come into the market.

I am of the view that all farmers, irrespective of what they are growing are on the verge of being ruined. The foreign companies have earned profit of Rs. 40 thousand crores through sale of mustard oil taking advantage of the liberal policy of the Government. Today our farmers are being subjected to incessant loot. Our's is a democratic country and the sentiments of all the people should be respected in democracy. Our economy cannot improve without the farmers. Without the contribution of the farmers neither the country can repay its debts nor can the industries be run and nor the country can be strengthened. Today, the entire economy is coming to a standstill while it is totally based on agriculture. 76 per cent people are dependent upon agriculture to earn their livelihood. As Basu Deb Acharia has told right now that 72 per cent of the population has its over land to cultivate while the remaining four per cent comprise the landless labourer group. All of them are being ruined today.

Today, our economy is both showing a mixed trend of recession as well as inflation. The agriculture produce is cheaper and there are no buyers for that while the agriculture inputs including fertilizer, diesel and electricity etc. are costlier. I am very sorry to say that while our Government has withdrawn the subsidy given to farmers, developed

* Not recorded.

countries have increased their subsidy six times of the present rate. I want to emphasize that though this issue is being discussed everyday, yet the Government have not taken any serious decision in this regard. The Government is not only ruining the economy of our country but it is pushing the entire country towards doom. Today it is being felt that the farmers will be forced to give up the cultivation in a very short span of time due to the wrong policies of the Government. The main question is that of Government policies. Day before yesterday, the former Speaker had remarked that today both the consumers and the farmers are being looted. What is your policy regarding the farmers. 53 years have passed since our country attained independence but there is no clear policy regarding farmers. The increase in prices of the factory made products. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mulayam Singh ji, the issue of farmers is being discussed everyday.

[English]

We are discussing this issue everyday.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: The agriculture produce is cheaper. At last, some policy will have to be formulated in this regard. Till when you will keep on harming the interests of farmers. This issue not only involves the farmers but the entire country for the entire economy is dependent upon agriculture. I want that the Government should resolve this problem by seriously pondering over it. These can not be anything more shameful for our country than the incidents of suicide by farmers. Hence the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should immediately give assurance in this regard.

I am of the view that you should not lay much stress on the Rule 193. The main thing is to take some concrete steps. Today the farmers at Hapur and Meerut have threatened to commit self immolation after gheroeing the tehsil....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mulayam Singh ji, the discussion on Rule 193 has not started till now.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I would like to say that if the farmers commit self immolation, it will lead to such a discontent among the masses which you will not be able to handle and that will go out of control. Hence

I would like to caution you to take this matter seriously and resolve this matter by giving assurance in this House regarding it.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, may I take only one minute?

MR. SPEAKER: If it is to be only one minute, I think, there is no problem.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, many senior Ministers are here. Nearly half-a-million people have assembled today in Delhi, representing the peasants' organisations and farmers' organisations.

They are holding a peaceful rally in Ram Lila maidan today. It is going on at the moment. The matter is vitally concerning this country and the economy of this country. This matter is concerned with more than 70 per cent people of this country. Can we not expect the Government to make a response on their own?

We have witnessed the unfortunate angry outbursts of the Agriculture Minister. In his reply to the debate, not a single issue was dealt with by him. Whether one likes it or not, we all witnessed it with great pain and anguish. The basic issues were not answered, but he only blamed the Opposition and he only blamed the WTO. ...*(Interruptions)* Let him come. It is not my fault. Senior Members of the Council of Ministers are present here. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY GOEL (Chandni Chowk): When hon. Minister had replied, you did not give any response at that time....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Therefore, I appeal to the Government as a whole. Senior Ministers are present here. When people are agitated outside the House, should the Ministers not come forward and give some response on the important issues that are being raised here? It is for the better functioning of the system....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Sir, I fully share the concern expressed by Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav and Shri Somnath Chatterjee. Most of the distinguished members of the Cabinet who are sitting here are coming from people's struggle. They have serious

experiences of being with the working class and with the peasants. It was a tradition of the House that whenever any grievances are expressed through rallies by the working class or by the farmers, especially the toiling masses, the Government — be it of any political party — and the Opposition respond together to their cause and to express their concerns.

During the course of debate on the adjournment motion initiated by Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, Members of all political parties cutting across party lines have expressed their concerns in the given situation of the economy and they did not try to score political points.

Therefore, I seriously feel — since the peasants from all parts of the country have assembled here together in Delhi — it is the duty of this august House to respond to their concerns and the Government should appropriately respond. Many of the Ministers in the Government have come from the struggle of the people and now are sitting in the Treasury benches.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): In Andhra Pradesh, the Food Corporation of India declared *swaranamasoori* and *1001* — the two varieties of paddy — as fine varieties last year. But this year, it declared those two varieties as ordinary varieties, due to which lakhs of farmers are suffering. There is a lot of variation in prices. The hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh had written a letter to the Consumer Affairs Minister also. Due to such declaration, the millers are treating them as ordinary varieties. Till the last kharif season, they treated them as fine varieties. This causes irreparable loss to the farming community. That is why I am humbly appealing to the Government through you, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that they should take immediate action to communicate to the FCI to accept the two varieties as fine varieties.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the countrywide movement has started over the problems of farmers and the Government is not serious in this regard....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Government is responding. Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, this is too much. This will not go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

* Not recorded.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): During the discussion regarding farmers, three issues have been raised and I would like to respond on the behalf of the Government in regard to respectively all the three issues.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Today we are going to take up discussion under Rule 193 on the same subject.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I will take only very minimum time.

[Translation]

The subject raised by hon. Member Shri Yerrannaidu, naturally.

[English]

It is about detailing of a variety of rice. So, I am not in a position at this juncture to make a reply. But I will definitely talk to the Consumer Affairs Minister and see that this problem is sorted out in Andhra Pradesh.

About the second point, it is being raised by Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh for the last four or five days.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: We have also been raising it.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Yes. It is being raised by Shri Basu Deb Acharia also. I will come to the general problem afterwards. As far as any Standing Committee on Farmers, of the Parliament is concerned, the Government fully supports this idea.

All are aware that such Committees are not formed by the Government. They are formed by Parliament under the guidance of hon. Speaker and hon. Chairman. So, I would appeal to the hon. Speaker to call the leaders and decide the modalities for forming the Committee. As far as the Government is concerned, we fully support such a Committee.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: The Minister should at least read the Reports.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: That is the problem.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Those who read too many times do not become Ministers.

[Translation]

The second issue is that 4-5 lakh farmers have gathered to participate in the agitation. I would like to submit that no politics is involved in it. It is all due to the support of the farmers that all of us are Members of this august House whether we may be occupying the treasury benches or the opposition benches in the House. Ruling party cannot muster majority in the House without farmers support. I do not work to divide the farmers. Four out of five votes are casted by farmers. Hence, their role in the formation of Government and opposition is very important. Therefore, neither Government nor opposition would like neglect the farmers and they should not do so too.

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): We do not want to listen speeches rather. We want action....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anil Basu, what is your action now? This is not a good action.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: The issue of farmers is being discussed in both the Houses for the last two weeks. Hon'ble Members of both the Houses have given valuable suggestions in this regard....(Interruptions)

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Coochbehar): You have left out the agricultural labourers. Please speak about them also.

[English]

They form fifty percent of the agriculturists....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: When the legislation regarding agriculture labourers will be brought....(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I will come to that point after this. My submission is that valuable suggestions have been given from both the sides and behalf of the Government I would like to assure the House that all efforts will be made to implement these suggestions effectively and immediately.

So far as the issue of new legislation in this regard, raised by Shri Basu Deb Acharia is concerned. I am not able to reply at this moment. I am not aware of it. However, I would bring all these suggestions to the notice of labour Minister and Law Minister. If any new law enacted I would come before you....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: The farmers of Uttar Pradesh have announced self immolation, potato growers of Hapur have also threatened to commit suicide, but Shri Pramod Mahajan has not mentioned anything about this....(Interruptions)

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, what would happen if it turns out to be true. Farmers of Hapur area of Gaziabad district have stated that they will immolate themselves. Cold store owners have also stated that they will cut off electricity supply today. This has been published in all the newspapers. What would you like to state in this regard?

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hapur is not governed by the Central Government. Therefore, State Government of Uttar Pradesh is accountable for that. If any Minister of Central Government is responsible in this regard, I can talk to him, but I can not speak about the State Government....(Interruptions)

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Your policies are wrong, your liberal policies are responsible for all this. Government is not serious about it, there, we stage a walk out from the House.

12.24 hrs.

*Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav and some other
hon'ble Members then left the House.*

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: We also walk out from the House on the issue of the farmers.

*Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh and some other
hon'ble Members then left the House.*

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Sir, through you, I request the hon. Minister to respond to the serious issue raised by Shri M.O.H. Farook about the cyclone in Tamil Nadu....(Interruptions)

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Sivaganga): Sir, I would like to speak about Tamil Nadu cyclone issue....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Today we are going to discuss about floods, drought and other natural calamities under Rule 193. You can participate in the debate.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adi Shankar, you can also participate in that debate. Please understand we are going to discuss cyclone also in that.

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA (Mumbai North East): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today I rise to felicitate hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Brilliant Chinese website had arranged an international competition in which website users of Europe, America and Asia had to choose the most impressive political leaders among the 300 heads of states of different countries. I can say it with pride that our Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee has also found a place among the 21 most impressive and popular leader selected out of 300 heads of states. On behalf of this House we would like to felicitate Shri Atal ji for this achievement. Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to request all the Members to support and felicitate Shri Atal ji.

[English]

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: Sir, I associate myself with what has been said just now....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All the members are associating with it.

[Translation]

SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHOUHAN (Sriganganagar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, a meeting was held between the Chief Minister of Punjab and Home Minister on 30th May regarding border area of Rajasthan, Sriganganagar. It was decided in that meeting to provide compensation to the farmers for the 1020 km. land which has been acquired to instal barbed wire fencing in broder area of Rajasthan but the same has not been paid yet. My submission is that the compensation for the land which has been acquired for installing barbed wire should be given to the farmers because farmers are facing hardships. They do not have easy acces to the land for tilling, irrigation and harvesting the crops. BSF people deputed on the border do not allow them to grow their crops on this land or to cut the crop.

12.27 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair)

My submission to the Government is that the compensation for 1020 km. of land should be paid to the

farmers immediately as has been done by the Punjab Government earlier too. The Central Government should ask the State Government to pay compensation to the farmers.

[English]

SHRI ADHI SANKAR (Cuddalore): Sir, I would like to raise an important issue and request the Central Government to give financial assistance to the State of Tamil Nadu.

Yesterday, there was a severe cyclone in my constituency, Cuddalore. The cyclone was accompanied by gale winds of over 200 kms per hour and heavy rains causing widespread damage in my constituency.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You can associate yourself with the matter which has already been raised.

SHRI ADHI SANKAR: Sir, there was a severe cyclone in my constituency alone. The entire system has been damaged. All the electric polls and telephonic polls have been uprooted. So far, three persons have lost their lives and 20 fishermen are missing.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This matter has already been raised. You can associate yourself with it.

SHRI ADHI SANKAR: According to the Railway authority, almost all the trains have been cancelled. More than one lakh trees have been uprooted. The Government of Tamil Nadu has taken all the precautionary measures. All the educational institutions have declared holidays. The approximate cost of damage is estimated to be nearly Rs. 1000 crore.

So, I urge upon the Central Government to rush immediate relief and give financial assistance to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have also given the notice.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You will be given the opportunity to speak when your turn comes.

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA (Etawah): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through this House I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas towards a fact that for the establishment of Gas Authority of India Ltd. a public sector undertaking in Diviyapur (pata) area of my parliamentary constituency,

Government had acquired the land of the farmers 10 years ago with the assurance to give compensation and to generate employment opportunities for them.

[Translation]

But so far no one has been given employment nor any assurance has been given regarding payment of compensation. Things have come to such a pass that some people are not being allowed to join even after being issued the joining letter.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Shakya ji, Zero hour is not meant for reading out prepared speeches.

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, through you, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to quickly resolve the problem of farmers so that the trust of the people in Government is not shaken.

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE (Malegaon): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government towards low rainfall in Maharashtra, especially in the Malegaon constituency of district Nasik. Water crisis is there even during the periods of good rainfall. However, in current year, the rainfall has been very low. Therefore, I request the Government to provide relief to the people there....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have given notice and when I am calling your name, you are going out.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajan), Bihar): I was under the impression that my name will be called later. That is why I was going out....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you try to draw my attention, you will get the chance in the last. I am going according to the notices received by the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, one of the great leaders of our freedom struggle Babu Kuer Singh was born in Arrah in Bihar. There is no statue of this great leader in Delhi. Through you, I want to draw the attention of the Government towards the fact that the first freedom struggle in 1857 against the British had begun from that very place. I request that Government should seriously consider installing a statue

of Baba Kuer Singh in Delhi. Through you, I make a request to the Government. Shri Pramod Mahajan ji is present here. I would request him to convey the sentiments of the Government to House so that the people of Bihar and country know the feelings of the Government about having a statue of Babu Kuer Singh in Delhi. Government's views in this regard should be clarified. I request Shri Pramod ji and you too, to let the House know about the views of the Government....(Interruptions) It is of no use to give a long speech in this regard. That is why I have requested the Government, through you, that it is a serious issue. The first war of independence against the British in 1857....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have just now raised the matter. If the Government has taken any decision, that would be conveyed by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. But I can't compel him for that.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): I have heard the speech of Shri Prabhunath Singh attentively as also his suggestion. I have great respect for freedom fighters. As far as having statue in Delhi is concerned it is very difficult for me to give any assurance to the House without collecting all the information regarding the authority responsible for such works and its relation with Central Government. Still I will look into the matter.

[English]

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY (Berhampore, West Bengal): Sir, may I draw the attention of this House to the spurt of violence along the Indo-Bhutan border? It has been observed that insurgent and secessionist groups have stepped up their nefarious activities in this area. Sir, taking advantage of the inhospitable terrain, dense forest and other militant-friendly situation, insurgent groups of various shades from North-Eastern region have been converging in that area. That area has been turned virtually into a sanctuary for those insurgent groups. They are not only imparting training to the nascent insurgent groups of this area such as Kamtapuri, Bodos and Gorkha Liberation Organisation but they are also exploiting the situation for drug trafficking. Sir, if this menace is not nipped in the bud, then I think, it will become another militant hotbed.

The spill-over effects of such activities are being felt and experienced by the people of West Bengal also. As far as West Bengal is concerned, the police administration is so effete and emasculated that they are unable to combat the insurgent activities.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You are not to make a speech.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: It is alarming to note that a few days earlier, armed battalion from Lalbagan was deployed in this area. But the police personnel refused to comply with the direction of the Commandant and furthermore they raised a banner of revolt. That police battalion belongs to the organisation run by the CPI(M). Therefore, I would request the Central Government through you so that in consultation with West Bengal Government, some kind of measures could be taken.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: What is it that you want from the Central Government?

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: In consultation with the State Government, the Central Government should take some measures.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: In the name of raising a matter during 'Zero Hour', anything can be said in this House.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: 'Zero Hour' is only to draw the attention of the Central Government.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: The Central Government should take some measures so as to combat the insurgent and terrorist activities. West Bengal is very much known for red terrorism in the present time. Actually the capital city Calcutta has become a city of abductions and dacoity. People are left to themselves to take the onslaught of anti-social activities...(Interruptions) Therefore, measures should be taken by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government so that people of West Bengal can live in peace and harmony. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You should have concentrated only on the steps to be taken by the Central Government.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: What is happening today is that we have converted this House into an Assembly. Anything can be said right or wrong. The Government of West Bengal is not here. The Central Government cannot respond to this. So, anything can be said....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Unfortunately, Members are indulging in such kind of activities. I cannot help it. This is after all the Parliament of India.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Who can respond to this?...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing of this kind will go on record.

*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

MOHD. SHAHABUDDIN (Siwan): Sir, Siwan is among important railway stations of Bihar. From the point of view of revenue, Siwan ranks second in the whole of NE railway and first in Varanasi Division. Former Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar had declared Siwan a Model railway station and thereafter the Minister of State for Railways Shri Digvijay Singh had given assurances in this regard. In the meantime, the railway administration has diverted the routes of four trains; Sadbhavana Express, Sabarnati Express, Saryu-Yamuna Express and Tata Express and these trains no longer touch Siwan. On this issue, an agitation was held on 23.1.2000 in which 2000 persons had participated. The situation there is very tense and people are very agitated. Therefore, I demand the restoration of the above mentioned train services.

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Sir, out of the five OMs issued against the employees belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, two have been withdrawn through 82nd amendment after deliberations by the hon'ble Prime Minister and Members of Parliament. But the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe employees were not benefited from this. A circular has been issued by the Department of Personnel and Training of the Government of India vide O.M. No. 36012/29/96- Estt. (Reservation)-Section-11, dated 3 October, 2000 under which the earlier provided facility of having lower marks for the purpose of assessment of staff/officers belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for promotion has been restored through 82nd amendment for appointments made prior to 22.7.97. But para 4 of the circular says that appointments made between 22.7.97 and 3.10.2000 will not be affected.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You should not read prepared speech during Zero Hour.

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the circular is not providing expected benefits. Therefore, I request the hon'ble Prime Minister, through you, that the intention behind the amendment is not being fulfilled. I request the new para should not be added and the original objective behind the amendment should be kept in mind.

[English]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): Sir, hundreds of LIC agents staged a dharna before the

* Not recorded.

Parliament House yesterday. The representatives of the LIC agents met the hon. Finance Minister also.

Sir, lakhs and lakhs of LIC agents have contributed a lot to make this institution as one of the prestigious ones in this country. While even its employees are getting all kinds of facilities, these agents are deprived of any kind of privilege which is very much needed for them. They are not getting any sort of protection from this Government. The LIC agents have demanded a welfare scheme providing for pension for which the LIC and its agents have to contribute. They have also demanded bonus and facilities like medical claim and provident fund.

I request the hon. Finance Minister and the Government to look into this matter and redress their grievances as early as possible. This is a long pending demand on which they have met the hon. Finance Minister also. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, I would like to associate with the views expressed by Shri Chennithala. Many social workers find it as an employment....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan is allowed to associate with what Shri Chennithala has said on the subject.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Sir, the Finance Minister is present here. I would request him to say something on the matter. He is well aware of the matter.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If the Finance Minister wants to respond, he may do so. But I cannot compel him to respond.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN (Sonapat): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, problem of railways is assuming alarming proportions in my State Haryana. For the last 30 years, new railway tracks have not been laid in Haryana, no new trains have been introduced nor any compartment has been added. Haryana encircles Delhi from three sides and the number of passengers is increasing day-by-day. Passengers on Sonapat-Panipat section are not getting new trains, nor new compartments. Trains from Delhi are over-crowded and accidents occur daily. Sister Mamata Banerjee had sanctioned the survey between Jind and Sonapat.

But progress of work on the survey is very slow. It is a serious problem. Delhi is the national capital. The problem should be solved immediately. New trains should be introduced there. Accidents are occurring daily. I request the Central Government to focus its attention towards this problem.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Government of India had undertaken a survey. According to the report of the survey the fluoride content in water of Gandhi nagar area of Jaipur is 200 ppm, Civil line area is 125 ppm, and Jawahar Nagar area is 150 ppm which is quite alarming. In Virat nagar it is as high as 1100 ppm. The people of Jaipur city and the slum dwellers are not getting adequate water even once a day. The State Government is yet to initiate effective measures to tackle the problem. From 170 tubewells of the Amanishah drain of Jaipur city 30 lakhs ton gallons of water is being supplied to the city. If water continues to be extracted at this rate, by the year 2004, the underground water will be exhausted everywhere within a radius of 26 kilometres around Jaipur. At present, water level has gone down of 42 metres. Baisapur project was launched to ensure water supply of Jaipur and work was progressing fast initially but now it has been halted. Jaipur city is getting water supply only from Ramgarh dam. It is heavily silted and there is need to desilt it through dredging. If Baisapur project is not completed soon, a severe water crisis is expected to engulf Jaipur city. World Bank is also willing to give loans for it. The Government of India should instruct the State Government of Rajasthan to consult with and avail loan from the World Bank for Baisapur scheme and resolve the problem of drinking water of Jaipur city else the people of Jaipur will really long for want of water. The Government of India should immediately pay attention towards this serious problem.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Government of India has fixed the Minimum Support Price of rice at Rs. 510 per quintile but in various States the paddy is being procured at Minimum support the paddy is being procured also Rs. 300-350 per quintile due to which farmers are not even able to realise their input cost.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Today, the issue is to be discussed under the Rule 193. You must express your viewpoint in brief.

[English]

Your notice is about non payment of paddy only and not about all the foodgrains.

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Sowing of Rabi crop has not taken place. The farmers are under the compulsion to commit suicide. Last year, the Government of India had made recovery of about 60 per cent of paddy. The year the recovery percentage is 68. The agencies involved in procurement are of the view that it is not possible to provide levy at 68 percent of paddy being procured in Uttar Pradesh. My demand is that the Government of India should give relaxation for making recovery in Uttar Pradesh as was done last year by restricting the recovery to 60 percent or else it should announce for providing a special package of Rs. 10 thousand crores for Uttar Pradesh.

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (Ranchi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Ranchi is the capital of Jharkhand. The permission to set up a DRM office there was granted three years back. Its foundation stone was laid by the Minister of Railways seven years back but the work is taking place at snail's pace there, which is causing a lot of inconvenience. At present a DRM office is located at Adra. I urge upon the Union Government to allocate maximum fund for this project so that the construction work may attain the momentum and the building may be completed in time.

[English]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, through you, I am drawing the attention of the entire House to the fact of a very interesting historical event where the Taliban Government of Afghanistan have made a claim of the Kohinoor Diamond from the Government of Great Britain. In the Hindu mythology, it was named as the *Kaustubhamani*. In 1739, when Nadir Shah got it from Mohammad Shah Rangeela, he named it as the Mountain of Light *Kohinoor*. Actually, initially it was with the King of Malwa. From him Allauddin Khilji snatched it way after defeating him in the war. After the decline of the *Khilji* dynasty, the King of Gwalior just took it away. From him, it passed on to Babar, the founder of the *Mughal* dynasty. Actually, later on, on the decline of *Mughal* Empire, from Mohammad Shah Rangeela, it was taken away by Nadir Shah by the exchange of *Pagri* because it was hidden on the *turban* of Mohammad Shah Rangeela.

Nadir Shah knew this. He wanted to exchange it as a symbol of friendship. He took it away to Afghanistan....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You ask the Government as to what should be done now with this Kohinoor Diamond.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: You give me another two minutes.

Ultimately Maharaja Ranjit Singh fought the war with Afghanistan and the took it away....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You ask as to what the Central Government should do?

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: I would conclude it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: In 'Zero Hour', you can only draw the attention of the Government.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: In 'Zero Hour', time and again, ten or 15 minutes have been taken on the same subject. I would like to take just two minutes only.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Two minutes more!

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: I do not speak anything irrelevant. Ultimately from the son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in the second Punjab war, the Britishers took it away to England....(Interruptions) At least, you should hear me, Mr. Deputy-Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Yes, I am listening to you.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: It was hidden in the tower of London, and now the Taliban Government, who do not have any claim over the diamond, had made a claim with the British Government. The Government of India has not made any claim for the last 53 years.

Sir, I appeal to the Government to make this claim because it involves the national sentiments. Originally, the diamond belongs to India, and the same should be brought back to India from England.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the atmosphere of agitation in prevailing throughout the country. The employees of Central Secretariat Services have been agitating for the

past four months. They are sitting on a hunger strike in the premises of North Block. They have not been promoted for the last 18 years despite performing all the grassroot work. The Standing Committee of the Home Ministry has thoroughly investigated the matter. After listening to the views of both parties the committee has recommended that those people should be given promotion and thus justice should be provided to them but the Government is insensitive to their demands and it is neglecting the recommendations made by the Standing Committee.

Through you, I demand from the Government to preserve the dignity of Parliamentary democracy and immediately promote those agitating employees of Central Secretariat Service who have not been promoted for the last 18 years. Redtapism is coming in the way of providing justice to these officers by not implementing the recommendations of the Standing Committee. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I request you to instruct the Government for implementing the recommendations of the Standing Committee and promote these employees. Alongwith it, I would also like to submit before you that we are prepared for further extending one struggle and fight for there is no other way out for it.

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the Arpa Bhesaghal irrigation project of Bilaspur district in the Chhattisgarh State. This irrigation project is lying pending for the last 10-15 years. All the staff and officers are duly posted for this project and a colony with a cost of Rs. 1 crore has already been set up. All the other staff are being transferred. The 16 districts of Chhattisgarh especially Bilaspur district are facing the problem of famine. The worker are facing the problem of unemployment. The famine are also suffering a lot. 15 thousand acres of agricultural land can be irrigated after the completion of the projects. Hence I urge upon the Union Government to immediately complete the Arpa Bhesaghal irrigation project at Bilaspur so that the farmers may be benefited from it.

VAIDYA VISHNU DATT SHARMA (Jammu): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, even today there is no irrigation facility in the 250 kilometre long Kandi region of Jammu. The farmers are still dependent upon rains for irrigation, the people of this region are still devoid of drinking water facility and there are many such areas where the residents have to rely on pond's water for the purpose of drinking. Hence I urge upon the Union Government to make available drinking water in the region by instructing all the water supply department under the supervision to act immediately in this regard.

[English]

DR. A.D.K. JAYASEELAN (Tiruchendur): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this entire House to the miserable plight of the fishermen in Tamil Nadu. Unfortunately, the Navy men of Sri Lanka kill the fishermen there....(Interruptions) The innocent fishermen have been rather killed by the Sri Lankan Navy frequently. It is very unfortunate. I urge upon the Government to deal with this matter.

Secondly, during the cyclone season also, the fishermen suffer a lot. So, the Government must come forward to help the fishermen of Tamil Nadu.

I want to add that the esteemed Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has written a letter to our hon. Prime Minister regarding this matter.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI PHOOLAN DEVI (Mirzapur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, many many thanks for giving me the time to speak. I have been giving Notice for the past one week but I was not given an opportunity to speak. I would like to speak on a subject related to Delhi. Through you, I would like to submit that a priest name Baba Nagpal was used to stay at Chhatapur temple. This issue was also raised earlier by the Members. Priest Nagpal collected donations form all around to construct the Chhattapur temple. Many big industrialists and even renowned personality like Indiraji denoted money and he was able to construct the temple with the donation. Two years back, he died. After his death, the owner of the Batra hospital in Delhi become fictitious trustee of the temple management. A priest named Sakhi Baba also used to stay there. He was denied his meals and the Brahmin priests were beaten and forced to leave the place.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Where this incident took place?

SHRIMATI PHOOLAN DEVI: It is about the Chhatapur temple situated in Delhi. It is a very large temple with the property worth billions of rupees which has been grabed by industrialist. It is a matter of great sorrow that an industrialist has grabbed a place of worship.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a State matter.

SHRIMATI PHOOLAN DEVI: It is a matter of sorrow that an industrialist has become life long trustee of that

temple. I demand from the Government to conduct a probe into the matter that how Baba Nagpal was murdered* and the industrialist become the life long trustee of the temple. Temple is a place where Sadhus, saints and seers worship the God. Our Urban Development Minister is doing a very good job. Is it not possible for his department to take over this temple. The Government should take over the possession of the temple from that industrialist and handover it to saints and seers. I would like to inform here that definitely a conflict is on the cards in this regard. Brahmins were brutally forced to leave the place*. He is a big industrialist who has grabbed the temple and is forcing Saints and seers to leave the temple.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, you please conclude.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barrackpore): It is a very important matter. A place of worship has gone into the hands of that industrialist. The wave is that even the God is favouring him....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is a State matter. Whatever it may be, you are provoking her further.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in a news item published in Rashtriya Sahara of 22 November an I.P.S. of 1971 batch belonging to Dalit Society....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Ramdas Athawale, the matter, which you are raising, belongs to an individual.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: The matter has been published in Rashtriya Sahara.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Whatever it is but you have to raise it in a proper way.

13.00 hrs.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a news has been published in Rashtriya Sahara dated 22nd November that an I.P.S. Officer of 1971 batch who

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

belongs to dalit society, has not been given promotion. His C.R. has been spoiled. He had been the Superintendent of Police of Bikaner in 1985. The allegations levelled upon him were investigated and he was found innocent. Therefore, my submission is that C.R. of several officials belonging to dalit community is deliberately spoiled. I request Shri Pramod Mahajan to remove the injustice done to them. Please state whether your Government will help the dalit and adivasi officials.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2 p.m.

13.01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.

14.04 hours

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at four minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

(DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH in the Chair)

INSURANCE LAWS (TRANSFER OF BUSINESS AND EMERGENCY PROVISIONS) REPEAL BILL*

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Business of the House starts now. Legislative items will be taken up now. Item No. 9, The Minister of Finance Shri Yaswant Sinha.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to repeal the Allianz Und Stuttgarter Life Insurance Bank (Transfer) Act, 1950, the Life Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1956 and the General Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1971.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH (Begusarai): Sir, you used to speak in Hindi. How did you speak in English today.

SHRI YASWANT SINHA: I speak both the languages.

*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part 2, Section II, dated 30.11.2000.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion Moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to repeal the Allianz Und Stuttgarter Life Insurance Bank (Transfer) Act, 1950, the Life Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1956 and the General Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1971."

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I oppose the introduction of the Insurance Laws (Transfer of Business and Emergency Provisions) Repeal Bill, 2000. Sir, I oppose the introduction of this piece of legislation because I do not feel that there is a necessity to bring this piece of legislation. This Act was passed in the year 1951. Then, in 1956, the Life Insurance Corporation was nationalised by an Act of Parliament. Subsequently, in 1972, the General Insurance Corporation was nationalised by an Act of this Parliament. Even after nationalisation of LIC and GIC, this Act remains in the Statute Book of our country. The Government did not feel, at that point of time, that there was no need for such legislation and that legislation should be repealed. When did this become redundant? If this Act became redundant in 1956, 1972 and then after the nationalisation of LIC and GIC Act was enacted, why was this Act not repealed? I would like to know whether it is a fact that after the enactment of IRDA, the Government decided to repeal this Act. I would also like to know whether with the repeal of this Act, will affect the functioning of LIC and GIC. I apprehend.

Sir, the Minister has assured on the floor of this House when he was replying to the debate on IRDA Bill, that his sincere effort would be to strengthen both these organisations. My apprehension is that with this measure, both these organisations will be weakened. There is already an attempt.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: It is not a discussion.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: All the subsidiaries have now been bifurcated. They have been made independent. GIC's only function will be re-insurance. The process has already started. This attempt, this measure will further weaken LIC and GIC. That is why, I oppose the introduction of this Bill and I urge upon the Minister to withdraw this Bill.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, I would like to begin by saying that the apprehensions which have been expressed by the hon. Member, are entirely unfounded. The procedure for introduction of the Bill in this House is governed by rule 72. Rule 72 very clearly says that unless it can be shown that this is outside the legislative

competence of the House, the introduction will not be opposed. Now, therefore, the point on which the hon. Member is opposing the introduction of the Bill is not covered by rule 72. We are not discussing the merits. We will discuss the merits when the Bill comes up for discussion. But even the issue which has been raised is entirely misplaced because the House is aware that there was a Commission on Review of Administrative Laws. This Commission has gone into the question of all the legislations which are on the Statute Book. It has made its recommendations to the Government. The Government has, as a matter of policy, decided to repeal all those statutes which have become redundant. But they are still on our Statute Book. The three Bills, which I am referring to in this particular transaction, are all Bills which have become redundant, but unfortunately, they are still on the Statute Book. Therefore, I have brought this repeal legislation.

And as far as the public sector undertakings are concerned, a year has passed since the IRDA Bill was passed and adopted by both Houses of Parliament, new insurance companies have been given licences, heavens have not fallen down. The business of LIC has gone up by 40 per cent and all our public sector undertakings in the insurance business are doing extremely well and I am assured by their managements that all those companies are in a very strong position to meet any challenge of competition.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: They have not started.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I had given the fullest justification. It is not merely in India that we are in a position to meet the challenge of competition. The LIC and other insurance companies are going out to meet the challenge of competition in other countries. Therefore, this apprehension of the hon. Member that it is only a cocoon and that it is only in a totally sheltered atmosphere that our public sector will flourish, I said, is a contention I do not agree with. The public sector in this country has the strength to withstand competition and the LIC, the GIC and the subsidiaries of the GIC will be able to do so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to repeal the Allianz Und Stuttgarter Life Insurance Bank (Transfer) Act, 1950, the Life Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1956 and the General Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1971."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I introduce the Bill.

14.12 hrs.

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA (AMENDMENT) BILL*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Airport Authority of India Act, 1994.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Airports Authority of India Act, 1994."

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: I oppose the introduction of the Airports Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2000.

Very recently, yesterday, a Sub-Committee of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, of which the hon. Minister is the Chairman, which examined this aspect of the Airports Authority of India leasing out all our airports, recommended against leasing out of any of our profit-making airports. Their apprehension was that this would involve a security risk also. That aspect has not been examined. Then, what would be the consequent results? If our airports are leased out, then a large number of workers would be rendered surplus. What would happen to them? Their suggestion was that instead of leasing out our airports the Government of India should try for FDIs for new airports.

The reason the hon. Minister had given in the Statement of Objects and Reasons is that the Government has no funds for modernisation of the airports. There are 94 Major Airports and 28 are of Civilian Class. A number of airports are making a profit. There is no need to lease out any of our existing airports.

All these aspects have not yet been examined by the Ministry. Without examining they have decided to lease out and thus they have brought forward this piece of legislation. This is against the interests of our country and that is why if this legislation is passed, that will be against the Constitution of our country.

That is why, I oppose the introduction of this piece of legislation. I demand that the hon. Minister should withdraw this Bill and should try for F.D.I. for new airports.

There is no problem if Foreign Direct Investment is there for new airports. But existing airports should not be leased out. So, I oppose the introduction of this bill. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): The bill is being introduced by a Minister whose ideology is against it. Why it is happening....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: You are not supporting it from the core of your heart. Why are you selling a thing which belongs to the entire country....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: A leader like Shri Sharad Yadav is presenting this bill. He had been a socialist leader....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJO SINGH (Begusarai): Let him present this bill, I have no objection over it. However, keeping in view the present situation of civil aviation, this bill should not be brought. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: It will be raised during the time of discussion, not now.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: We should support this bill because we do not want to lower down his prestige....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJO SINGH: This bill is useless. It is not worth to be introduced.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have not given any notice in this regard, please take your seat.

[English]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (Tamluk): Sir, if this bill is introduced, then the hon'ble Minister will be jobless....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: We are with you please fight against injustice....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Earlier also we have fought together, but you changed the party and changed yourself. I appeal you not to bring this bill....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: It will not go on the records. Please take your seat....*(Interruptions)* *

* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-2 dated 30.11.2000

* Not recorded.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: Yes, we have fought together....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have already said what you want to. You have registered your objection. Now please take your seat. Let hon'ble Minister deliver his speech.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: You are in the same place. Only Priya Ranjan Das's seat has been changed....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I am still in the Congress Party. I have not change my party. Shri Yadav ji used to inspire us. He fought against the justice when he was got elected from Jabalpur. I got inspiration from him. At present a very strong person is in your Cabinet. I mean to say why you are spoiling his talent....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: He has been elected as a representative of people by defeating you. He is the first Janata candidate who has defeated you....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is the question of introduction of the bill, other issues have nothing to do with it.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Acharia ji is a very senior Member. The issue will be discussed at length during consideration of the bill. I will try to give a detail reply about the committee you are mentioning. That committee has been constituted by us. Priya Ranjan Damunsi ji, I would like to submit that the Private air-port constructed in Cochin with the joint venture recently is being given on lease. Not a single penny of the Government has been invested for its construction. Airport Authority is the spirit of civil aviation in our country but it does not have so much amount of funds to spend on Gaya, Lucknow, Jaipur, Khajuraho and Konark....(*Interruptions*) Please listen to me. I would like to solve the problem raised by you. Though discussion on this issue will be held when the bill is introduced but I would like to submit that these airports are being given on lease. We have decided the issue of worker and other things in this regard. We are aware that all four airports are running into profits. We propose to give on lease the management of the airports only to enhance this profits. I would like to state that your apprehensions regarding the workers and other thing etc. are in my mind.

I would like to state....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: You have not revised salaries of employees of Airport Authority.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: It could not be revised because of internal fighting among the officials. We are ready to revise their salaries, you make them unite.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: How they will be united, you recognize the elected Union of the employees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will discuss it at the time of debate.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: You are not aware that they have distributed the wages.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): In which sector you want recognition, you will not go there. You are saying this because you need recognition in this sector.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: When the debate on this bill will start then you can raise this question. That work will be done according to the wishes of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Airports Authority of India Act, 1994."

Motion adopted

[*English*]

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: Sir, I introduce the bill.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) **Need to Direct the Government of Rajasthan not to Reappropriate the Central Funds sanctioned for the Purpose of Tackling the Drought Situation**

[*Translation*]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): The Government of Rajasthan had a balance of Rs. 75 crore with it of previous year besides that it has received an amount of Rs. 105 crore from the Government of India and also Rs. 100 crore for tackling the drought situation, however, it has failed to give NOC regarding the first amount.

Rajasthan Government did not use the above amount for drought relief work and instead used it for other purposes, which is not fair.

[Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava]

Therefore, I request the Union Government to direct the Rajasthan Government to utilize central funds for the purpose of tackling drought situation only and State Government should also take the Members of Parliament from Rajasthan into confidence in this regard.

(ii) Need to Transfer the Employees of Coal India Limited particularly those Posted in Sensitive Posts for a Long Period

SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY (Giridih): There are a number of officers in the subsidiaries of Coal India Ltd. who have been occupying sensitive as well as general posts for many years and at one place only. This kind of practice is encouraging corruption and the honest officers are being deprived of working in the interest of the company.

I have recently drawn the attention of the Government, towards the officers working in sensitive posts for 15 to 20 years at Delhi based offices of Coal India Limited, at the meeting of Coal advisory committee. But no action has taken place so far.

Therefore, I request the Government that the officers posted in sensitive posts for a long period at one place should be transferred and a list of suitable, efficient and honest officers should be prepared and they should be posted on such posts.

(iii) Need to Provide Financial Assistance and other basic facilities to the People Residing at Indo-Pak Border in J&K.

VAIDYA VISHNU DATT SHARMA (Jammu): A number of people have been killed along the international border in J&K State due to firing from across the border and the number of animals killed is much more than that. This has made farming nearly impossible in these border areas and the people are faced with unemployment and starvation. Therefore, I urge upon the Government of India to construct bunkers in the houses of the residents for their security and also impart them training in Civil defence. Besides by constituting village defence committees they should be provided arms which can increase their courage and check the infiltration of terrorist through border and smuggling of narcotics. In such a situation barring a few areas the residents living adjacent to the international border should be given financial assistance and they should be provided flour, rice and other foodgrains on cheaper prices.

(iv) Need for Maintenance of Road between Naginimora and Tuensang via Mon in Nagaland by Border Roads Organisation

[English]

SHRI K.A. SANGTAM (Nagaland): Sir, a strategic road in the Indo-Myanmar border, which starts from

Naginimora in Nagaland via Mon and connects Tuensang district has been handed over to Nagaland State Government under the Public Works Department as advised by the Director General of Border Roads Organisation, from April, 2000. This road construction had been initiated by the Defence Ministry mainly for the purpose of movement of troops on the Indian side of the border.

The maintenance of this road should be kept with the Border Roads Organisation by providing sufficient budget under Defence Road. There is likelihood that the State might finally have to abandon it, as the State Government is not in a position to take any such financial burden on its shoulder as Nagaland is already facing financial crunch.

Besides, I would suggest to the Government of India to direct the Director General of Border Roads Organisation for maintenance and development and also to plan out to make double land road, so that if there is any eventuality in the future, with any external aggression on the border, India would be able to move its troops freely and quickly and defend the country. We should not hand over such important and strategic border defence roads to any other agency other than the Border Roads Organisation and take the matter seriously.

(v) Need for early completion of Upper Krishna Irrigation Project in Karnataka

SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA (Hassan): Sir. Upper Krishan Project is a major project in Karnataka which is being completed with the assistance of the World Bank. The estimated expenditure is about Rs. 4,000 crore.

The C.&A.G. in his report is reported to have mentioned that over Rs. 300 crore have been siphoned off from this project. On account of this, World Bank is not releasing the money. The Project is still incomplete.

I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Prime Minister to order for an immediate enquiry into the matter and instruct the authorities to complete the project as per schedule.

(vi) Need to Check Increasing Terrorist Activities in Maharashtra.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (Aurangabad, Maharashtra): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Pakistan supported Lashkar-e-toiba and ISI have been planning to spread of communal riots by carrying out terrorist activities in Mumbai, the economic capital of the country and other cities of Maharashtra. They had planned to blow up the

naval headquarter, Mumbai high, residence of Shivsena Chief and the headquarter of Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh in Nagpur to destroy the economy and spread the communal riots in the entire Maharashtra. Some months back these organisations have planned to blow up a Church in Sholapur district. The fake currency notes of Rs. 500 are also supplied in other States of the country from Maharashtra.

Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to take appropriate measures to check these terrorist activities in consultation with State Government so as to restore peace and order in Mumbai, the economic capital of country and Maharashtra.

- (vii) **Need to provide financial assistance to the Government of Tamil Nadu for providing basic amenities to the people in Tirunelveli parliamentary constituency**

[English]

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN (Tirunelveli): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Tirunelveli, my parliamentary constituency, in Tamil Nadu is consisting of Tuticorin, Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai, Srivaikundam, Ottapidaram and Vilathikulam Assembly constituencies. Among these Assembly constituencies, Tirunelveli, Tuticorin and Palayamkottai are urban Areas.

For the last 28 months, Tuticorin municipality alone has spent about Rs. 58,02,000 towards rent charges for the water tanker lorries. Sir, the cost of each tanker of lorry is Rs. 8.76 lakh. Sir, to augment that resource, I released Rs. 60 lakh from my MPLADS fund and asked the Collector of Tirunelveli to purchase four tanker lorries for Tuticorin municipality and four tanker lorries for Tirunelveli Municipal Corporation, but it was negatiaved by the Collector saying that it was not a durable asset.

The population of the villages within these Assembly constituencies are mostly backward and Adidravida communities because Srivaikundam, Ottapidaram and Vilathikulam Assembly constituencies are rural areas. The people residing in these areas are not having basic amenities like potable drinking water and proper metalled roads. There is no Centrally-sponsored scheme to provide pure drinking water though the perennial Tamirabarani River is flowing in that area.

I request the Central Government to allocate necessary funds for implementation of the Central-sponsored schemes in order to provide basic amenities in all the villages in my parliamentary constituency.

Moreover, the desilting of Tamirabarani River is in the offing, and the Government should take it up immediately to cater the needs for irrigation and drinking purposes in my constituency.

- (viii) **Need to provide Financial Assistance to Government of Bihar for Development of Jaimangalagarh in Begusarai District**

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH (Balia, Bihar): Sir, Jaimangalagarh is a renowned historical place in Begusarai district in Bihar which is situated like an island in Kabar lake. The legend has it that Lord Buddha had visited this place for a short stay alongwith his 1200 disciples. Some pay their reverence towards this as a Siddh Peeth while other designate it as the fort made during the Pal dynasty. There are many legends of this kind. Though the remains of the fort is still intact and in existence there. A deep trench, which was dug as an alternative means of strengthening the defence line of fort surrounds it in which numerous fishes can be sighted. Birds keep on chirping. It seems as if even the lotus flowers are smiling to look at this historical monument. This is a very beautiful and worth seeing place and also a pilgrim Centre. Devotees congregate here in large number on every Tuesday and Saturday. More than one lakh people assemble here on the first day of every January to celebrate the onset of new year. But this place has not so far been declared as a tourist centre.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to declare this place as a tourist centre and allocate sufficient funds for its development.

- (ix) **Need to provide Funds to Government of Himachal Pradesh for Water Management for Irrigation in Solan District.**

COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla): Sir, a major portion of the population of district Solan in the Parliamentary constituency of Shimla comprises of farmers and horticulturists. A revolutionary transformation can be brought about in the financial position of about 20,000 families living in this area by utilising the water of Gambhar and Kuhni Divisions for constructing smaller dams to provide potable water, water for lift irrigation scheme, aqua-culture and for generating hydro-electricity for local consumption by dint of which non-seasonal crops and cash crops such as vegetables, flowers, tomatoes, peas, capsicum and ginger can be produced on large scale. The State Government is making effort in this direction but the assistance of Union Government is necessary to streamline this developmental work.

[Col. (Retd.) Dr. Dhani Ram Shandil]

Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to be instrumental in removing unemployment in this area by ensuring through water management, irrigation facilities for atleast three bighas of land to every family. Besides I would also request that an expert team of Union Government should be sent for survey regarding implementation of proposed project.

- (x) **Need to introduce more flights from Kerala State to foreign countries particularly to the Gulf region**

[English]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): Sir, a large number of Indians are working in foreign countries. Inadequate international flight connection is one of the major problems before them. We have drawn the attention of the Government to this problem many times. Trivandrum, Cochin and Calicut Airports have enough international standard to receive international flights. The Gulf passengers are the worst affected. More flights to foreign destinations will help the smooth travelling of the Indians working abroad. The Ministry of Civil Aviation may take urgent steps to introduce more flights without delay.

- (xi) **Need for proper Maintenance of National Highway No. 80 Between Mokama and Farraka**

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH (Begusarai): The stretch of National Highway No. 80 between Mokama and Farraka is in a dilapidated condition. This has made it difficult even to treat this road on foot what to talk of running a vehicle.

I would therefore, like to draw the attention of the Government towards the condition of this road and request it to immediately release funds for immediate repair and renovation of this road.

14.36 hrs.

IMMIGRATION (CARRIERS' LIABILITY) BILL

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D.SWAMI): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to make the carriers liable in respect of passengers brought by them into India in contravention of the provisions of the Passport (Entry

into India) Act, 1920, and the rules made thereunder and matters connected therewith, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

As the hon. Members are well aware, the Passport (Entry into India) Rules, 1950 to prescribe certain conditions for the entry of a foreigner or any person coming from any other place outside India, by sea, by land or by air. Under these Rules, foreign nationals are required to be in possession of a valid passport and a visa, all authorised travel documents. An Indian national also is required to be in possession of a valid passport. The immigration authorities posted at various check-posts covering land, sea and air do a thorough checking all right of the persons coming by different modes of transport, but it has been seen recently that a large number of passengers at the four major international airports, particularly Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai, manage to arrive here without any valid documents creating various problems for the immigration authorities. They detain them for some days, then deport them back to the countries wherefrom they had come by the same flight. Some airlines do not exercise, it has been seen during the recent past, proper check of travel documents before allowing such persons to board the plane. It has, therefore, become necessary that a statutory responsibility is cast on the airlines, ship carriers bringing such passengers by imposing financial liability on them in order to tackle this problem.

In nutshell, it is only for this purpose that the Immigration (Carriers' liability) Bill, 2000 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha. The Bill was sent to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs also in February 1999. Their recommendations were also examined in consultation with the Ministry of Civil Aviation as well as the Surface Transport respectively, and some decisions were taken.

In this Bill, it is proposed to impose a penalty of one lakh rupees per person on the carrier which brings passengers without valid travel documents into the country. The power to impose such penalty is proposed to be given to the Foreign Regional Registration Officers concerned or any other authority to be authorised by the Government of India. Other countries like U.K., U.S.A., Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Australia etc., also have a similar legislation. For the information of the House, I may tell that during the year 1999, as many as 815 such foreigners were detected, who were travelling or who arrived in India without any travel documents.

With these words, I commend the Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Bill, 2000, as passed by Rajya Sabha

on 24th November, 2000, for favourable consideration of this august House.

Sir, may I add with your permission and with the permission of this august House that this very Bill, when it was considered by the other House, was passed by the Rajya Sabha without any discussion. I would also like to take the liberty of praying to this august House to follow the example set by the Rajya Sabha. This Bill is not only innocuous in its nature it is only meant to sort out certain problems that arise at the time when people arrive here, at our destination, without any documents. There are problems like detaining them and deporting them back. Such problems would get sorted out with the passage of this Bill. We would not have to harass the people and the people also would be saved from harassment if this responsibility is cast on the carriers such as the airlines and the ship carriers.

Sir, once again I would like to request you to consider my request if you so please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to make the carriers liable in respect of passengers brought by them into India in contravention of the provisions of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, and the rules made thereunder and matters connected therewith, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Chandigarh): Sir, the hon. Minister should welcome discussions. Some ideas could come out of discussions.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: If there was anything to be discussed I would certainly have done that. But even then if you want to discuss it, then I am ready for it. If you like, then we can discuss it.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): We are interested in discussing the flood situation as early as possible.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome this Bill. You know that there is no need to speak much over this subject. Since all the Members and parties have expressed their consent therefore Rajya Sabha has also passed this Bill without much discussion.

I would like to raise one-two issues. Travelling documents should be checked properly. The hon'ble Minister has said clearly all these things. This kind of provision is there in other countries also. All travelling documents should be verified. The carriers who bring such people should be held responsible for such lapses. Many people come here from abroad and we welcome those people, we invite more and more people here. Here they get all facilities. They visit tourist places and thus leave happily. However, the terrorists also enter our country with drugs. It causes a big threat to the unity and integrity of the country. Due to this many problems arise in the country. The Government of India has brought this Bill to prevent all these things.

On this occasion, I would like to draw your attention towards one-two points. The Indian Airlines flights fly to countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal and Singapore. I would like to know whether the amendments being carried out by this Bill will be applicable to the above Airline. The Immigration Department should check their working from time to time. They should always remain alert. They should change their working style and see whether the carriers are liable or not? They should check their travelling documents from time to time. They should pay attention towards all these things. With these words, I welcome this Bill and congratulate Hon'ble Minister as he has made efforts to bring such a Bill in the Lok Sabha.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I strongly support the Immigration (Carriers' liability) Bill, 2000 presented by hon. Minister. Although it is a good Bill, it is a serious bill also. This Bill is useful for the country because the world has opened up. Travel has increased a lot. India has vast borders which is spread from Himalayas in North to Indian ocean in South. Since ancient times travel used to take place through sea, land and air. We have Passport Act, 1920 in our country and a special provision relating to entry was incorporated in it in 1950. From time to time several changes were made in the Passport Act but even then it has some shortcomings therefore this Bill has been brought. The main aim of this Bill is that it make the carriers liable in respect of passengers brought by them into India. According to this, a passenger is also required to be in possession of legal document. The immigration authorities posted at various check posts do a thorough checking of the persons coming by different modes of transport whether it is sea or air. In this Bill, it is proposed to impose a penalty of one lakh rupees per person on the carrier which brings passengers without valid travel documents into the country. I would like to point out that this penalty of Rs. 1 lakh is enough, however it may create fear in the mind of people engaged in smuggling

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

of heroin and drugs and prevent them for entering into our country. Suppose a person wants to file an appeal against the penalty of Rs. 1 lakh then there is a provision that either he can appeal before the competent authority notified by the Central Government or before the Civil Authority under Passport Act, 1948 and Foreigners Act, 1946, who will examine his case. After examination, if it is found that the authority has favoured someone or he has any such apprehension then the travellers apprehended can appeal. In this way the spirit of justice has been followed in this Act. As per the principle of Justice, both the parties will be heard and given an opportunity to defend themselves. In this way, he will be able to respect the person appointed by Government of India to recover penalty. This right has been given to the Joint Secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs. Suppose a person does not have Rs. 1 lakh in that case the competent authority may recover the penalty by seizing or obtaining or selling the aircraft or the goods on the ships or the aircraft. In this way it is a comprehensive bill in itself. I feel that it is in national interest. Shri Chennithalaji has also expressed similar view that in reality this bill is useful for the country.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to tell two-three points. Our sea and land borders have been properly guarded and strong measure have been taken in this regard. In our country infiltration takes place through sea, land and air. Sometimes ago arms and ammunition were dropped by some foreign plane in Purulia. This incident is 3-4 years old. Perhaps the hon'ble Members might have remember this. After dropping arms and ammunition that plane flew to Mumbai. Later on they were caught but were freed as a result of intervention by many Governments. Similarly in my region Ajmer also, few days ago a Group of 21 Bangladeshi people we caught. Though at land borders B.S.F. check but what I mean to say is that the check posts installed at the sea and land borders and the immigration officers and security officers posted at these posts should check the authenticity of documents very honestly.

Though we are imposing this kind of restrictions on foreigners even then they enter into our country in collusion with our people. Sometimes it is the weakness of some person. Therefore, such persons should be appointed as Immigration officers who are competent and should not be taking bribe. Through you, I would like to tell one more thing that by imposing a penalty of Rs. 1 lakh the Government has brought all Criminals at par. In this connection, I would like to point out that suppose a person, without valid passport and document, is nabbed with heroin and drugs worth crores of rupees, is a penalty

of Rs. 1 lakh enough for him? In my view, the amount of penalty should be much higher in these cases. Perhaps in other Acts, they may be such provisions. Hon'ble Minister is requested to throw some light on this point. This was my doubt which I have expressed before you. In the end, I would once again like to say that the laws after enactment should be strictly implemented. Some travellers enter the country without documents and cause problem for us. Therefore, laws should be made very stringent in every case irrespective of the status of the MNCs or relation with the foreign countries.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, finally I would like to say that certain agents and middlemen entice Indian citizens in collusion with fake companies and foreign companies and send them to foreign land. You might remember that an Iranian Ship had sunk in which many Indians were also drowned and 40-50 persons were caught in Germany.

In Punjab, Kerala, Maharashtra, Mumbai, Delhi and Rajasthan such gangs are in operation who take thousands of rupees from gullible persons and take them out of the country on fake passports. Proper attentions should be paid, how people with fake passport go out of the country and pass through check points. My request is that restrictions should be put on outsiders and the people of the country as well. This is all I have to say.

[English]

SHRI ABUL HASNAT KHAN (Jangipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, day before yesterday, we had passed a Bill wherein a provision of deterrent punishment for the people to enter into our country without valid documents, has been incorporated. This Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Bill, 2000 is also on the same object and ground. So, I support this Bill.

I think, a provision of deterrent punishment should be incorporated in this Bill for the carriers who are engaged in bringing people into India.

Sir, due to globalisation, the world is coming closer day by day, and people from different countries are coming into India for different purposes. Lakhs of people are coming to India every year. Those people are businessmen, persons associated with industries, agents of multinational companies and corporations, tourists students and so on and so forth.

But, Sir, we have to be very alert to see that in the name of businessmen or tourists or otherwise who are coming into India, there is nobody engaged in the anti-national or subversive activities, and they should not get

entry through this passage. But it is very difficult to identify such persons. So, we have to be very alert.

Sir, a good number of people entering into India with valid documents overstay many a time, and get disappeared. As far as information goes, as of 1999, more than 25,000 such persons have disappeared in India.

They have come from outside but they have disappeared. They seem to be engaged in drug trafficking, trade in illegal arms, subversive activities and anti-national activities. This has become a racket. This has become a threat to our national security. So, identification and deportation of such unauthorised persons is very much necessary.

It is an open secret that corruption in issuing passports and visas is rampant. Touts and many travel agents are involved in this corrupt practice. The international and inter-state fake passport racket is very much active. This should be dealt with seriously.

With these words, I support this Bill.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support this Bill. The Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Bill is in consequence and in support of the Passport Rules, 1950. To travel abroad, a valid passport and a visa are required. But some people travel illegally. Those who are travelling without a passport or a visa are to be punished very severely. If they donot have a passport or a visa, the motive for their arrival into the country would be different.

14.56 hrs.

(SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN *in the Chair*)

They may be coming here for drug trafficking; they may come here for terrorist or other illegal activities. So, it is very necessary that the carriers should check the documents and the genuineness of the passports. It is only then that they should be allowed into the carrier.

Generally, there is an understanding between the carrier and the immigration authorities to get such people into the country. So, not only the carrier but the immigration authorities also have to be vigilantly scrutinised. There should be an authority to act as a check on the immigration authorities who pass their documents. It is a two-sided activity. It is not done by the carriers alone. The immigration authorities collude with them and allow these terrorists into the country. So, the punishment of only Rs. 1 lakh to be paid by the carrier

for carrying each passenger is not enough. You should cancel the permit of the carrier. There should be some deterrent punishment in the rules. It is only then that immigration into the country through illegal means would stop. There should be some penalty on the passenger also. Otherwise, he would himself pay Rs. 5 lakh to the carrier to him into the country. The real answer lies in giving a deterrent punishment to the carrier and a vigilant look on the immigration authorities.

This Bill is the beginning of a process. Perhaps, this is a step in the right direction. I support this step in the right direction. In future, you should think of giving some deterrent punishment of the carriers with a threat to cancel their permits at least for some time if they resort to illegally carrying passengers into our country.

I support this Bill and request the hon. Minister to look into the aspect of giving more deterrent punishment because this Bill permits making of rules also.

15.00 hrs.

While making rules, the Government should think of its power to make rules under Section 8(1), which says that the Central Government may be notification in the Official Gazette make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act. Under this provision, the Government may make rules which will make it much more deterrent for the safety of the country. So, the Government may make such rules which would permit it not to bring illegal persons into our country.

Today we are facing the problem of terrorism which is coming into our country; we see drugs being brought into our country. All those who are bringing them here are not passengers with valid passport or valid visa. No person with dignity would carry these things. Those who are bring drug into our country or weapons into our country are illegal passengers. So, there should be a test check of their passports and their visas. If they are found to be fake, punishment should be given.

We have seen such a case in our own country in the State of Andhra Pradesh. In Hyderabad, it was found the other day that several fake passports were issued by the Passport Authority. Officers including the Passport Officer have been taken to task. Given the conditions prevailing in the country, it is not difficult to produce a passport or a visa. It depends on the attitude of the officers and such officers who are indulging in such activities should also be punished. They should also be taken to task and summarily, they should be dismissed.

[Shri M.V.V.S. Murthi]

So, the Government has to bring such a provision under the purview of this Act or at least, under some other Act. By this, the Government should be able to punish the carrier and the officers responsible for such things. Then only our country will be safe.

With these words, I will conclude. I support the Bill.

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Sivaganga): Respected Chairman, Sir, here I would like to stress only on four points.

The first is regarding the definition of the word 'carrier'. The word 'carrier' is defined with some restrictions. I would like to draw your attention to the definition of that word. When we see the ordinary dictionary meaning of this word, it is very comprehensive. I will read out the dictionary meaning from Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 6th Edition 2000. It says, a 'a company that carries goods or passengers from one place to another'. Encarta Macmillan Special Edition 1999 says, 'transporter of people or goods a person or company whose function or business is to transport things or people from one place to another'.

It is defined here only for the purpose of passengers. Suppose this leaves out goods and suppose along with cargo if any person is also travelling with or without permission, it will be in violation of the Passport Act and also the Passport (Entry into India) Act. Then, they cannot be punished. Therefore, the definition can be very clearly stated. That is, 'transporting passengers and also goods' could be there.

Similarly, in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill, the word 'land' is covered. But in the definition that word is not covered. It talks only about water or air. Therefore, carrier normally means only ships and aircraft. But when we want to punish people who are coming into India from Pakistan, violating the Passport Act and the Passport (Entry into India) Act, one cannot do it. It is because they can come by bus or by train or even by cycle.

They can come by cart. Are they going to be punished or left out? That is the question. That is wide open. There should be some separate Act or this Bill can be made comprehensive to include that also.

The other point is the definition of the word 'person'. According to Section 6 of sub-clause 6 (b),

"Passenger" means any person not being a 'bona fide' member of the crew, travelling or seeking to travel on a vessel or aircraft."

Here also, an unknown passenger who comes without the knowledge of the carrier, owner or anybody else and enters into India is not covered. That should also be looked into. A person is coming without the knowledge of the carrier. For that also the carrier is going to be punished.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to *bona fide* carrier. There should be some exemption for *bona fide* carriers. Suppose a person is coming without the knowledge of the carrier, then he is committing an offence under the Act. Hypothetically, let me give you an example. A traveller comes into the aircraft. Subsequently he missed the passport. Then automatically he is violating the Act. Therefore, he is punishable with five years' imprisonment. But what about the carrier? They have checked in properly. But they would also be punished. For an offence committed by the traveller, the carrier would be punished. Some carriers may be habitually allowing the passengers to travel like this on *mala fide* grounds. They should be punished. But *bona fide* carriers should not be brought within the scope of this Act. There should be some exemption for those carriers.

One after another, plenty of small amendments are brought before the House. The hon. Minister is very vibrant and dynamic. Why can he not bring a comprehensive Act covering Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939, Foreigners Act, 1946, Trading with the Enemy Act, 1947, Foreigners Law, 1962, FEMA, and Immigration (Carriers Liability) Bill. It is because to find out the rules we have to go back to several years. To find out the actual position, we have to go back to several years. There is no comprehensive rule by which a foreigner can find out what he should not do and what he can do. There should be a comprehensive Act for the foreigners so that they can very easily refer to that and come to know about the things about which he should be careful. As far as possible, the Act should be very clear.

I was just submitting that terrorism etc., is a passing phase. We have to concentrate on the future of India and its economy. Plenty of people will be coming to India for trade and there should not be any scope for harassment due to this kind of *ad hoc* legislation and *ad hoc* rule making power of the Executive delegated by this Bill.

15.09 hrs.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Chandigarh): Sir, Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Bill, 2000 intends to make the carriers liable in respect of passengers brought by them into India in contravention of the Passport (Entry

into India) Act, 1920. As my hon. friend said, it is a welcome step but permit me to say that this a half-hearted measure and is not commensurate with the problems that you may have to face with the situation that may confront you because of the changing crime scenario in the world. Nature of crimes that are indulged in today from across the borders, in subtle manner have been referred to by the hon. Members before me and I would not like to repeat those but I certainly would like to refer very briefly to some of the provisions of this Bill which I also feel should have been in the form of a comprehensive Bill encompassing all the relevant laws under one head.

Firstly, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister, which I am sure he is aware of, that it is not only by air or by water that persons are illegally brought into the country. As our experience has shown in the North, the West and in the East, infiltration takes place by land routes also. It is not just that a person walks across the border — though that is also not very difficult to do in certain areas. Organised groups are being arranged to bring people from across the borders into the country in violation of the law of the nation. That should have also been taken care of when we stipulate the modes of transport by water or air. I think we should have included the land routes also.

Clause 3 of the Bill provides for a penalty of Rs. 1 lakh on a carrier who brings any person into the country in violation of the provision of this Bill. Given the situation that I have very briefly adverted to, I think this is not enough. I think given the enormity of the crime which is now committed or given the extent of the monetary consideration which would be involved in bringing people from across the border to India — maybe for drug trafficking, carrying weapons — this penalty of Rs. 1 lakh would not be a deterrent. What happens, if a carrier were to bring an organised group of 20 people into the country? It may be a hypothetical case but you cannot rule out such instances. Very willingly he would like to pay Rs. 1 lakh and go scot-free. Sir, I think the minimum that should have been done was to provide for a minimum period of imprisonment, provided of course certain other conditions are fulfilled and the person is held guilty of the offence. If the carrier is guilty, there should be sentence of imprisonment for him as well. That is what I do want to bring to notice of this august House.

Clause 5 says that where any penalty imposed under this Act is not paid, the competent authority may recover the penalty by seizing or detaining or selling the aircraft or the goods on the ship or the aircraft. Sir, at times one may get to know of the commission of an offence much later. One could certainly ascertain that this was the

aircraft, or the ship, used by the carrier in transporting people but there may be nothing left on the vessel to confiscate. So, I think, there should be a provision that besides two measures it should be open for competent authority to also seize any other goods belonging to that carrier.

That should have been provided for to make it open to the competent authority to take action even after the offence has been committed in cases where the knowledge about the commission of the offence is actually achieved or derived later.

Sir, these are the only observations which I wanted to make. I would only conclude by saying — it is only for the sake of adding emphasis that I repeat it — that today not knowing the unravelling situations that arise, it is necessary that the Government approaches these matters with a sense of vision, learns from the experience, and moves forward with determination. We must visualise all the situations, then tailor the possible responses accordingly which has not been done. I think, though the Bill is a welcome measure, it falls short of expectations. The Government would do well to really give a thought to the entire matter and come forward with a comprehensive piece of legislation.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Chennithala was giving speech over this Bill. He delivered good speech in Hindi for which I congratulate him. He gave impressive speech in Hindi than in English.

After going through this Bill, it is clear that the Government lack intelligence and commonsense. I have reasons for what I say. In the passport Bill passed day before yesterday there is provision of punishment for those who violate the rules. If the hon. Minister has any objection then he should clear as to why the Government is enacting separate law for illegal migration and carrier by sea. The hon. Minister should clarify that why this clause of awarding punishment to the illegal migrants as well as to the carrier who brings any person into the country in violation of the provision of this Bill, was not incorporated in the passport Bill which was passed day before yesterday. Why both the laws were not brought together?

Shri Daroga Prasad Rai was once Chief Minister of Bihar. In his speech, he used to say "laala laaglava palla Khuḷava." which means that law should be enacted to prevent illegal migration. In his speech, the hon'ble Minister has said that 850 people entered into our country.

[Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

Why he is saying so. What is the relevance of your law. Transmigration is taking place unabatedly. It seems as if the law is meant for a law abiding citizen along and the real culprits goes scot free taking advantage of it. The law should be strictly enforced to deal with the rogue elements. He is telling that 850 people entered into our country and he is sternly dealing with the issues. You must give the reply of question No. 1 wherein it was asked as to why both the bills were not brought together.

Shri Bansalji very well knows about law. He says that he has brought a comprehensive Bill which means there will be separate laws for illegal migrants as well as for the carrier. I would like to know why common law is not being enacted for both illegal migrant and the carrier. The terrorists board the plane from Nepal and hijacked it and took the plane to Kandhar from Amritsar. However, the Minister of External Affairs surrendered terrorists. Tell the House what law you have got for this act. The Government is deceiving the people by saying that they are strictly implementing the laws. The Government simply play faux-pass in the name of law. You are the breakers of law. The Minister of this Government visited Kandhar. It is unparalleled in the entire history that no action for more than an hour was taken against the hijackers due to lack of co-ordination among the disaster management bodies. After that when the hijackers flew to Kandhar, the Minister of Civil Aviation and the Minister of External Affairs visited Kandhar and accepted the condition of releasing Militants put forth by the hijackers. This episode was severe blow to the prestige of India in International arena, such is the scenario and the same Government claims to be the Guardian of law by introducing and passing such Legislation in a hasty manner. What sort of Law is being framed....(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): What is Chota Rajan doing?

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Chota Rajan and all other criminals travel wherever and whenever they like. They are continuing their smuggling business that is why arms were dropped in Purulia. It means that all misdeeds are being committed and we are deceiving the Parliament. In their speeches, they say that are taking strict action. Now come to the point. The Bill provides for a penalty of Rs. 1 lakh on a carrier who brings any person into the country in violation of the provision of this Bill. I would like to know whether the penalty of Rs. 1 lakh is enough to put a check on all these illegal activities. A person making quick buck in crores of rupees will not hesitate to pay Rs. 1 lakh as penalty. How can

you prevent him from doing so. It tantamounts to deceiving the people as to claim that we want the bill to be passed at the earliest without any discussion on it. Hon'ble Minister was saying that this Bill should be passed without discussion. I would like to know as to what is the relevance of this House? If the people do not have any knowledge of the law you frame then it is useless to do so. If discussion is not held over it and if it is not disseminated to the common man through media then how can the people be aware of it. Simply saying that we are in majority is not enough. This way you can get all the Bills passed without holding discussion then what is the need of this House. The debates and discussions takes place in the House between the ruling and opposition parties. Is it logical to frame law without holding any discussion and without apprising the people about it. Merely printing the Bill meant for one billion people in the Gazette does not make its dissemination conducive. Bansal Saheb, there is a maxim followed in Court "Ignorance of law is no excuse."

Ignorance of law is no excuse. One who commits sin will be punished. If a judge commits a mistake there is no one to check him but if a common man commits a wrong he is caught and punished.

My third point is—what is the procedure adopted for the publicity of the laws enacted. You merely publish it in the gazette. If Malhotra Brothers publish the Act passed by you and any lawyer obtains a copy and reads it, he will come to know about it. Commonman will have no knowledge of such a law. That's why laws are often violated and you say, "Ignorance of law is no excuse". If one is ignorant about law and violates it, he will be punished. These are basic question which you need to reply, then only we would realise that country is safe in your hands and if you are not in a position to reply it, we would feel that the country is not safe in your hands. We are watching your activities, also the practices you are adopting for passing the Bills. We level charges that you are not enacting appropriate laws to tackle basic problems.

With these words I thank you.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to all those honourable Members who took part in this discussion. I pray that I may please be excused since I was misunderstood. I just gave an example of Rajya Sabha. I welcome the views expressed during this discussion. Several hon'ble Members raised many points. It is a matter of happiness that everyone expressed concern regarding infiltration. Everyone desired

that illegal entry should be checked. Everyone desired comprehensive laws are to be enacted so that security, integrity, sovereignty of our country is ensured. All this is welcome but several hon'ble Members raised issues relating to making of passport and people illegally entering into India.

Objective of this Bill is limited one. In fact, it has been brought to prevent such acts which were committed in its absence. When some people come into our country by air or by ship or vessel without any valid visa or any document, a critical situation arises. Though we welcome outsiders in our country and for this very purpose we promote tourism and thus we need tourists. But it does not mean any unauthorised person, as a smuggler or a terrorist may come here. If a person enters into our country without any authorised document then deporting him back becomes a problem. If we deport him we have to arrange ticket for him from our own resources if he does not have a return ticket. The flight he boarded may have already left, then next flight to his country may be after two or seven days. In such case, immigration authorities will have to keep such person with them for such period and even will have to arrange for meals and other things. The present Bill has been brought to tackle such situations. Now, hereinafter, if any persons comes to our country without any authorised document or valid passport or any travel document, the airline, ship or vessel, he boarded for coming to our country will be held responsible for everything relating to such person. It will be their responsibility to carry out such checks before any person is allowed to board an aeroplane, a ship or a vessel. This Bill has been brought with this purpose. This will provides that an organisation held responsible for such a person will be liable to pay a fine of Rs. 1,00,000. In America and England, similar penalty is imposed in such cases.

Second point was raised regarding enhancing penalty. Well, we have the rule making power but that does not mean we will not control illegal traffic. This Bill has been brought to prevent such traffic. Authorised agencies do not allow illegal traffic. Today there are about 65 such check posts which monitor such traffic. Therefore, there is no need to provide for more stringent laws or provisions.

One of our hon'ble Member has said that any bonafide ship or airlines, which carried out proper checks and still someone evaded all that and managed ticket from outside, should not be held liable for punishment. Even a provision has been made for such a situation. Penalty on the passenger will be imposed.

[English]

After affording reasonable opportunity to the carrier.

[Translation]

Carrier agency will be given proper opportunity to prove that they carried out thorough checks before the journey commenced.

There may be passport which are infact fake but look like genuine one. Holder of such passport may escape attention of checking staff. In such circumstances if carrier agency proves that the passport was of such a nature then the agency will not be liable to be punished. In this regard the decision will be taken by the authority to be appointed for this purpose be it foreign resgistration officers of civil authority appointed by the Government of India. In addition, there is a proviso for filing an appeal before Joint Secretary, a competent authority in Ministry of Home Affairs, within 30 days. Standing Committee has further relaxed this period by another 30 days, if concerned party proves that due to some reasonable reasons the appeal could not be filed within first permissible 30 days or the such reasons were beyond his control. The concerned party should satisfy the competent authority then only relaxation over first 30 days shall be granted.

There are other laws and Acts like Passport Act concerning illegal migrants. One suggestion has come to enact a comprehensive law wherein different provisions are incorporated. The Government will consider it seriously and the competent authority will examine it. I am grateful to all other hon'ble Members who took part in the debate. Shri Bansal dwelt about seizure of ship, vessel or the carrier and disposal thereof. In addition, if the company has no other items then what ever items the company has can be seized and penalty amount be recovered through disposal thereof. This situation will arise if carrier fails to pay penalty at that time. In that case carrier would give Bank Guarantee otherwise the aeroplane will not be allowed to leave and penalty would be recovered from sale proceeds of the aeroplane. Then the need of seizure of other items and auction thereof will not arise. The carrier will either pay penalty or would give Bank Guarantee without which they will not be permitted to go. Thus they would be left with us and necessity of seizure would not arise. The proposed Bill covers air traffic and traffic through ship or vessel but does not include land traffic. Therefore, the present law has a limited purpose. There are checkpost at borders to prevent illegal entry. Their job is to stop illegal entry there itself. Thus, no one is allowed to enter India, so the problem of deportation

[Shri I.D. Swami]

will not arise. Intruders will be stopped at the border itself and pushed back. Therefore, we did not include land aspect in the law. Though the Standing Committee had suggested its inclusion at consideration stage, but when we consulted all other authorities including Civil Aviation the need for it was not felt. Since such person can be prevented from entering Indian territory and compelled to go back. As far as smuggling and narcotics is concerned, it is a matter of happiness that we are cautious about it and I assure you that we will tackle this menace under relevant provisions of various existing laws. Every provision cannot be incorporated under this act. But let me assure you that we take action under various provision of different Acts as the case may be. I am again thankful to you, for drawing my attention towards this too. I was of the view that this was a very simple and innocuous law but many colleagues helped us and showed the way. Therefore, I am again grateful to you. With these words, I again request you all to pass this Bill unanimously.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to make the carriers liable in respect of passengers brought by them into India in contravention of the provisions of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, and the rules made thereunder and matters connected therewith, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill. The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 10 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 10 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

15.37 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE: DISAPPROVAL OF THE CENTRAL ROAD FUND ORDINANCE AND CENTRAL ROAD FUND BILL

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the House would take up Item Nos. 13 and 14 together. Shri Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy.

SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY (Cuddapah): Sir, I move:

"That this House disapproves of the Central Road Fund Ordinance, 2000 (No.5 of 2000) promulgated by the President on 1 November, 2000."

I would like to move this Resolution because the Government, has after passing a Resolution, collected the cess on diesel and petrol in the year, 1998-99, and have started collecting cess on diesel from April, 1999. Since then, we had the Budget Session and the Monsoon Session. The Government did not bother to bring this Bill. We know that this Session is due on 20th of this month, and so the Government hurriedly brought this Ordinance, which is not the right convention. So, we thought it fit to bring this Resolution to disapprove the Central Road Fund Ordinance, 2000. This is only to dissuade the Government from the practice of bringing the Ordinances when the Parliament Session is due in the near future.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) SHRI B.C. KHANDURI): Mr. Chairman, Sir with your permission I would like to say something before I move the Bill....(Interruptions)

[English]

I beg to move:

"That the Bill to give statutory status to the existing Central Road Fund governed by the Resolution of Parliament passed in 1988, for development and maintenance of national highways and improvement of safety at railway crossings, and for these purposes to levy and collect by way of cess, a duty of excise and duty of customs on mother spirit commonly known as petrol, high speed diesel oil and for other matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): We welcome him as Minister.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): As Minister, he is making a maiden speech. We welcome him.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) SHRI B.C. KHANDURI: Thank you.

Sir, the Central Road Fund has been existence from 1929. It was being governed subsequently by a Resolution of Parliament of 1977, as per which 3.5 paise per litre of petrol was to be collected, and to be distributed among the States and Centre in the ratio of 80:20.

This was revised in May, 1988 and it was decided that not less than 5 per cent of the basic cost of petrol and diesel would be set apart for and distributing among the States, Union Territories and the Centre in the ratio of 64:35.5 per cent, 0.5 per cent being kept for the administration of the Fund. However, this decision could not be implemented. This was never implemented because it was under examination and no decision was taken. The amount of money that would have accrued to the States was around Rs. 25 crore to Rs. 30 crore per year as per 1977 resolution.

In 1998-99, the Government decided to levy a cess of one rupee per litre of petrol and in 1999-2000, a cess was levied on diesel also at the same rate, that is, one rupee per litre. The allocation norms for this were also decided and as per the norms, the cess on diesel was to be divided in the ratio of 50:50; 50 paise cess per litre of diesel was to go entirely for the development of the rural roads, that is it would be given to States and the amount would be used by them in consultation with the Centre. The balance of 50 paise cess per litre of diesel and the full cess of one rupee per litre on petrol would be pooled together and its distribution would be like this, that is, 30 per cent of this would go to the States for the development of State Highways and other roads in the States, 12.5 per cent would go to the Railways for construction of overhead bridges and manning of unmanned level crossings so that road safety is improved and smooth flow of traffic is ensured on the Highways. Then, the remaining 57.5 per cent was to be utilised for the development and maintenance of the National Highways. This was the proposal made. The total allocation under this formula is Rs. 5,800 in 2000-01 for the Centre including Rs. 990 for the States. Earlier, the States were getting about Rs. 25 crore to Rs. 30 crore per year, but now they will be getting Rs. 990 crore per year.

Now, a very valid point has been made by the hon. Member, Shri Y.S. Vivekanand Reddy that we have issued an Ordinance for this purpose. I entirely agree with the hon. Member that it is not good to issue an Ordinance when the Parliament is about to meet. But I would like to submit that we were required to issue this Ordinance in order to give statutory status to the Central Road Fund so that it could be distributed to States immediately. We wanted it to distribute funds to the States immediately because the working season was on, the rainy season was just over, the roads needed repairs and, so, money was required to be distributed immediately. If we had not issued this Ordinance and come to the House to pass this Bill, it would have taken time. As I have mentioned, we have already allotted Rs. 325 crore out of Rs. 990 crore to the States during the month of November. Many Chief Ministers have met me in this connection and I have informed them about the distribution of money. They are very happy that they can start using this fund immediately. Therefore, this was the reason for which we had promulgated this Ordinance. I would request the House to see the intention behind issuing this Ordinance, because it was done purely to start using this Fund, so that the whole process is not delayed.

Sir, with your permission, I now move that the Central Road Fund Bill be taken into consideration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motions moved:

"That this House disapproves of the Central Road Fund Ordinance, 2000 (No. 5 of 2000) promulgated by the President on 1 November, 2000."

"That the Bill to give statutory status to the existing Central Road Fund governed by the Resolution of Parliament passed in 1998, for development and maintenance of national highways and improvement of safety at railway crossings, and for these purposes to levy and collect by way of cess, a duty of excise and duty of customs on motor spirit commonly known as petrol, high speed diesel oil and for other matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

15.44 hrs.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Bill which has come before the House, through an Ordinance, deserves, at least, our support because we looked forward for such a legislation for a long time. I remember a dear friend of mine, Shri Rajesh Pilot, who is no more with us now, who gave a very serious thought to this issue. He raised this matter many times in the House and argued in favour of such a

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

legislation in the party forum also. At the outset, I would request the hon. Minister to think very sincerely in terms of our target and requirement.

We do have a Plan target in every Plan year between the States and the Centre. In the meeting of the National Development Council, we prepare a target and go ahead. We have also additional requirements which we meet through the Budget of the Ministry of Rural Development.

As I understand it, against clause 7, you say:

"The Fund shall be utilised for the —

- (i) development and maintenance of national highways;
- (ii) development of the rural roads;
- (iii) development and maintenance of other States and roads including roads of inter-State and economic importance;
- (iv) construction of roads either under or over the railways by means of a bridge and erection of safety works at unmanned rail-road crossings; and
- (v) disbursement in respect of such projects as may be prescribed."

Now, as you have just now stated, the share in revenue would be around Rs. 985 crore for the States and a little over Rs. 5,000 crore in your hands. Very recently, the Godkari Commission had given its Report to the Ministry of Rural Development. We do not know the factual position because nothing has been disclosed in the Parliament. That Report also says that in every Block, the rural road connectivity, that is, a road of an international standard and size, shall be looked into. Since the Report was given, I do not know what action has been taken or what programme has been adopted.

Now, under the Rural Road Development Programme also, we are told that not less than Rs. 2,500 crore are placed at the disposal of the Department of Rural Development. There is a debate going on as to how that money should be distributed. Some Members of the House feel that they are getting Rs. 2 crore under the MPLAD Programme and that is a meagre amount. Instead of burdening the Exchequer for more money for the MPLAD Programme, whether a road in one of the rural development projects in each constituency of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha be projected before this Government for sanction from the Rural Development Fund which will be augmented for the road connectivity. It can help the Government.

There is another point of view that each district should be given a sizeable amount of money and the *Panchayats* in a district shall formulate a plan out of that fund.

Now, you say that rural development programme will come under the State Governments and they would spend from Rs. 985 crore for some programme and plan in regard to that.

While you talk about the rural road development, there is no clear definition which district will get the priority. Would these be backward districts? There are also districts having different kinds of terrain, like the hilly terrain. There are also districts where systematic drought has made them to be shown as drought-prone like the Jaisalmer District of Rajasthan. So, it would have been more appropriate if the priority would have been mentioned as to which are the rural roads which will get priority in terms of their present classification. However, I understand that all that cannot be explained in the Act itself. It requires an understanding of the States and the Centre.

But I would like to seek a clarification from the hon. Minister. While he says about the development of the rural roads, does it mean this from fund? Does it mean some other fund — tagged with this fund — at the disposal of the State Government so that we can understand what role we shall play in this regard as Members of the public in our respective States and the constituencies?

The other point stated by the hon. Minister in the Bill is about the construction of roads either under or over the railways by means of a bridge which you call road overbridge. The road-overbridge programmes are normally being sanctioned by the Railways with the support of the State Governments because they are the authorities to encroach upon the land and make an approach road, etc. I understand from your statement and the provisions of the Act that now if the Ministry of Railways approves a road overbridge, the connecting road of that bridge or the approach road should also be managed from this fund. Will the Ministry ask for funds from the State Government within that amount of Rs. 985 crore or will the Ministry get a separate fund from your Department which is the Central Pool over and above Rs. 5,000 crore? That point also has got to be clarified while you reply so that we understand that when you submit a proposal to the Ministry of Railways, where should we run for the part — to the State Government or the foolproof part, that is, the Union Government?

Similar is the case of unmanned level crossings. Thousands of thousands of unmanned level crossings,

throughout the length and breadth of the country, are causing lot of harassment and accident, etc. The Railway Ministry took a unique proposal that if one MP agreed to provide support for one unmanned level crossing to a manned level crossing, the Railways will provide another one as an incentive.

As far as the road management is concerned, I would like to ask again whether these funds will be shifted to the State and the Railway will have to initiate to the State or some part of the money on demand of Railways will be shifted to Railways or who will support the road overbridge. That point also needs to be clarified.

15.51 hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER in the Chair)

The most important gap is in 7(v). This is where, I think, the discretion of the Government is applied, 'Disbursement in respect of such projects as may be prescribed.' Who will prescribe — the State or his Ministry? If they say the State will prescribe and they say that they would not do that, there will be a State-Centre confrontation. So, it would be better if there is a clarity. Now with regard to 'such other projects which are prescribed by the State', either they say 'by the State' or they say 'such other States which will be prescribed by them consulting the Planning Commission.' Otherwise, nobody knows, whose share is it. Where will it come? This also requires a kind of clarity in so far as Clause 7 is concerned.

Now, I come to management aspect. It deals with Section 9 (i) and also Section 10 — Functions of the Central Government. I will not go into the details of this clause. Powers of the management of the Central Road Fund are there. What is happening actually? Now, Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev will speak after me. He is from one part of the country. We have heard that from Saurashtra to Silcher, a very long four-lane road is proposed to be built at the behest of the Surface Transport Ministry. It is the Prime Minister's declaration. I found that some part of the road was being planned and Silcher to Saurashtra means a substantial part of it will have to go from my constituency. I was told that the work had started and suddenly some instructions had gone and the work is stopped. All the old banyan and other trees are got uprooted and taken away. The road was expanded, local villagers were involved to broaden the road and suddenly it was stopped.

I would like to know has the scheme got abandoned or has the money flow stopped or has something else happened. I would request the hon. Minister to explain that point also because it will provide strong infrastructure to entire North-East and East so far as the future of

economy of our country is concerned. Road is one of the important points where the future of our economic development rests.

In West Bengal, I remember, there is one road, that is, Express Highway Panagarh to Morga. I personally happened to be there many a times. It is one of the unique models made by some company and it is one of the unique roads I found, though in the recent floods that also got damaged. If similar kind of Express Highway type of roads where it can carry containers in two lanes and buses carrying passengers in other two lanes can be accommodated in a bigger dimension, East West, North and South. I may like to inform you that the investment opportunities of the companies, about whom we are all shouting in seminars will be more and infrastructural attraction will be more effective and economic development will be more than what we are expecting now.

Therefore, this Department of his Desk and this concept of this Bill and the augmentation of resources, if not merely linked to repair and management, have a longer vision and will provide a positive infrastructure for the country. So, we are supporting this Bill, especially for that count. But in terms of sharing the money, I would plead that if they could share some more resources after a review with the State, it would be better. Because the States have got to manage their State Express Highways.

The States have got to look after the Panchayat rural roads. The States have got to take care of the requirements of the old roads of PWD. Having taken altogether, hardly there will be anything left in the State coffers for planning any bigger road, that is State highways, where the State on their will decide and say, 'this is my priority'. Therefore, I feel that you can review the position in regard to Resource Division part, not now but later on, and give a little more share to the States so that the States will be competent enough and confident enough to plan their own action. With this money, hardly in a year or five years, they cannot think of one or two major express highways. If the States get strength, build up their own plan of action with this fund, then, I think, that will give more strength to infrastructure.

I conclude by saying that please strengthen the National Highway Authority. I tell you that it is in shamble. I belong to a constituency, where the national highway becomes the casualty every year due to floods. The National Highway Nos. 33, 34, and 35 are the lifeline of Sikkim, the lifeline of the entire North-East, bordered with Bangladesh for border trade, bordered with Nepal for border trade, and bordered with Bhutan for border trade.

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

Every flood destroys these highways and the DM becomes helpless. The National Highways Authority people hardly come. I approached 20 times. I found nobody there, no officer was there, and only a guesthouse. When I carried a paper with the DM, no one was there to acknowledge that paper. Therefore, kindly make a Zone. For every State where the National Highway is operating, there should be a Zone to look after and respond to the issues in consultation with the State Government. Otherwise, PWD people will say, "This is not our task. We cannot encroach upon the National Highway Authority." The District Collectors also will say, "We cannot encroach upon the National Highway Authority." Then, where do we go? We cannot explain to the people. The National Highway Authority is under your control. This is my last request.

At the end, I would like to say that while awarding contracts, tenders and other things, please do not look into any political consideration, give it to the best companies with best specifications, who can do the job well. I gave you one example, Panagarh Express Highway of Bengal. I am not pleading for 'A' company or 'B' company but you give to the best and highly sophisticated companies, who would be able to do well....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Only one hour has been allotted to this Bill. You have already taken 15 minutes.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, this Bill cannot be passed within one hour. The entire House will agree with me. Every Member will agree with me....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: In the BAC meeting, we have allotted one hour for this Bill.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: After allotting one hour to this Bill in the BAC meeting, the members shouted at me, "Why have you agreed for only one hour? This is the Road Bill — Rs. 5,000 crore."

With these words, I conclude and thank the Minister for his good journey in the Ministry. As he ran in the battlefield as a Major General, in the battle of infrastructure also, he will succeed.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) SHRI B.C. KHANDURI): Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Kharabela Swain.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, I rise to support the Central Road Fund Bill, 2000. As everybody

knows, road constitute a vital part of the infrastructure like telecommunication, ports, airports and railways. So, it is a vital part of the infrastructure.

I am very happy that at last the Government of India has come forward with such a proposal thorough a Bill, which will provide the most needed thing for the construction of roads. The most needed thing for the construction of roads is money.

Sir, for the last 53 years, the roads in this country are in appalling state. In a single year, the collection of cess from petrol, and collection of cess from diesel has come to about Rs. 6,000 crores....(Interruptions)

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Now, it is four o'clock. We have to take up the Discussion under Rule 193. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am also looking at the clock.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, the way you are looking at the clock, I get frightened.

MR. SPEAKER: You can continue next time.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Sir, what about this Bill?

MR. SPEAKER: It will be taken up later.

15.59 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

LOSS OF LIVES AND PROPERTY DUE TO FLOODS, DROUGHT AND OTHER NATURAL CALAMITIES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the discussion regarding loss of lives and property due to floods, drought and other natural calamities in various parts of the country under Rule 193 has been admitted in the name of Sarvashri Rupchand Pal and Ajoy Chakraborty. They have requested me to allow Shri Somnath Chatterjee to raise the discussion on their behalf. I have allowed Shri Somnath Chatterjee to raise the discussion.

16.00 hrs.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you and to the other hon. Members of this House for the indulgence and accommodation shown to me for initiating this important discussion.

I rise to initiate this debate on an extremely grave national issue. I hope and trust that this will not be treated as a mere routine matter or a matter of any particular State or a particular Party. Even when we are discussing, after the motion has been adopted, today we have seen how the people of Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu have been affected by the recent tornado or heavy rains. They are experiencing a very serious natural calamity. We sympathise with the people of those States. I shall join the hon. Members to raise the matter and in their demand for greater Central assistance for meeting the relief and rehabilitation work. As a nation, we should be deeply concerned that every year more than once, one or more States of this country are suffering of serious natural calamities of different intensities and some of which are also of rare severity. We are losing very valuable national assets. Vast areas are devastated due to these calamities. Crores and crores of rupees worth properties are damaged or destroyed. Lakhs of people are rendered homeless. People are dying due to floods or drought. Some cases are also of earthquakes resulting in, apart from loss of national assets, utmost human privation and misery.

We were talking just now of construction of roads. Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmuni rightly mentioned that because of the floods valuable roads, for which a lot of money has been spent, are being destroyed. He mentioned just now the road from Panagarh to Moregram which is very well constructed by a Mumbai concern, AFCONS. It is part of my constituency. I have been looking into this. It is one of the finest constructions made by a very able contractor. I must openly admit that. It was built with the Asian Development Bank funds available to them. Even that very well constructed road has been damaged severely because of the fury of the floods. I will ask my hon. friends here to please go and see. Then you will realise what was the fury of the floods.

We have seen the telecom services getting totally disrupted; electricity lines are snapped; houses are destroyed; and huge numbers of people are becoming homeless. The schools and hospitals are damaged. This is not the experience of my State or my area. I am afraid, probably, most of my hon. friends in one part of or the other of the country have had such traumatic experience. It may be now I am suffering.

Today Pondicherry has joined us, Tamil Nadu has joined us and our very distinguished friends in Andhra Pradesh had also experienced it.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikulam): We have had the experience.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: You, you had the experience of the Orissa super cyclone. And I have the distinction of joining Shri Yerranna in demanding some special assistance from the Centre for him. No doubt, I am not trying to score any debating points. I am mentioning all these things because sometimes a narrow vision is taken. I am not blaming talking of anybody particularly. It is treated as if it is a matter of a particular State. But this is happening.

And we have also seen now that another serious danger is taking place and many States are suffering, and that is the havoc that is created by soil erosion. Even frontiers of district are being altered, borders are being altered, deforestation resulting in soil erosion also, siltation of the river beds, these are very serious problems which cannot be dealt with as a mere party issue or a State issue. That is my humble submission.

But it is always generally said that it is the State Governments which are responsible because it is the Governments which are in the field. Therefore, the question of providing relief is the responsibility of the State Governments. Rehabilitation of the affected people, restoration and re-construction has also to be undertaken by the State Government. No doubt, Constitutionally it is their responsibility.

But the Finance Commission, which is a Constitutional body has realised that it was impossible for any State in this country to bear those financial obligations. Therefore, the States, although they have this primary responsibility they hardly have the wherewithals to meet the expenses required for providing urgent relief etc; and because the States find that the burden is unbearable, that is why, everybody is running to Delhi. When Parliament is on, we raise it here. We go to the Prime Minister and we ask for assistance. We hold demonstrations. We are supporting each other in this. There was a most unanimous view on this. The Members of this highest body agreed that this is a matter which cannot be treated as a pure and simple State matter. The States do need substantial funds.

It is quite proper to keep in mind that from the Second Finance Commission onwards it has been one of the terms of reference of the Finance Commissions that they should make provision as to how to meet the expenses for natural calamities. It was realised, even when the Second Finance Commission was constituted that we were not able to get rid of natural calamities. Some may be avoided, some cannot be avoided like earthquakes. Latur was devastated. How could it be avoided. There are some, may be peripherally some

[Shri Somnath Chatterjee]

protection might have been there. But these are not under anybody's control. Therefore, when such situations occur, they find that it is a daunting task for any State Government and then they rush to Delhi and ask for Central assistance. Otherwise, for no fault of the state or the people of that State they are seriously prejudiced, and the progress, the development achieved or undertaken within say, five years or ten years, could be washed away in two days or one day. Their whole achievements or developments are destroyed. It is not easy in this country to construct roads, to construct houses, buildings, hospitals but it will take a few minutes or a few hours for them to get destroyed and then wherefrom will the money come?

Unfortunately, if we consider the country as a whole such calamities are coming with frightening regularity. Even in one year or more than once, some States are suffering this problem. At least in some States almost every year and in some of the states even more than once a year they occur.

In that situation, the question necessarily arises as to how to meet this as a national cause.

Sir, we are discussing in the highest forum of our country. We are discussing this in a forum, which is the highest forum. My appeal to all sections of the House is that as we treat this as a national issue, we should try to take an all-India view as to how to come to the rescue of the persons, who are all Indian citizens. They are our brothers and sisters. No one should gloat over others' misery. I am not saying that anybody is doing it. Nobody can remain aloof in somebody else's misery.

Sir, the conscience of the whole country was roused when the super cyclone hit Orissa because destruction of such magnitude was almost unparalleled. As Members of Parliament, we, responded. Many of us have even donated Rs. 10 lakh out of our MPLADS's Fund. I made a similar appeal. Now, I request my friends also to kindly respond, if possible.

Therefore, these are the matters, which should be treated in that sense. But, today, I may be excused for dealing with the recent devastation by floods that has taken place in West Bengal, which is of rarest severity, caused by incessant and unprecedented rainfall which took place for four days. Though I have got the figures, I do not wish to burden anybody with those figures. I have got all the official figures — figures of the Government of India and of the State Government. It is one of the most devastating floods with heaviest rainfall in nearly hundred years. Not only West Bengal, but our

border State Bihar also suffered seriously. Nobody else will know it better than our esteemed hon. Minister for Agriculture, Shri Nitish Kumar. Consequent upon the development of low pressure over the Bihar Plateau, there was very heavy precipitation of high density. ...*(Interruptions)* Now, Jharkhand, parts of Bihar....*(Interruptions)* 'Yes', we congratulate the Jharkhand, but we are not happy that Jharkhand faces such problems....*(Interruptions)* Then, we have to stand by them and stand by Bihar and stand by Jharkhand also.

Sir, between 18th and 20th September, for 96 hours, there were incessant rains in the Mayurakshi basin itself during four days. The total rainfall in the uncontrolled catchments between Massanjore Dam and Tilpara Barrage exceed 1000 mm in 96 hours. Even when the annual rainfall is around 500 to 600 mm, in four days, the rainfall was 1,000 mm. Birbhum district recorded rainfall between 1050 and 1480 mm, which is much above the annual average rainfall. Murshidabad district — Shri Adhir Chowdhary is always trying to catch hold of me—his district recorded extraordinarily high rainfall of about 1200 mm during these four days causing complete inundation of the river level of Bhagirathi and Jalangi which rose to 11.93 meters which is 2.88 meters above the extreme danger level. As a result of these, ultimately, Nabadwip and Krishnanagar—my friend Shri S.B. Mukherjee is here, he represents it — and all Block Headquarters in Murshidabad in Nadia were totally inundated.

As we know, river Ajoy originates from Bihar....*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): It is in my constituency.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Well, you are also sending excess water to me, but I have no quarrel on that.

Sir, in a single day, river Ajoy rose by four metre! As a result of it, all the embankments were over-topped, as they say in their language. Damodar-Barakar Basin also received the heaviest rainfall in living memory during those days. Therefore, we are saying that such rainfall caused floods of rare severity and the misery that has been faced by the people has been almost of monumental proportions.

I am thankful to the Ministry of Agriculture that they forthwith sent a team - much sooner this year than other years. The Joint Secretary who visited the State, heading a team of Central officers, described the flood situation

as very serious. The Prime Minister himself described that this has caused serious national loss. The hon. Agriculture Minister himself visited the State. We deeply appreciated it. Our then Chief Minister expressed his gratitude to him and described the flood as a severe one. The Minister is here. I have got it from the papers. He said that the national level help was needed to tackle the situation. I am grateful to him for his endorsement.

One hon. Minister said on the floor of this House that the flood was due to very heavy rainfall, both in quantity and intensity, never recorded before. She said it on the floor of this House on the 22nd of November. Between 18th and 23rd September, the total rainfall in Ajoy Basin was 1,040 mm, in Mayurakshi catchment area it was 1,224 mm and in Damodar Basin it was 529 mm. Bhagirathi Basin was over-flooded as it received discharges from its tributaries many times more than its carrying capacity. The embankments of all the rivers breached by over-topping. All the details have been given here. The hon. Minister also said that the floods caused by the rainfall of such high intensity in a short span of time, as during the current year, is difficult to predict and prevent.

It has also been said in the leading national dailies that it has been a national disaster. The *Indian Express* says that the State has suffered an enormous human calamity and the loss of lives and property has been of staggering magnitude. 2.18 crores of people in 171 Blocks and 68 Municipalities are affected. 1,320 people have lost their lives in nine out of seventeen districts of the State which have been affected. The cattle death has been about 83,630. The number of cattle affected is 31 lakhs plus. 19.20 lakh hectares of crop area of an estimated value of Rs. 3,866 crore have been affected. 21,94,858 houses of the estimated value of Rs. 438.97 crore have been damaged or destroyed. We had almost been cut-off. Communications had been disrupted very seriously, National Highways became non-negotiable, railway lines were uprooted — even now it has not been normalised in spite of efforts — and there was no connection between north and south Bengal at all. The estimated damage is of the order of Rs. 5,660 crore.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the State did take recourse to immediate relief and rescue operations. Twenty-nine thousand and seventy three relief camps were opened. I have got these figures also from the Ministry of Agriculture's note. Forty eight lakh people were rescued. Air-dropping of food articles was effected and Army help was requisitioned immediately. I personally know that in my constituency the fury of the flood water was so much that the Army men had to come back as they

could not even reach the place. Even the Army helicopters could not reach the places because of the inclement weather and also could not find dry places to drop the food articles. One day they came back saying — 'Sorry, we cannot do it.'

Civil Defence pressed into operation 50 speed boats along with 3,000 country boats. About 10 lakh pieces of tarpaulins have been distributed and 12 crore halogen tablets were provided to purify the drinking water. Sir, whatever may be the criticism — I am happy to say that only 58 deaths have taken place due to diarrhoea and some enteric diseases which is even less than the normal figure. Sixty two thousand metric tonnes of rice have been distributed as special G.R. and the State Government has already incurred an expenditure of Rs. 583 crore out of its own resources.

I am sorry that I have to tax your patience by reading out these figures only to show the magnitude of the damage, the magnitude of the suffering and the large number of people and areas which have been affected which required massive funds, massive efforts - coupled with massive funds - for the purpose of reconstruction and restoration and rehabilitation also.

Therefore, necessarily and naturally from the very first day the State Government has been asking for funds. I am sorry to say one thing here. Hon. Minister Shri Nitish Kumar is here and there is no doubt that he will reply to this discussion. No effort was made to provide any assistance and whatever was provided was out of our, the State Government's normal allocation except the Calamity Relief Fund. Sir, I will come to the C.R.F. immediately because I will take a few minutes only to deal with that.

An amount of Rs. 101 crore is allocated to West Bengal under the Calamity Relief Fund out of which 25 per cent has to be provided by the State and 75 per cent has to be provided by the Centre. Only that amount has been given which is due to the State under compulsion, under the Constitution, as per the Finance Commission's report which has been accepted by the Government. Not a single paise has been given. I am not making any ground of it. Mr. Minister, I am not making any complaint. A State Government — whichever State it may be — has to pay even for the use of the Army. They have to pay for the helicopters. They have to pay for the Army boats. All the charges have to be paid. Naturally, these bills are coming in. I do not know actually whether they have been paid or not uptill now.

After all these figures have been taken account, the State demanded for immediate relief of Rs. 1,586 crore

[Shri Somnath Chatterjee]

for the purpose of meeting the essential expenses out of which only Rs. 101 crore has been paid and it is — as I said earlier — out of the C.R.F. which is not a special relief.

Sir, I have got here the report of the Eleventh Finance Commission. I will take only a few minutes more. The Calamity Relief Fund was constituted after the Ninth Finance Commission made a recommendation to that effect. Earlier the State Governments were to provide what is called 'margin money' against which funds were to be raised. But that system was discontinued and the Calamity Relief Fund, under the decision of the Tenth Finance Commission was established separately for each State on the basis of the recommendations of the Ninth Finance Commission.

Sir, there is a total estimate here. As I have mentioned, a sum of Rs. 101 crore was allocated for West Bengal. The Report of the Eleventh Finance Commission says:

"The Ninth Finance Commission mooted a near fundamental change in this approach, by recommending creation of a Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for each State to which the Centre and the State were to contribute in a ratio of 75:25 and by doing away with different forms of Central assistance, requirement of the visits of the Central Team to States etc."

It further says:

"It is the primary responsibility of the States to incur necessary expenditure on the immediate relief whenever a natural calamity occurs. To role of the Centre is to provide supplementary assistance to the States as it may not be possible for a State to immediately come forward with sufficient funds to meet natural calamities which occur suddenly and with intensity."

Again, at page 91, para 9.22 says:

"This does not, however, mean that a calamity of rare severity should be left to be attended by the States from their own resources alone. The super cyclone in Orissa (October, 1999) and the drought prevailing currently in some States, are a pointer to the fact that a State faced with a severe natural calamity will not be able to provide relief to the affected area and the population all alone, and will depend on the assistance from other States and the Central Government. In a situation like this, the decisions will necessarily have to be made on an emergent basis without waiting for an assessment of the damage by a Central team followed by confabulation in an Inter-Ministerial Group and decision by NCRC."

Sir, what happened after the Tenth Finance Commission? Apart from CRF, they made a provision for what is known as NFCR, National Fund for Calamity Relief, under the Ministry of Agriculture to provide assistance to the States affected by natural calamity of rare severity. It held the view that if a calamity of rare severity occurs, it should be dealt with as a national calamity. I am humbly trying to place this before this august House that if a calamity of rare severity occurs, it should be dealt with as a national calamity and it requires additional assistance and support from the Central Government beyond what is envisaged under the CRF scheme. This is the recommendation of the Tenth Finance Commission. The Tenth Finance Commission followed this principle. This principle has also been followed by the Eleventh Finance Commission. It has been accepted by the Government.

Sir, the Eleventh Finance Commission has said that this NFCR has not been very successful because no specific allocation was made for NFCR. That is why, there was no accumulation of funds in NFCR. Now, the Eleventh Finance Commission has changed the position. This is very important. They say that this National Calamity Contingency Fund will have to be constituted by the Central Government with initial funding of Rs. 500 crore by the Centre so that the money is readily available because you cannot expect the State Government to meet the expenses. Immediate relief is necessary and cannot wait for a Central team to go and have confabulations, if I quote the language of the Eleventh Finance Commission. Sir, this was a very important suggestion which was made.

It was also provided:

"That a National Centre for Calamity Management of the Ministry of Agriculture be established to monitor all types of national calamities including calamities of rare severity without any specific reference from the Central or the State Government. The Centre should be empowered to make recommendation to the Central Government as to whether a calamity is of such severe nature.

Any financial assistance provided by the Central Government to the States in this regard should be recouped by levy of a special surcharge on the Central tax, and not to be deducted from the allocation under the Planning Commission."

This is the difference. Earlier, whatever fund was given was adjusted against one or the other funds available to the State.

"Collections from such a surcharge should be kept in a separate fund created in the Public Account of the Central Government to which it should contribute Rs. 500 crore as the initial core amount. Outgo from this fund should be recouped by levy of the surcharge."

Sir, when this resort was submitted before this House, the Government of India had to give an explanatory memorandum as the Constitution, requires. In this Action Taken Note of 27th of July, 2000, today is 30th of November, it has said:

"The Central Government's responsibility does not get restricted to the availability of the amount in the CRF as indeed has been shown during 1995-2000 when the Central Government released Rs. 2,500 crore from NCFR.

Please see the Action Taken Note of the Government of India, Ministry of Finance.

Instead, the Commission has recommended that the Central assistance to the States in national calamities should be financed by levy of a special surcharge on the Central taxes for a limited period. A surcharge can also instil a feeling of national participation for a national cause. Collections from such surcharge should be kept in a separate fund to be known as 'National Calamity Contingency Fund' created in the Public Account of the Government of India.

The Commission has also recommended that the Government of India should contribute an initial crore amount of Rs. 500 crore to this fund so that the funds for initial operations are readily available. However, drawals from the fund should be accompanied by imposition of the special surcharge etc."

Sir, at para 12 of this Action Taken Note or Explanatory memorandum as they call, it says,

"The Government has accepted the above recommendations of the Commission. The recommendation concerning the National Calamity Contingency Fund will be implemented after necessary legislation is enacted."

Sir, apparently, this is now creating a problem, that is, the explanation given from Prime Minister downwards is, "What can we do"? In September, when our calamity came, what we call a rarest, of severe magnitude, immediately requests were made. As a matter of fact, our former Chief Minister Shri Jyoti Basu sent a request to the hon. Prime Minister. Although we are ordinarily

opposed to Ordinances, this is a case where an Ordinance should have been passed because the House would not sit till November. No action has been taken on that. So many Ordinances have been converted into Acts of Parliament everyday; even today, two Ordinances have been passed. So, we do not understand this. What happened is that the Government of India totally ignored a very serious recommendation which is of a national importance. This is not for West Bengal or Andhra Pradesh or Orissa. This is for every State, for the whole country. Can we prevent natural calamities taking place by refusing to pass the legislation? Just because we do not pass an Ordinance, will rainfall not come, will floods not come, and will typhoons and tornadoes not come? What is happening today? Our brothers and sisters of Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu are facing it today.

16.35 hrs.

(DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*)

Sir, this is a criminal neglect. I charge this Government. Their people say as to how they could pass an Ordinance when Parliament is to sit soon. This is what they say when two crore and eighteen lakh people are involved; so many people in Bihar are involved, huge damages and destruction have taken place; people are homeless and national properties have been totally destroyed. To say that because the House will sit in November and we cannot pass an Ordinance — that was the apprent excuse that was given — is a deliberate neglect, a criminal neglect, if not an unfriendly act towards the people of West Bengal.

Sir, I know my friends will immediately get upset. But we felt that because of the pressure from one of the important allies of this Government who described this as a man-made flood — this has, of course, been denied by the hon. Ministers — all sorts of alleged impropriety are taking place. Therefore, it has not been refused on that ground. I can only say that it is the height of irresponsibility to allege that this is a 'man-made' flood. I repudiate this with all sense of seriousness and sincerity and appeal to my friends on all sides of this House not to play with the lives of the people. We have got our political battles to fight. Nobody is saying that we should surrender to others. But this is a question of alleviating the miseries of the people of one of the States in this country. I demand that Pondicherry must get the relief; the State of Tamil Nadu must get the relief. It is not for us alone that we are saying this. But what have they said?

[Shri Somnath Chatterjee]

Sir, as you know that the States get money from the Centre under four heads, namely, one is for the division of taxes under the Constitution and second is the provision under the Planning Commission for providing Revenue Deficit Grant. Here, we had taken about Rs. 2000 crore by way of 'ways and means' provision. Within one week that was adjusted against revenue deficit grant of Rs. 400 crore for which an interest had to be paid on Rs. 200 crore. I do not know whether the interest is more important than human lives.

Sir, you would remember that a few days back we had held a demonstration in front of the Parliament House building. Ordinarily, I agree and I concede that it should not be done. But here is a case where the people are suffering and the State Government alone cannot obviously meet the expenses. People have to be protected; houses have to be built; roads have to be constructed and hospitals have to be re-constructed. But then there was total silence and callousness on the part of the Central Government towards meeting the necessary expenses.

Sir, I am obliged to the non-NDA Parties in this House. They also participated and joined us in the demonstration. It was not taken as a mere West Bengal cause. I do not wish to make it a West Bengal cause only. West Bengal provides only a very grim example of the situation, a recent example of very grim consequences. We were very happy that it was being felt as a national cause. So many political Parties joined us in the demonstration. I can understand the compulsions of Shri Yerrannaidu. He could not have done it without a clearance from Hyderabad. But at least he said on the floor of the House that he supports our demand. I am sure, Shri Vaiko also does it.

Sir, we met the hon. Prime Minister with a representation signed by 70 Members of Parliament from different Parties. I know some of our friends from West Bengal also wanted to sign it but they could not sign it. I know their compulsions.

Sir, this is a matter which has to be looked into very seriously. The Government of India owes an explanation to the people of this country as to why it was not done. Why till today no Bill has been presented in Parliament? Hon. Prime Minister expressed his helplessness in the absence of a law. He said that if surcharge was imposed, there would be difficulties. The Government has accepted the proposal. If Government cannot implement it, let it find out some other method of providing assistance! If it neither passes a law nor provides any other method to provide assistance, who are the targets? Targets are the common people of West Bengal because they have been

supporting a Government which is not to their liking. We have not every grugged - we have strongly supported on the floor of the House - grant of additional fund to Orissa, grant of additional fund to Andhra Pradesh, and even the demand for additional fund for Gujarat which is suffering from drought. Half of Gujarat is now under drought. They need the money. Madhya Pradesh is also facing severe problems. Are we going to treat it as a political issue, a partisan issue, or as a national issue? Shall we treat the residents of some other State to be our enemies because they happen to support some other political party in their State? Where will be unity in India and what will remain of India as a country then?

I appeal again and again to the Government of India. It has the wherewithals. It has accepted the recommendations of the Finance Commission. It has undertaken to provide assistance before this House. An Explanatory Memorandum has been filed in the House saying, 'will be implemented after necessary legislation.' Why no legislation is passed? Even today, I am told that the hon. Finance Minister has informed the State Finance Minister that action is being taken to frame a legislation. This Session will continue till 22nd of this month. I do not know on which date he will come with that legislation. It will have to go to the other House, President's signature will have to be obtained, and then the Government would start looking for money.

I respectfully submit that this is a matter which cannot be ignored any longer. Along with this we have been suggesting that a long-term action has to be taken. The riverbeds have come up. Deforestation is taking place. Dr. Sarkar was the Chairman of Calcutta Port Trust. He was running here all the time to get money for dredging of the Calcutta port. He knows what the problems are. If you come to my constituency, Shri Nitish Kumar, you will be able to see. You can come to Santiniketan....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): I undertook aerial tour.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): You have become a high flier, Mandir wala, and have gone away from realities.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Riverbed of Ajoy, which comes partly from Jharkhand and partly Bihar, is almost on the same level as its banks.

[Translation]

DR. BIKRAM SARKAR (Panskura): Were you not defeated in Jhadavpur.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: You were also defeated once.

[English]

DR. BIKRAM SARKAR: I never lost from there. Sir, he is giving wrong information.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Okay, it is withdrawn. You lost to your leader. She did not file nomination.

DR. BIKRAM SARKAR: You should withdraw your remark.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Okay, I withdraw it.

Sir, this is not a matter relating to any particular area. The whole plateau and the whole river system has to be studied to see as to how siltation can be avoided? The DVC system has not been completely constructed. It has been done partly. That is also causing serious problems. The result is the one or the other part of the country is suffering serious predicament and prejudice.

Sir, let it not be taken as a mere request to the Government. We will treat it as a serious lapse if no steps are taken immediately forthwith to provide assistance to West Bengal.

Sir, when *ad hoc* assistance was rightly provided to Orissa and Andhra Pradesh when they faced such calamities, there is no reason why such assistance should not have been provided to West Bengal or any other State that is suffering from calamity of rare severity. So, I demand that this matter should be immediately responded to.

Sir, this country has to be governed for the sake of the people. The Government has to be for the people. The Government cannot be for only its allies.

16.46 hrs.

(SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU in the Chair)

The Government cannot be only for its allies, and we have a justified feeling that because of the pressure from one of the allies of this Government, they have not taken any steps in the matter.

Even today, I understand that the hon. Prime Minister has not given any assurance to the Chief Minister who had met him. There is no doubt that he had heard him attentively, but he has not given any assurance to him. I am told that one of the officials has said that the Government will make a move in this Session of the House. Now, if that is the plea that there is no law in this country for giving this relief and assistance, then, this is an unpardonable lapse on the part of the Central Government. I would rather say, it not a lapse but it is a deliberate action to deny the people of West Bengal their legitimate dues.

Some of my friends from the Andhra Pradesh may be on the right side today but who will be on which side in future, nobody knows.

If the future of this country is to be decided on the basis of who is on which side, then the country's future is very bleak and we shall never accept this. There will be a widespread agitation. There will be demonstration. The people will rise against this intolerable injustice that is being caused to the people of West Bengal. Therefore, I demand that immediate action be taken by the Government of India.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (Calcutta North West): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on the discussion under Rule 193 regarding loss of lives and property due to floods, drought and other natural calamities in various parts of the country.

The devastating floods, drought and other natural calamities have caused damage to the crores of people of this country in general and floods have caused severe damage to the millions of people of West Bengal Particularly. It has very seriously affected our economy also. The poor farmers, poor agricultural labourers have been seriously affected due to all these calamities. We all know that even yesterday evening and today morning how the severe cyclonic storm had hit the people of Pondicherry and Chennai. We express our solidarity with them and hope that the Central Government will take all necessary steps to extend fullest cooperation to the affected people there.

Sir, I remember that during the April, 2000, severe drought took place throughout the country. Then, the hon. Prime Minister had convened an all-Party meeting on the 25th April, 2000. The main drought-hit States were Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.

[Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay]

We raised this issue at that time also. The severe drought situation caused tremendous anxiety not only amongst the Members of this House but in the whole country. We were really anxious to see what the Central Government was going to do and how they were trying to sort out these problems.

I remember, at that time, on behalf of our Trinamool Congress Party, we placed a few proposals. I want to raise it here this time also. We very categorically said that India had enough water resources and so the people should not suffer when droughts affect our country. If our huge surplus water is managed proper and scientifically, we can sort out this type of problems to a certain extent. We had said that water conservation methods should be modernised on a priority basis.

We very categorically said that there should be the harvesting process of water. In different parts of the world, rainwater is being harvested. So, we proposed that water harvesting including rainwater harvesting was necessary in a country like ours where water is certainly in surplus. We categorically said that the inter-State river water disputes have to be resolved. Otherwise, when people are affected by droughts they cannot get relief promptly.

We also proposed the framing of micro level strategies to face the drought situation in the country. We proposed projects for prevention of damages. We proposed the protection of cattle stocks. We proposed an arrangement by which when an area is badly affected by drought we could promptly supply water and food. These were the proposals we made very categorically at the all-party meeting.

We have a very efficient Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar, in charge of the Ministry of Agriculture. We made those proposals with great expectations and hopes. We may kindly be clarified what the Government is considering about the proposals that we made and what decisions are going to be taken by the Government about these proposals.

Recently, there has been a flood situation in your State, the State of Andhra Pradesh. You very promptly managed to send messages to the people; you lifted the people from the affected areas within a very short period. We always appreciate your system and arrangements for tackling flood situations. Your Government has proved its efficiency, which we fully appreciate. Shri Somnath Chatterjee is a great admirer of yours. He often quotes your name. You have extended your support to them; I will also extend my support after some time, after giving my version. Seeing the way the Government of Andhra

Pradesh tackled the situation, other States should have been cautious. They should have ensured that information reached people about where there were apprehensions and where there were possibilities by which people could be affected by floods. I will come to that point later.

In West Bengal, it was a devastating flood. There is no doubt about it.

People are just trying to remain alive. They are struggling for existence. They do not know how to survive, from where to get food and how to build their shelters again. They have become homeless and rural economy had totally collapsed. We certainly share our feelings and sentiments. When cyclone hit Orissa, the Central Government took all out efforts to extend its assistance. I am sorry to say this. I will request the hon. Minister Shri Nitish Kumar to give a positive reply in the House. We are making a positive demand. When the Central Government could extend assistance when Orissa was affected by cyclone, why is it not extending its hands of cooperation when West Bengal has been very badly affected?

I did not expect Shri Somnath Chatterjee to say that due to the objection of a particular ally, meaning the Trinamool Congress, the Central Government had not sent the money. I will request Shri Nitish Kumar to clarify this and give a positive reply. Let us know whether any allies of the present NDA Government put any pressure in not extending assistance to the State Government of West Bengal.

I do not know whether Shri Somnath Chatterjee is frustrated for not becoming the Chief Minister of West Bengal after Shri Jyoti Basu, whose name was also being published sometimes in the newspapers of Bengal, as sometimes they criticise Shri Nitish Kumar.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: They were the newspapers sponsored by you. He is now really stabbing me in the back.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: The former Chief Minister Shri Jyoti Basu is normally known as briefless Barrister and Shri Somnath Chatterjee is a very busy and a very reputed Barrister of the country. He could deal with the matters nicely. I believe, as an orator and as a parliamentarian, he has very nicely placed the demands. The Chief Minister of West Bengal is now touring Delhi seeking assistance for the flood affected people. They have given a warning or a threat also in their latest meeting. They said that if their demands were not fulfilled, there would be a Bengal *bandh* or a Bharat *bandh*. So, political issues are already ready with them

because West Bengal is going for elections in the month of April. So, all arrangements are ready and the speeches were also ready, as Shri Somnath Chatterjee was mentioning here, which are not for the poor.

I attended the all party meeting convened by the Chief Minister himself at the Writers Building. I supported it. The Chief Minister was there and the present Chief Minister was present there. I had the privilege to deliver my speech there about man-made flood. I said to here also that it was a man-made flood. I will request Shri Somnath Chatterjee to go through the records of the all party meeting. I raised the issue there also. The then Chief Minister Shri Jyoti Basu instructed the State Government or his officials to go to my house and meet me, to convince me or try to convince me. I ultimately did not agree because I wanted the issue to be discussed with the officials in a public place and not in a private place.

The devastating flood cannot be controlled; I know that. It was a huge rain. What I wanted to mention very categorically is this. There was a heavy rainfall. But the water was released from the dams without intimating the people in the rural areas, in the villages. I will request Shri Somnath Chatterjee to hear what I am trying to place before the House without prejudice.

17.00 hrs

The flood occurred between 19th and 26th of September. What was the volume of water that was released? On 19th, from Durgapur Barrage, 42,310 cusecs of water was released. People are generally aware that between 20,000 and 30,000 cusecs of water would be released. On 20th it went up to 1,07,850 cusecs; on 22nd it went up to 1,60,000 cusecs; and on 23rd it went up to 2,23,292 cusecs. People were not intimated in time about the release of water. From 19th to 23rd the release of water went up from 42,310 cusecs to 2,23,292 cusecs. People had to suffer. The same thing happened in Tilpara Barrage. There, the release of water went up from 43,167 cusecs to 2,08,762 cusecs.

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): What was the inflow of water?

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: I am not talking of inflow and the rainfall.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can speak when your turn comes. When Shri Somnath Chatterjee spoke nobody disturbed him.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, because of the way the water was released from these Barrages, people had to suffer a lot. Had people been warned of this, they would not have been affected to such an extent in spite of the heavy rainfall. That is why we made this allegation that this is a man-made disaster. We still stick to that. It was a man-made flood and we stick to our allegation.

I would once again request the Central Government to take all out efforts. The extent of damages and losses have been broadly explained. A Central team had been there. Shri Nitish Kumar reached Calcutta very promptly. He met the Chief Minister along with all his officials. It was appreciated by the State Government itself. But when this issue was raised in the 'Zero Hour' and when Shri Nitish Kumar was getting ready to respond to this issue, he was not allowed to respond. We would urge upon the Agriculture Minister to provide funds. But there must be accountability and utilisation certificate should also come. If utilisation certificate is not submitted in time, the next instalment may be delayed. We would certainly approach the CPI (M) Parliamentary Party Leader, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, to talk to Shri Buddadeb Bhattacharya, the present Chief Minister of West Bengal. Let the Chief Minister talk to hon. Railway Minister, Kumari Mamata Banerjee also. Shri K. Yarrannaidu's support and Shri Vaiko's support will not help him to that extent. There are two more Ministers in the Central Government, Shri S.B. Mookherjee and Shri Tapan Sikdar, who are representing West Bengal. Let the Chief Minister have a meeting with the Minister of Central Government who are representing West Bengal in Delhi. Why is he hesitating? Let the Chief Minister express his desire.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, it is a very important discussion. Members should not sleep.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: I do not know what are the reasons for his hesitation and reservation?

Sir, I may also inform the House what was happening in West Bengal when it was badly devastated by floods. At that time, one Chief Minister was retiring from Chief Ministership and another Chief Minister was coming to take oath. A festive mood was there. It was supposed to be celebrated and inaugurated. It continued for a few days. Neither the former Chief Minister nor the present Chief Minister visited the flood-affected areas. They were in festive mood. The Chief Minister was taking retirement after remaining in power for long 24 years and another Yuvraj was coming to take oath. The total state of affairs went into mess. Was it proper? Do people not expect that when floods affect any part of the State the Chief

[Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay]

Minister should rush to that area? So, this has to be brought to the attention of the House. But still one feels that people of West Bengal should not suffer. We are very firm and confident about it. There should not be any tendency or attempt to curb the interest of West Bengal. It is because today or tomorrow Kumari Mamata Banerjee is going to take over the State after the elections in April. So, what is our gain by raising the issue that we will oppose the Central Government for not sending the money to the State Government? We appeal to the Central Government to make all-out efforts without any hesitation. Whatever is possible to do, it must do.

Sir, I still remember when Shri Jyoti Basu was going to Thiruvananthapuram. I was also travelling by the same flight. Our Chief Minister normally travels in the 'J' class. Normally, we travel in the 'Y' class, as our leader Kumari Mamata Banerjee also does. But on that day, we were sitting just side by side in IA-320 aircraft. At that time, there was a cyclonic storm in Visakhapatnam and the flights were not going straight to Chennai. While travelling, some discussions took place between us. He asked us: "Why do you not take interest to see the ordinance matter?" Shri Somnath Chatterjee very categorically raised it. He said that the Central Government is trying to impose upon us all these hazardous processes. We are really feeling very disturbed due to this reason. I said that as a Chief Minister of a State, when you are pointing it out to us, we will certainly look into it and would also see that the Central Government makes all-out efforts. But now I have one paper of the Government of India, the Ministry of Finance, (the Department of Economic Affairs). Shri Somnath Chatterjee mentioned many matters from the Action Taken Report. But so far as Chapter 12 is concerned, following has been very categorically mentioned:

"The Government has accepted the above recommendations of the Commission. The recommendation concerning National Calamity Contingency Fund will be implemented after necessary legislation is enacted."

So, we believe that this matter is to be taken up on priority. I certainly believe that petty politics should not be reflected on such issues. I have mentioned it on several occasions on the floor of the House that after Independence Eastern region, particularly West Bengal, is the worst sufferer of regional imbalance. It is my firm belief and opinion that the agony of West Bengal sometimes go up to the extent that we feel isolated. Sometimes this feeling comes to the minds of the people of West Bengal whether they are in the mainstream or not. I believe that this Government should take all out

efforts and should extend all financial assistance to West Bengal.

Without any hesitation they should tell the truth on the floor of the House as to how far they are prepared to help where there are problems and where the situation actually stands. If Shri Nitish Kumar is not responsible, then why do we accuse him on every occasion that it is because of him or the Government that the people are put to sufferings?

I would, therefore, urge upon the hon. Minister to come with an open mind and report to the House. The agony and the feelings of the people of West Bengal have to be properly ventilated and properly projected in this House.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN (Tirunelveli): Mr. Chairman Sir, I rise to speak on this occasion with anguish.

The people of Tamil Nadu, particularly in the district of Cuddalore, have been attacked by a cyclone yesterday. A severe cyclone at 150 kmph wind had attacked Cuddalore. About forty fishermen of Cuddalore who had gone for the fishing have not returned so far. In a crisis like this, the Government of India and the Government of Tamil Nadu should attach their top priority. This is the need of the hour. In Tamil language there is a proverb:

"Manthirikku azhagu varum porul uraithal"

It means that a Minister should have the foreknowledge of all the consequences of cyclone. He should have the foreknowledge of the consequences arising out of drought. He must have the foreknowledge and the thoughtfulness that in the monsoon season, cyclone would definitely attack a cyclone prone area like Tamil Nadu.

The Times of India reported that the cyclone could have crossed over to the State of Andhra Pradesh. But it attacked Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu. I would like to apprise the House about the lapses of the Central Government and the State Government. I am not charging anybody, but am only highlighting the callous negligence and the gross negligence on the part of the Central Government. Till this time, that is 5.10 p.m., no Minister has gone and visited the cyclone affected area. No one has consoled the people there.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (Madras North): The State Ministers have visited.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: About twenty thousand trees have been uprooted. About fifty per cent of the trees

and forty per cent of the lamp-posts have been uprooted. Telephone wires have been cut off and the whole country has lost communication link with Cuddalore and Pondicherry. This morning, at about 11 o'clock, the Chief Minister of Pondicherry, Shri Shanmugam phoned me up about this incident. I would not say I am lucky. On the first day of this Session, we gave a notice to raise the issue of flood situation in the country. Today it so happened that I am able to raise this issue with vigour.

In Pondicherry, a portion of the Raj Nivas, the official residence of the Lt. Governor, has been broken because of the fall of a tree. *The Times of India* reported: "In Pondicherry, a portion of Raj Nivas, the official residence of the Lt. Governor, gave way when a tree fell on it." So, it is a grave situation. People of Cuddalore are frustrated. We have different seasons like droughts and floods. As soon as monsoon season sets in, there will be imminent floods.

I would like to point out the past record of the Central Government of their service to the people of Assam.

Sir, when the impact of damages came as on June, the Central Government had released only Rs. 13 crore for Assam. Today, what is the position of Assam? For the last six months, they have been agitating. But the Central Government is not able to concentrate on the problems of Assam. The Central Government has released Rs. 148 crore for Andhra Pradesh. Sir, it is because you are an ally to the Government, you are able to get it. The State of Arunachal Pradesh got only Rs. 2 crore. The assessment of damages is vast. This position was as on 15th July, 2000. So, Sir, the Central Government has a step-motherly treatment towards certain States. So also is the position in Bihar. There is no release of funds from CRF by the Central Government.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Although they have ten Ministers from Bihar!

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: No fund was released to Bihar and Gujarat got Rs. 131 crore. Why is this discrimination found? Is it a Government of allies, as Shri Somnath Chatterjee puts in? It is Government of India. Or you declare that it is Government of NDA. As on 1.8.2000, they have released Rs. 8.4 crore to Himachal Pradesh.

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): It is National Disasters Association!

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: Then we must form an association saving the country from the NDA. For Kerala, the amount released is only Rs. 17 crore. Punjab got

Rs. 16 crore and Sikkim got Rs. 2 crore. Uttar Pradesh received Rs. 39 crore. I heard Shri Somnath Chatterjee speaking about West Bengal. That is why, I say that the Government should act on this matter. They should treat everybody alike. They should treat the States alike. They must treat all the citizens alike. This is the case of flood. It is an act of God.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): they should treat all the calamities alike.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: It is not a man-made flood. No man can make a flood. Man causes a flood. Man-made is different from man-caused. Man can cause a flood. He can open a sluice. In West Bengal, there was incessant and unprecedented heavy rainfall in the catchment areas. What is the remedy which you have given to West Bengal? Sir, do not look at Shri Somnath Chatterjee or the Opposition here. It is the constitutional duty of the Central Government to protect every citizen of India, irrespective of religion, caste, place of birth or political party.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: What is the role of the State?

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: The role of the State is to ally with the Central Government. Do you want me to say that? No. Flood is a national disaster. When the Central Government is not acting immediately, what is the use of the existence of the Central Government? They should protect the needy ones. You are not able to provide relief. I am citing the analogy. We are not giving employment to the youth. The Prime Minister has sanctioned Rs. 30,000 for a heart patient who is needy, oppressed and weak. So also the States should get funds. I have categorised the States and truth behind the flood. Hundreds of people are dead and millions are awaiting succour in West Bengal and Bihar. What is the action taken by the Central Government? No action is taken by them....(Interruptions) Sir, as All India ADMK Party, we have a perspective throughout India.

I am not speaking only for Tamil Nadu. I am speaking for Assam, West Bengal and every State for that matter....(Interruptions) So, I am not accusing anybody. The Central Government should fight the menace of floods. When the matter was raised yesterday immediately after we received the news about the Cuddalore cyclone, Shri Nitish Kumar immediately reacted to it. I must be thankful to the hon. Minister who was able to react. But what is the use of reaction? It is for Press consumption. Mr. Minister, you can say it in so many words. But you must give the money. You can console anybody. But you must give money. So we are living with floods in Cuddalore and Pondicherry. Therefore, the timely action

[Shri P.H. Pandiyan]

of the Central Government and the State Government would have prevented the recurrence of flood. Flood and drought is a recurrence every year. That is why, I said that you must have a fore-knowledge of the consequences of flood. You must have a fore-knowledge of the consequences of a drought. A Minister must have proper brains to understand. Here, I do not accuse anybody. A Minister must have proper brains to understand. Let it be any Minister for that matter, he must have proper brains to understand the common man's expectations and the common man's protection. For consulting a lawyer, you go to a better lawyer. For consulting a doctor, you go to a better doctor. So, for a Minister, you must have a best Minister....(Interruptions)

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Sir, I would submit that the hon. Member is not realising the actual seriousness of drought, flood and the cyclone affecting the States....(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: Why have we failed to control it? The Central Government has failed to control floods. Had they taken action when they were informed about floods in Gujarat and Orissa, they could have prevented the recurrence....(Interruptions) So also is the position about droughts. We are speaking today with an all-India perspective. We want a best Minister....(Interruptions) My friends, you do not want a best Minister. You do not want a brainy Minister. You do not want an active Minister. You do not want a Minister to act in a situation like this! The Minister should go to the spot....(Interruptions)

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (Madras North): Sir, the hon. Member is misleading the House. There are two Ministers who are camping at Cuddalore. From this morning itself, two Ministers, one Shri Ponmudi and the other Shri N.R. Pannarselvam, are camping there....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will have an opportunity to speak. You can give a rebuttal.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI: The point is that he is misleading the House. He is not giving proper information to the House....(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: Camping is no good. If you go with an empty hand, what is the use of it? What did you do? Did you remedy the situation? What is the use of camping there? The Minister should go with the treasury....(Interruptions) As I said earlier, the Minister should go to Cuddalore with a treasury. If he goes and sits in a travellers' bungalow, calls the Collector, rains will not stop....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): You should go there like Ms. Jayalalitha! Nobody will go to jail like Ms. Jayalalitha sanctioning money not according to a law....(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: In 1993, there was a flood. My leader, the General-Secretary of my Party, Puratchithalaivi Dr. Jayalalitha went direct. She saw the flood for herself. She sanctioned the money. She remedied the situation on the spot itself. So, remedy is the answer. Therefore, the Central Government should remedy the situation. The State Government should also remedy the situation. A Committee consisting of Members of Parliament other than the NDA should be formed to protect the States which are ruled by the adversaries so that we can satisfy the people. We can remove the frustration of the people. Today, people are frustrated....(Interruptions) If the NDA is coming, we will take it up....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Pandiyan, please conclude now. You have taken much time.

SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN: Mr. Chairman, I cannot feel happy about it. It is an unfortunate situation....(Interruptions) The flood situation is unfortunate. The drought situation is unfortunate. We are speaking today about an unfortunate situation.

Sir, you have permitted me to speak on behalf of the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. I thank you very much for that. With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI (Khajuraho): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are present here today to discuss a very serious issue. I do not feel we should see this issue with a political angle. Today, irony is that lakhs of people are pinning their hope to see whether the people's representative who have been elected by them feel their agony, whether they are serious about their problems and finding the solutions thereof, so that the life of these people can be improved upon. Whether it is not an irony that ours is a very large nation considered to be embodied with lots of natural resources. It is surrounded by Himalayas in the north and by large sea-shores and ocean in south. But even after 52 years of Independence every year we discuss either drought, floods or hail storms in either House of Parliament. Every now and then we repeat same old stories. Year after year people of this country are forced to face same miseries. I would like to associate my party with this issue. As I have already said that let us not give it a political colour. Are all of us not compelled

to think that even 52 year after Independence we could not find ways to tackle all these problems.

I remember that in fifties a proposal for linking Ganga and Cauveri and several toher rivers was conceived by the Union Government. It remained an issue of debate for several days. I do not know why this plan was put in waste-bin. May be, it had been dropped keeping huge cost factor in mind. During those days its estimated cost was around Rs. 52000-57000 crore. You see, today in Bengal people are dying because of flood, in Rajasthan and Madya Pradesh people are facing drought and they are pinning for even a drop of water. Had we prepared a comprehensive plan during those days then this situation would have not arisen. We could have definitely found some way out. Though it is late, still if we consider it seriously, something can surely be done. I realise that the country is facing financial constraints and taking up mega projects is difficult. Since capital outflow takes place in the world so now money is not serious a problem. Therefore, if we take up a mega projects affecting lives of crores of people, then nothing impossible.

If we calculate the total amount spent during these last 50-52 years on relief measures because of natural calamities, the loss of property worth billion of rupees, we would realise that we have spent more money than the total cost of those mega projects which we did not taken up.

Last year also we faced same misery, still we are grouping the dark and next year too we would be discussing same issue in this House and sheeding tears. Our thinking and the attitude has become quite narrow. We just worry about solving present crisis and do not take long term measures, that's why same problems crop up every year and the condition remain more or less the same. I request the entire public, all political parties to shun political affiliations and give constructive suggestions. The Government should take initiative in this direction since it is the responsibilities of the Government. The opposition parties can merely give suggestions. I am not saying ths from criticism point of view. I feel that none would disagree with my proposal. Today Orissa and Bengal are facing fury of flood and Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and some part of Bihar adjacent to Madhya Pradesh and some portion of even Andhra Pradesh are facing unprecedented drought. During my visit to my constituency, an octogenarian said that such severe drought he has never seen in his life. Even in the month of November and December only five feet water is there in the wells. Water level in tubewells has gone down by 5 to 16 meters. There is no fodder for cattles and there is no water in ponds and dams. There

is shortage of power since all power plants are lying closed. Farmers are not getting power supply. Kharif crop has been destroyed totally and only one third Rabi crop could be sowed in Madhya Pradesh. And I do not know whether the crop which has been sown will survive or not. Since there is no water and the crop cannot survive without water so the crop which has been sown will vanish within one or two months. Gujarat and Rajasthan have been facing drought for the last two three years. One can imagine what shall be the economic condition of an area which has been facing drought for the last three years. We see lakhs of labourer fleeing at railway stations from their homes in search of a job. Labourers are most vulnerable.

The helpless are migrating to Punjab, Haryana and other States in search of employment. The State Government wrote to the Centre several times. The State leadership came to the Centre and held meeting with the authorities concerned. A discussion was also held in the August House in this regard.

Plans have also been submitted for approval so as to solve this problem. First of all drinking water facility will have to be provided. If there is no irrigation facility and electricity supply in the villages, what will happen to agriculture there? Fodder to feed the cattle and water is not available in rural areas. If lakhs and crores of people are not provided employment, what will hapen to them and if employment also is to be made available to them, the job oriented trades will have to be started there. Only then something could be done. Shri Somnathji was just talking about all this. So, I do not want to repeat them. Confusion prevailed on the part of the Government in respect of bringing about his ordinance.

On the pretext of this ordinance, the Government asked them to enact a lane in this regard, but the Government have not been able to bring a Bill on the subject in this House. The House is in session since 20th instant and no attention has been paid by the Government to this. At least, a bill could have been introduced in this regard. Nobody was going to cause any obstruction for them to do so? Leave introduce the bill could have taken. The Bill should have been introduced on the very first day of the session but I do not think that any sessions effort is being made for it and if any effort is actually being made then I might not be aware of it. If such is the case I am ready to withdraw my words? Is any serious efforts is being made in this regard?

Sir, five to six big States of the country are in the grip of natural calamities. I can give all figures, since I

[Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi]

do have them with me right now. I do not want to read them and I do want to waste the time of the House. I would only like to lay emphasize on the main issue only. I would give a brief account. There are eight such district in Orissa where the rainfall has been seven to fifteen percent below average, in 15 districts it was 20 to 38 percent below average and in seven districts the figure was 44 to 58 percent below average. Paddy crop worth Rs. 770 crores in an estimated area of 1069000 hectares of land has been damaged. Eight lakh families have been adversely affected in Orissa due to drought and famine. They have been wandering search of bread. 167 out of a total of 314 development blocks have been affected due to drought and famine. I have also got with me the figures of Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. The situation is the same every where. The crisis is even more severe in Madhya Pradesh where 37 out of a total of 45 districts are affected by drought. Seven districts have witnessed 19 percent less rainfall, and 36 districts witnessed 20 to 59 percent less rainfall. There is no water left in ponds and wells. In district Reeva, rainfall has been 60 percent less. One can imagine what could be the condition of the people these areas. Crops have been damaged. Nobody is prepared to buy Soyabeen produced in Madhya Pradesh, the highest producer of Soyabeen. Due to scanty rainfall the size of the grain was smaller. Those who procured it rejected because of poor quality of the crop. If concession has been given in Punjab then facility should also be extended to Soya farmers of Madhya Pradesh. On one hand, the production of Soya crop is suffering, on the other, whatever is being produced is not being procured. In such a situation, where will the farmers go? The crops are dying for want of water. There is no water in the wells and the hand pumps are also in a very bad condition....(Interruptions) 37 out of 279 districts are facing the drinking water crisis even today. All the schemes to provide drinking water have collapsed. Relief work are to be undertaken very soon. There are also schemes for organising cattle camps. I would like to tell a very peculiar thing reported at page No. 3 of the daily 'Indian Express'. I tried to confirm it by making a telephonic inquiry and found that it is true. Panna National Park is situated in my own constituency. Wild animals of this National Park have been found entering the residential areas and villages in search of water since water is not available in the park. These incidents have also reported to have taken place in Chhattisgarh also. Some incidents of animals attacking the locals have also come to notice. At some places it has led to the killing of some animals and at some other places, people have been wounded. What a greater irony, can it be than the fleeing of wild animals to villages and

cities in search of water. ...(Interruptions) If it is the Ramrajya, then may God save this country from this Ramrajya....(Interruptions)

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): 'Daihi, Daivik, Bhoutik tapa Ram Rajya kahin Na Vyapa'. We all want a Ramrajya of this type.

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: If this definition he is giving is true, he should stop making such a claim that Ramrajya is here because just the opposite is taking place.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: An effort should be made in this regard by rising above politics.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Rawatji, Jasu Raj Priya Praja Dukhari, Te Nrip Hoya Narak Adhikari."

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please come to the subject.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Sir, who is responsible for this?

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: No cross talks please.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shri Digvijay Singhji had come to Delhi and all the M.P.'s from Madhya Pradesh had held a serious discussion over the crisis. After holding discussion at their own level, the M.P.s rising above party politics, met the hon. Prime Minister. The August House should pay attention to these two-three items. The Centre is making cuts in State allocation. We have started making allocation from funds allocated to our State. We have no adequate resources to meet our own needs. If owing to the ongoing financial crisis, the Government cannot provide funds in terms of cash, then arrangements should be made for providing free foodgrains from the FCI godowns, so that at least, we could take up food for work programme under the relief operation.

Secondly, some extra allocations should be made for running various schemes of the Rural Development Departments so that the exodus of people from the drought affected areas could be checked and they could be provided employment and other means of livelihood.

The third submission that we made before the hon. Prime Minister is to relax the ban on the funds being sent to the districts through the Tenth Finance Commission and issue necessary instructions to the Rural Development Department; because as of now these funds are only meant for building construction. Today, the circumstances are very special hence same relaxation should be given. This will help create employment oriented work in these villages so that the poor are provided some succor from the money received through Tenth Finance Commission.

The last thing is very important. My State despite facing various adverse situation and grave crisis, has never been a defaulter in respect of repayment of its loans. Our State has consistently kept on repaying the loans worth crores of rupees it had taken in the past. We submitted before the hon. P.M. to suspend the practice of monthly repayment of loans and make arrangements for their repayment in easy instalments over a period of five years so that, in the meantime, this amount could be utilised for providing employment and making arrangement for drinking water facility. In this way we could also get relief and the Centre will not also have to lose money. We submitted before the Prime Minister to ponder over these points. If necessary assistance is not given in time when I will consider it very irresponsible on the part of the Government and I do not think any Government will like to be labelled as irresponsible.

When the entire country is facing natural calamities and crisis, it would not be possible to combat this situation by an ordinary means. We will have to take some extraordinary and special decision and in my view, any laxity at this stage could prove very disastrous. I hope that the Government will, at least once, ponder over the points to which I have drawn their attention. Though late, yet it is never too late. We should ponder over it afresh so that natural calamities do not occur every year. We should chalk out a national and long term project and evolve a policy in this regard, so that the recurrence of floods and droughts could be checked in those areas. There is a regular feature. We can also take up projects for linking various rivers. The Government should seriously ponder these things. Thank for giving me time to speak.

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA (Mandsaur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are discussing here a very important subject and the subject which is related to many areas of the country. It is a fact that earlier also we have discussed flood, drought and many other natural calamities here. During the course of discussion, some urgent as well as some long term measures were also presented in the House. After consideration the Government have

taken some decisions in this regard. These decisions are being implemented. By drawing your attention towards the seriousness of the subject I would like to submit that today only I was going through a news in 'Dainik Bhaskar' published from Indore. A news was published in it that due to the terrible situation of drought a father in a village of Sagar district killed his son. The question was raised in the Legislative Assembly of Madhya Pradesh that why and how this incident took place? I asked for the complete information regarding the entire situation but I would not received the complete information. The moment I get it, I will make it available to hon. Minister. The newspaper has explained the reason as to how the Madhya Pradesh has been hit by drought.

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: This incident took place in Sagar district which is adjacent to the border of the constituency of hon. Chaturvedi where a father chopped his son into 18 pieces because of hunger, unemployment and poverty.

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: I would like to draw your attention towards another subject. The life is in state of little sketter due to drought. The animals there are in a worst condition. In the details provided by the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh to the Member of Parliament, he himself was accepted that due to the scarcity of water, grass and fodder, animals of Dhar Khargona of Khandwa district are migrating to other places.

There is another news published that many animals died in Khargone district after eating poisonous grass. They are compelled to eat grass. I have stated two news items to make you aware that how grave is the situation there? Shri Pandiyan is not present here, he had drawn the attention towards third news item. Somnath da and Bandyopadhyay ji had stated by inviting the attention that how the calamity hit Bengal? The life is in a state of little scatter there due to flood. Recently a sea storm created havoc in the coastal areas of Tamilnadu. The flood disturbed the life there. The life is hit sometimes in Tamilnadu, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh and sometimes in Orissa. When a natural calamity hits us we feel concerned and draw the attention of the Government towards it. The Governments takes some decision but sometimes due to delay in taking these decisions and consequent delay in its implementation we hardly get the benefit which we supposed to get from these decisions. I know I am not standing here to criticize the Government but I would like to ask, that what happened to the amount of fund granted to the State Government of Madhya Pradesh last year for various work? That fund has not reached to the collector as yet. I am coming straight from there today. I would like to draw your attention

[Dr. Laxminarayan Pandeya]

towards the observation of the Chief Minister made in the meeting of hon. Members. The fund of Rs. 500 crore was sanctioned from here out of which the first instalment of Rs. 55 crore has been released recently. The Government of Madhya Pradesh have recently demanded more fund. The distribution of first instalment has not been done properly and now they are seeking more funds. I was stating that according to this note, 2 per cent animal camps, per developmental block are proposed to be set up near perennial river or pond. If they are proposing it now, when they are going to set up them? It says further the animal relief camps will be completely set up in a period of four months but till date no camp has come up. My submission is that its implementation is not being done properly. We talk about schemes but don't implement them properly. I would like to submit that even after release of the relief funds to State Governments people are not getting the desired benefit out of this.

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the State Government has received the amount of Rs. 55 crore till date and then amount of Rs. 10.77 crore per district have been released to collectors of 37 districts. Now, you please tell that where is the money by which this work can be undertaken?

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Chaturvedi ji, I do not want to involve myself in this issue but what work has been done by the State Governments? Earlier also, at the time of requirement the Union Government have provided Rs. 128.25 lakh to Gujarat, Rs. 126.88 lakh to Rajasthan and Rs. 225 crore to Andhra Pradesh under rural schemes. The Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh were provided lakhs of tonnes and Rajasthan 5 lakh 26 thousand tonnes of foodgrains. Still you are accusing the Union Government. Now this is a natural crisis but earlier also the Union Government has been helping. Now, suddenly this crisis caused by storm has come up. May be you must be aware that a major earthquake had hit Jabalpur which caused massive destruction. People were ruined. I don't want to accuse anybody but I would like to know that whether the State Government have utilised the allocated fund properly?

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI: It is not a matter of dispute infact. I can give the data of the demands we sought from the Centre.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Government will give the reply. Shri Satyavrat Chaturvedi, please do not argue.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: I know this but I was submitting that, the level of underground water is continuously falling in Madhya Pradesh. There was the matter of installing tubewells in my constituency. The water was not available 700 feet below the ground whereas Shri Chaturvedi ji was saying that immediate and long term measures should be adopted. I know this also and would like to say that the way Ganga-Kaveri scheme was prepared in same manner Narmada-Shipra, Shipra-Chambal and Chambal with other rivers is linked then this scheme can become a reality. The Malwa region of Central India is gradually becoming a desert. There is a couplet about this.

"Malav dharti gahan gambhir
Pag-pag roti, dag dag neer."

Now, food and water is not available there but if the rivers are linked properly and dams are built then this is much possible. The Gandhi Sagar dam was built on Chambal river. It used to generate electricity till a month back but now it is no more generating electricity because the dam is empty. There was no scarcity of water in this dam during the last 30-32 years but now there is no water there. My request is that this matter should be considered. When it came to the notice, that silt has accumulated in the dam, the measures should have been taken to remove it. If this is not done, then generation of electricity will be gradually stopped. Rajasthan gets water from this dam, the electricity generated by Rawatbhata not only benefits Rajasthan but also the agriculture in Madhya Pradesh. Therefore, some long term measures should certainly be taken for such dams.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was stating that the note, given by our State Government, shows the estimate of fall in the underground water in minimum 10 meter and a maximum of 30-40 meter in the month of November, 2000 in comparison to any general month. In forthcoming months the crisis will become severe. Therefore, I would like to submit that the State Government have not been able to implement the schemes due to the non-availability of funds from Central Government. Just now hon. Chaturvedi ji was stating that there is some hindrance in the release of the fund of tenth and eleventh finance commission, the problem is that you have to undertake certain construction work. You cannot undertake relief work directly. Therefore, if the compulsion of construction work is removed or if it is released then it might make the relief work easier. 40 districts of Madhya Pradesh are in the grip of drought. The crop of Soyabean is completely ruined.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, since the State of Madhya Pradesh is adjacent to Rajasthan and my constituency Mandsaur, is surrounded by Rajasthan from three sides. Rajasthan is continuously facing drought and this year it was the most severe one. Being directly connected to Rajasthan, thousands of sheep and goats directly enter Madhya Pradesh. The people of Madhya Pradesh drive them towards Gujarat. But considering the security of the forthcoming crisis the issue should be considered from Rajasthan's point of view. The entire Arawali region of Rajasthan is changing and a massive problem is going to erupt there. Therefore, the most important thing is that the Task Force constituted by the Government, from the view of crisis scheme, should take some decision after considering it so that the fund allocated by the Government to various State Government for the implementation of the scheme are distributed properly. For example, the Government of Madhya Pradesh have demanded an amount of Rs. 606 crore after the formation of Chhattisgarh. This should be provided as early as possible.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please wind up.

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: I have to say something more. Can I continue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may take one or two minutes more. There are many speakers to speak.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had been on the tour of Gujarat. There I visited the Kutch and Bhuj regions. The situation there is also very grave. There you can face mirage like situation for a long distance. Sun shines intensely, land is salty. You can go to many kilometers like a deer in search of water but there is no water at all. The situation of Gujarat is also bad. I have drawn attention because Gujarat is also suffering with the same problem. All the rivers of Gujarat have dried up; Mahi is a largest river in Rajasthan. I have seen river Mahi which is adjacent to the Ratlam district. It has also dried up. The river Mahi not only affects Rajasthan but also Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. River Mahi has dried up river Chambal has dried up and river Narmada is also on the verge of disappearing which falls to the internal region of Madhya Pradesh, the situation there is also very bad. For improving the condition of these rivers and to maintain its water flow the work should be undertaken after drafting a fixed Action Plan. Though in the future the schemes are being drafted for development of catchment area in different places,

for conservation of water and infact development is taking place in the area of water reserve but the implementation of these schemes are not taking place with the required pace and villagers and farmers are not aware of these schemes they have not been able to get benefit of these schemes. Some schemes are only running on government papers and administrative machinery is working arbitrarily. Therefore, I would say that this should be considered thoroughly.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention towards another news published in 'Aaj' that what could be the reasons behind all these natural calamities. Scientists say that drought is the warning about the chain of natural calamities. Different parts of the country are in the grip of severe drought therefore the concern of scientists cannot be ignored. Not only in India but many other parts of the world are being affected by famine. Famine has affected those places also which have never seen drought before.

18.00 hrs.

This year the world has faced the destruction by sea storm and severe flood. At the time when the world is heading towards destruction the attention has especially been drawn towards environment which states the cause behind destruction is indiscriminate deforestation and no afforestation. The schemes which were being implemented earlier for afforestation such as path vriksharopan, van vriksharopan have come to an end and due to the absence of these schemes whatever protection we could have provided to the environment is not being done. This is another reason of drought. From this point of view, we must consider that how we can protect environment by mobilising our resources. We can construct small pools and reconstruct old ponds, some bawadis can also be constructed and this problem can be solved by making dams on small rivers and nallahs. We should work together at this time of crisis to solve this severe problem. The Government is doing whatever it can.

In the end I would like to submit that, two three points which were raised specifically were that the fund will be provided to the Government of specifically were that the fund will be provided to the Government of Madhya Pradesh and how the amount of rural schemes will be distributed to benefit them. Though the Government of Madhya Pradesh agreed that the Centre should monitor the schemes but it has been regretted that suitable amount of fund should be allocated to it. My submission is that along with providing fund the restriction should be there that the fund should be spent on the work it has been provided for. There is a provision in 10th Finance

[Dr. Laxminarayan Pandeya]

Commission, that in all the works proposed for building construction work should necessarily be included. But I propose that this provision should be released so that this fund can be utilized for other works and drought affected districts can be provided relief. I don't want to waste the time of the House by mentioning others measures which have already been discussed and would like to request that whatever fund the Union Government is providing should be provided at the earliest so that the people could get relief and the basic needs of the people are fulfilled and we could come out of this crisis and also come out of the kind of destruction that took place in West Bengal or in Himachal Pradesh or in Orissa and the recent storm which hit the coastal regions of Tamil Nadu. This is a national crisis and we should consider it from a national perspective. The losses which the farmers of Madhya Pradesh are facing right now are very huge, crop has been destroyed which cannot be covered. The Government should also consider that how we will cover all these losses and how we will manage to help the farmers in growing crops in future.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for this discussion is two hours, that is, from 4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. Many speakers are still there to speak. If there is a consent of the House, then we can extend the time of the House by two hours.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Coochbehar): Please extend the time of the House by one hour....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, one hour is not sufficient. We can do like this — one and a half-hour for discussion and half-an-hour for reply by the hon. Minister.(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Let us continue tomorrow....(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Shri Ramdas Athawale, tomorrow is Friday. Please consider everybody's problem. It is a Private Members' Day....(Interruptions)

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): It can continue after Question Hour tomorrow....(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: After Question Hour, Members will ask for Zero Hour'. If you commit today for

tomorrow, then, there will not be any Zero Hour. Please try to understand it. My request is that we have completed two hours. We do not mind even sitting one hour or one and a half-hour more. But when the Minister will reply, before that everybody may want to speak. But in any discussion, you cannot accommodate whoever wants to speak. So, you have to make choices in discussions. So, my request would be, let all small and big parties speak and if time remains, then, Sir, you can repeat the list. But if you decide that at 7.30 p.m. the Minister will make a reply, then he can make a half-an-hour reply and 8 o'clock, we can close down....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: What about smaller parties?

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: As I said, everybody should be represented. My request would be that let us decide that 7.30 p.m. the Minister will reply. Let us try to accommodate as many Members as possible in the next and a half-hours. That is my request because taking it up tomorrow will not be possible....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would request all the Members to please keep in mind the time constraint so that more Members can get the opportunity to speak.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU (Tenali): Sir, the situation of natural calamities in the country has grown from time to time and has assumed the dimensions of grave severity in most of the States, particularly in States which are located on the coast. Even the statistics and the estimates also show that the damage to the crops due to floods had tremendously increased in the recent past. It was estimated that during the year 1971, that is, just three decades ago, the total area that was being damaged in the whole country due to floods was to the extent of 20 million hectares. Presently, during the year 1999-2000, the crop area that is getting damaged has grown to the extent of 67 million hectares. This speaks volumes whether adequate measures have been taken during all these years or not. These floods after cyclones and cyclones after floods have been occurring and the drought situation is also playing its own role. People have been suffering, assets are getting damaged, infrastructure is getting damaged and cattle are dying. All these things are happening. I am not going into what we have been doing and what the successive Governments have been doing. I am not trying to accuse any particular Government or any particular State, nor the political parties which are at the helm of affairs in different States. But, by and large, what is happening is that a casual treatment is being given to this type of natural calamities. A serious thought has not been given from time to time and a

serious solution has not been evolved. Had a serious solution been evolved, the situation would not have grown to this dimension — from 20 million hectares in 1971 to 67 million hectares by 1999-2000. During these three decades, what are the steps that have been taken by the successive Governments? Had the steps been taken adequately, the situation would have been better and the damage would have been minimum. This is the situation.

On several occasions, even the scientists and the study groups nation-wide have also suggested that the flood-prone zoning programme should be undertaken by the Government of India so that it can advise the State Government also as to what are the steps that should be taken, either during the pre-natural calamity period or during the post-natural calamity period.

India is one of the most disaster-prone country nowadays. It has assumed that particular dimension. It has been suggested that there should be demarcation of areas likely to be flooded and demarcation of areas which are likely to be hit by drought situation. For this, taking into account the past 100 years history as to which State has suffered in a frequency of how many years, all the States in the country have to be zoned first.

You have to take into account as to how many States have suffered floods once in five years, once in ten years; once in 20 years or once in 30 years so that the action programme can also be evolved in the same manner and also assistance from the Central Government can also be given in that proportion. If the frequency of the droughts and floods is so heavy and they occur frequently, naturally no State will be in a position to save the people and no State will be in a position to incur the expenditure. It is but natural that the States will look at the Central Government for assistance. In this particular situation, there is a necessity that we will have to look at this whole programme for droughts, cyclones and floods in a totally different manner.

Successive Finance Commissions have also been making recommendations. Hon. Member Shri Somnath Chatterjee has asked, what had happened to the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission. No serious thought has been given to them. Commissions after Commissions are being appointed. But no action, as per the recommendations, is being taken. In this way, the situation is also becoming very grave. In this way, the required relief could not be provided to different States, and also to the suffering people.

Coming to the floods that had occurred in the recent past in different States, you are quite aware that in this year and also in last year, Andhra Pradesh was affected by floods. Between 3rd and 27th of August this year,

there were very heavy floods in Andhra Pradesh which were most unprecedented. Even the State capital, Hyderabad was also affected by the floods and there was so much of inundation like never in the past. It has never happened that Hyderabad City was also affected by floods. Eighteen districts out of the 23 districts of the State have suffered because of floods. The villages affected were 4,522 and 29.35 lakh population was affected and the number of houses fully damaged was 1,04,000 and the value of the total damage to the public property was to the tune of Rs. 963 crore.

Amidst all these things, the State Government has taken a lot of initiative under the able guidance of Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu, our Chief Minister. Our Chief Minister has not only taken the steps in this regard in our particular State but also as and when there were natural calamities in our neighbouring States, he helped them. Recently, when Orissa was affected by the super cyclone, our State has gone to the rescue of that State and as much as Rs. 80 crore was spent for flood relief work in Orissa. This amount has been totally borne out by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh.

18.13 hrs.

(DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA *in the Chair*)

Our Chief Minister, Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu was the first person to take cognisance of the flood situation in that area.

Recently, the States of West Bengal and Bihar suffered between 16th and 20th of September. It is one of the rarest and severest flood situation and there are no two opinions about it. The State of West Bengal has suffered a lot. I really agree with the statements that have been made by the hon. Member Shri Somnath Chatterjee that adequate relief is to be provided. It is not the question of politics. It is the question of human life. It is the question of damage to a part of this country. We should look at this whole situation only in that way and we support that adequate relief is to be given.

Recently, there was a flood in Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu and other areas. Luckily, our State, Andhra Pradesh has escaped it.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): That was an accident.

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Yes, that was an accident. There could have been a second calamity as far as floods and cyclones are concerned in quick succession, just only in a matter of two years.

[Prof. Ummareddy Venkateswarlu]

The relief that is provided is hardly Rs. 148 crore from the Calamity Relief Fund.

This is quite inadequate as far as flood situation in Andhra Pradesh is concerned. I need not repeat the total figures of what the West Bengal has suffered. I can only put it in this way that these were one of the severest and the rarest flood situations that the West Bengal and Gujarat had suffered.

Now, I come to the drought situation in Andhra Pradesh, I think, this is one of the very rare situations. Sir, you are aware of the drought which has been there in the recent past in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. All these States were severely affected. Tackling the situation of drought is one of the major items. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has experienced one of the worst droughts in recent times which resulted in loss of agricultural production worth Rs. 2,560 crore. It is unprecedented. A Memorandum was also submitted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh to the Government of India as early as in September, 1999. As against a requirement of Rs. 720 crore, just Rs. 75 crore had been provided by the Government of India as advance.

To tackle this situation of drought in Andhra Pradesh, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has taken the most appropriate steps. The most innovative step that has been taken by the Government of Andhra Pradesh is that under the *Neeru Meeru* Programme, all the people have been made participants and in every house, it has been made mandatory that there should be a soaking pit. We know that in the recent past, the underground water table has been depleting and water circulation is also not proper. So, we have got the responsibility to see that level of underground water table is increased. That is why, under this particular programme, rain water harvesting has been taken up as one of the major issues. So, construction of soaking pits have been taken up on mass-scale along with watershed programme, check-dams and renovation of old village tanks. So, this is one of the major issues.

Now, the rainfall is optimum in most of the areas, but there is no rain water-holding capacity in the villages. Most of the village tanks have been silted and they do not have water-holding capacity. As and when it rains, the water is running out and going into the sea. Unless water-holding capacity is increased in the villages by renovating tanks on a mass-scale by spending huge amounts on that, most of the rain water will go waste as a result of which during summer, there will not be adequate water in the villages. So, this has to be taken

up in a big way by the Government of India and not by the State Government because most of the State Governments have been starving of funds. Sir, these are some of the steps that have been taken and relief measures that have been provided both at the time of drought and also at the time of recent flood in Andhra Pradesh by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. These measures are very meagre and need to be augmented. In particular, the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission need to be looked into and taken up immediately.

While concluding, I would say that one of the major measures which should be taken in Andhra Pradesh is to link the waters of Godavari and Krishna by providing Polavaram project. Otherwise, most of the water will go waste into the sea. On the one side, we are losing a lot of water which is running into the sea and on the other, there is a huge drought situation in major parts of this country.

To avert the situation of droughts followed by floods, there should be linkage of all the rivers and better utilisation of water. In the days to come, there are going to be disputes about water not only between the States but also between the countries.; The river-water disputes are likely to come up. If at all the wars come up, the wars are likely to come up on the issue of water sharing not only between the States but between the countries also.

Thank you very much for having given me this opportunity.

18.20 hrs.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN (Murshidabad): Respected Chairman, Sir, I would like to mention here about the unprecedented floods which have affected nine districts in West Bengal. Hon. Member, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, already spoke about this. Among the nine districts in West Bengal, Murshidabad is the worst affected district. The total life lost due to floods is 1,320. Out of this, 696 in Murshidabad, which is my constituency. More than five lakh houses, out of 22 lakh houses, collapsed in Murshidabad. a big bridge, 80 metres in breadth and 62 feet in depth, collapsed in Bhagwangolia Thana, which is in my constituency, and it is now like a new river in this locality.

What is the reason for these heavy floods? Hon. Member, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, has already mentioned about it before this august House. There was a heavy rainfall right from 17th September to 20th September.

This is the main reason for the unprecedented floods that have occurred in West Bengal. There was a question in this august House as to whether flood forecasting was being done in proper time or not. In this regard, I would like to quote the reply of the Minister of State in the Ministry of Water Resources which was given on 22nd November to an Unstarred Question No. 519. I am referring to the reply given at para 'c' and para 'd'. It says:

"Flood forecasting cannot prevent floods, but helps in mitigating the flood damage potential. The Central Water Commission issues flood forecasts and flood inflow pattern forecasts to the State Government and concerned agencies from time to time, and regular flood warnings are issued from offices located in DVC and other barrages. The district administration makes elaborate arrangement of communication to different block offices which are likely to be affected by flood waters passing through these areas."

Someone has told that Unscientific release of water from the dam is the cause of the floods. I would like to place some data before you. The Massanjore Dam is managed by the West Bengal Government. The capacity of this dam is eight lakh cubic feet area. Before the rains, it was nearly dry. In the above mentioned four days, ten lakh cubic acre feet of water flowed into that dam. What was the release? On 18th September, the inflow was 2 lakh cusecs, and the release was 43,000 cusecs. This has been calculated by the management. On 19th September, the inflow was one lakh cusecs, and the release was 1.23 cusecs. On 20th September, the inflow was two lakh cusecs, and the release was 1.28 cusecs. On 21st September, the inflow was 2.8 lakh cusecs, and the release was 1.674 cusecs. On 22nd September, the inflow was 1.97 cusecs, and the release was 1.44 cusecs. I would say that it was a calculated release by the management. So, unscientific release of water is not the cause of the floods.

Sir, one thing that is being spoken about in whispering tone in West Bengal is that water distribution as result of Indo-Bangladesh Farrakka Treaty has been the cause of floods. I would like to urge upon the Central Government to consider it their duty to come out with a clear statement on the Farrakka Barrage Treaty between India and Bangladesh.

Sir, so far as rural infrastructure in the State of West Bengal is concerned, I would like to submit that it has been totally damaged in so many places. Out of the total 1700 route kilometres of National Highway in the State, 800 kilometres of National Highway, that includes 19 bridges, have been damaged. Railway connection has been completely out of place. My district and my

constituency has not yet been linked by rail. Partial restoration work of railway lines has started only on the 17th of November, 2000. In total 147 kilometres of rail route there are 117 breaches. So, severe had been the extent of damage.

Sir, I am stating all these things to only show that it was a natural calamity of a rare severity. It has already been stated by our leader Shri Somnath Chatterjee. The hon. Prime Minister has said that it is a national damage. What was expected in this perspective? Our expectation was that the Central assistance would reach the people. But what has happened in reality? The Central Government has failed to compensate this national damage. I would like to urge upon the Central Government to show a reasonable attitude to save the people of West Bengal. The people of West Bengal are out and out Indians. No fund has been provided so far. The Government is talking about advance.

Sir, I am sorry to inform this august House about what has been published in a newspaper which says:

"I am advancing either the Central Plan Assistance or the share of the Central Taxes or other receivables by the State Governments."

Sir, does it help the State? Never does it help the State. As per the norms of the Planning Commission and the Finance Commission there is no conditionality. Such things help the States only to improve their position temporarily from the view point of 'ways and means' provision. Except that, it has no other relevance.

Sir, the Government has failed to constitute the NCCF. There is already a discussion about the NCCF and I am not in a position to go into the details of it. According to one of the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission, which have been accepted by this Parliament and as well as by the Government, there was ample scope to form the NCCF. It was the Final Report of the Eleventh Finance Commission. Even the Mid-term Report of the Eleventh Finance Commission also mentioned that there was ample scope for the formation of the NCCF.

Sir, we had the Monsoon Session of Parliament and now we are in the Winter Session of Parliament. The Government had ample scope to form this Fund. But I doubt the attitude of the Government. I firmly believe that it is an unpardonable delay on the part of the Government. It is an aberration on the Constitution.

Sir, we are not sitting idle. Re-construction work in the State of West Bengal is going on in full swing. The

[Shri Moinul Hassan]

people of West Bengal will not spare the casual attitude of the Central Government in the days to come.

Sir, I would just like to take another three to four minutes and I would like to take this opportunity to mention about another disaster and that is about erosion. The problem of erosion is a long-standing issue before the Government of India.

In the eight Districts in which the problem of Ganga-Padma erosion is faced, particularly Murshidabad and Malda Districts, Nadia lakhs of people are evicted, lakhs of acres of irrigated land, populous villages, townships and fruit orchard areas are engulfed by the river. The entire economy of these areas is disrupted. A Railway station and the National Highway are at threat. In Eastern Railway, the distance between a station called Sakoghat and the river is only 150 metres at present. At a place called Fazilpur in Murshidabad, the distance between Bhagirathi and Padma is only one kilometre. It was 15 kilometres just fifteen years ago. They can merge into a single river any day. If it happens, there will be another national disaster. The railway station and the National Highway are under threat. It is a long-pending demand to treat this calamity as a national disaster because it is caused by a national river.

Many Expert Committees were set up in the past. An Expert Committee was set up by the Planning Commission in September, 1996 to examine the problem of erosion of Ganga-Padma river system in Malda and Murshidabad Districts of West Bengal and to recommend remedial measures. The Committee in its report submitted in December, 1996 had identified 16 schemes under short-term measures costing Rs. 315 crore, and four schemes under long-term measures costing Rs. 612 crore. The Tenth Finance Commission awarded only Rs. 20 crore to tackle this problem. The Eleventh Finance Commission said:

"The State has drawn our attention to the continuing problem of the Ganga-Padma river system in the Districts of Malda and Murshidabad and sought grant to undertake repair measures. We have provided Rs. 60 crore for this purpose."

The amount given was only Rs. 60 crore. It is extremely inadequate. I had an opportunity to meet the Chairman and Members of the Eleventh Finance Commission. I submitted a Memorandum demanding adequate funds. The Government of West Bengal also placed a Memorandum before the Eleventh Finance Commission. We demanded release of special grants to the tune of Rs. 5.37 crore in a phased manner. During

the period of the Eleventh Finance Commission the funds were very much needed but they were not given.

The Government of India already announced a scheme to meet the problem on 75:25 sharing basis. A lot of funds have already provided by the State Government but the Government of India has been silent on this. In this situation, I would like to say before you and before this august House that to meet this national disaster, release of money from the national fund is very much required.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this House is making a serious discussion on the problems of famine and natural calamities. Various hon'ble Members have discussed the loss occurred due to flood, famine and other natural calamities. Hon'ble leader of CPM-Shri Somnath Chatterjee has expressed his concern over the loss occurred in other parts of the country especially West Bengal. The Union Government has been asked to provide assistance in this regard. I feel that many hon'ble Members have rightly said that this is not a political issue. ... (Interruption)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Carrying a mobile phone in the House is not permitted. Since you have brought it please switch it off. Mr. Speaker, Sir, has repeatedly directed not to bring mobile phones in the House.

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Its alright Sir, I will not bring it in future. The Union Government should generously provide help at this juncture. Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture was with us in Bihar at the time of massive devastation that had been caused by the floods. From Patna itself, he had directed the officers of Department of Agriculture to go to Bengal and had himself gone to Bengal from Patna on the directives of the Prime Minister. He observed the prevailing conditions there and realised the seriousness of circumstances and had also placed his views and opinions strongly in that regard. Sir, as compared to other areas, where floods occur in 10, 20 or even 25 years, my State witnesses floods every year. Almost all districts of Northern Bihar face loss and destruction every year due to floods. Loss of crop and other property worth rupees 850 crore has taken place over there. You would agree to the fact that all rivers in my State have their origin in Nepal, and the State Government can, in no way, stop these rivers from flowing into our country. No dam can be constructed over there. The State Government does not have the right to hold

talks with the Government of Nepal in this regard. Northern Bihar would continue to be ruined in the same manner unless the Union Government work on the construction of dams on have effective talks with the Government of Nepal. We belong to neighbouring areas of the terai region of Nepal. Our area touches the border of Nepal, where the river makes a steep fall from the mountain, altogether causing an intensive erosion of soil, thus causing heavy damage due to floods which cannot be imagined.

Hon. Minister of Agriculture hails from Bihar, he is very well aware of the conditions there. I have stood to say before the House that the Union Government may hold talks with the Government of Nepal so as to find out some concrete solution to tackle the menace of devastation caused to Bihar by international rivers and if the Government is unable to find out any positive solutions to this problem, then it could give compensation for the damage caused by these rivers.

Sir, the Union Government should think over this fact that things would not be right if efforts in this direction are not made. One and a half lakh hectare land, out of ten lakh hectares of land in Bihar, is atoll area. Nine lakh hectares of land belongs to Northern Bihar and other areas. These areas are badly affected by water logging which has become a regular feature there. Our land would be blessed with prosperity if arrangements are made to clear off accumulated water from this ten lakh hectares of land. Schemes should be formulated for this purpose and hundred percent Central assistance by the Union Government should be provided.

I feel that Bihar can never prosper unless efforts are made in this direction. Bihar is presently divided in two parts. And Bihar is virtually left with nothing after the creation of Jharkhand State. Incidentally, all industries, power plants, coal and other mineral resources are located in the Jharkhand State. Now our area is left with agriculture only and that too is devastated by the rivers flowing from Nepal. Heavy damage is caused by the Ganga, the Kosi, the Baramati and such other rivers flowing in that area. Area from Buxar to Farakka, Munger and Patna is badly affected by erosion. Entire villages have got submerged in water and people are devoid of food even. No preventive measures for flood are being taken in this area. I would urge the hon. Minister that the Union Government take effective steps to check the erosion cause by river Ganga. We can not undertake such a serious task depending only upon the Government of Bihar. Hon. Minister of Agriculture is well aware of the resources left with the Government of Bihar.

Some concrete measures are required to be taken by the Union Government to prevent from flood the 9 lakh hectares of land in Northern Bihar affected with water logging because public life, railways etc. are affected by flood. Thousands of families are taking shelter at the river bank and thousands of people die due to floods every year. So, the Government should atleast provide some help, but the Government is extending no help.

Hon. Minister of Agriculture knows that the floods had occurred last year also. A number of Ministers from Bihar are sitting here in this House who are well aware of the situation prevailing there. Even Andhra Pradesh got help from the Union Government, other States should also get help and so Bihar should also get this help. In order to remove the hardships of Bihar people, I would especially say to the hon. Minister of Agriculture that please don't consider yourself as the Minister of Agriculture in the N.D.A. Government, but feel that you are a leader of Bihar and the people of Bihar have given their love, affection and co-operation to you. So, you should resolutely come forward for the welfare of people of Bihar. We are demanding our rights, we are not begging for anything. The people of Bihar are not ready to tolerate the discriminatory act done to them. The Union Government should also undertake its liability towards Bihar.

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we are discussing upon the damage caused by floods and famine in the entire country. Members who have spoken before me, have presented their respective view points. It is really a peculiar situation that only the farmer of the country gets affected by floods and famine even after 52 years of independence. We have been discussing upon Agriculture and marketing since the last many days and today we are also making a discussion on the loss suffered by the farmers due to floods and famine.

What is the extent of damage caused and how can this problem be resolved. A large part of India is afflicted by famine and floods. Lot of damage has been caused. Intensive discussion took place on this issue. Estimates of the loss were also made. The Union Government provided assistance in this regard. The Union Government says that State Governments do not perform their duties properly. We have made discussion here. But we were kept in dark of the action taken subsequently in this regard. Discussion on the loss occurred due to floods on 9th August was held. Shri Raghunath Jha, speaking just before me, had said that heavy loss has occurred in Northern India from Himachal Pradesh to Arunachal Pradesh due to overflow of rivers flowing from Nepal.

[Shri Ravi Prakash Verma]

This matter was raised in the House with full zest. Around 20 Members took part in it. But no one knows as to what happened subsequently.

My area adjoins the terai region of Nepal. Many new agricultural projects have been formulated in Nepal wherein the direction of the flow of river is being diverted. A lot of loss is being caused due to these projects. The river Sharda which previously had 3-4 lakh cusecs of water, is now flowing with 7-8 lakh cusecs of water. This matter was raised before the Union Government but it is very unfortunate to inform that no measures have been adopted despite assurance given by the hon'ble Minister, and we were not taken into confidence. We were assured that a high level delegation would be sent to Nepal by the Union Government and would solve the problem after proper dialogues. But no one is aware of any such delegation. Magnitude of loss is increasing day by day. Parliament is responsible for that. We virtually become word less when we go before the people. The people have been dragged to the situation of revolt against the Government.

Moreover, there is the problem of marketing of agricultural product. Their crop is not getting sold in the market. The loss taking place due to natural calamities, on the other hand, is making the condition of farmers all the more worse. Whether the Union Government is providing assistance or not and whether the State Government is making efforts or not, but one thing is sure that the administrative machinery is showing utter carelessness in this regard, be it the Orissa cyclone or the problem of famine etc. The problem of the farmers increase due to the inefficiency of the officers and staff engaged in relief works. This should be taken into consideration.

Some part of my parliamentary constituency also gets affected by drought. The water level is decreasing there. The Government of India had sanctioned two projects of the 'Water shed Management Scheme' and allocations to the tune of Rs. two crore was made but no work has been started so far. It has come to my knowledge that the entire money has been spent. The officers had spent all the funds through NGO's of their own relatives. Due to this, the scheme has been shelved. We will have to think over it. What does this prove? Whether the funds are allocated by the Centre or by the State Government, but the system should be monitored. You are yourself associated with farmers. I wish you will pay attention towards it. You must pay attention towards the problems of the farmers. Efforts should be made to put the Government machinery engaged in relief operations in

order so that the assistance may reach the needy in a proper way.

SHRI RAGHUVIR SINGH KAUSHAL (Kota): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I hail from a State whose name is synonymous with farmers. Famine on a small scale do not cause panic in our State. Rajasthan is a very backward State from the education, economic and social perspective. Geographically now Rajasthan has become bigger than Madhya Pradesh. It's area is 3 lakhs and 46 thousand square kilometres and its population is 4.75 crores. Most of its part is desert area where the water is not available. It is in the grip of famine for the last three years. I have never seen such a famine in my life. There is a well developed canal in my constituency. It has not faced any dearth of water since the construction of Gandhi Sagar Dam. Water is even supplied to Madhya Pradesh from the dam. Since long there is no water in the Gandhi Sagar Dam reservoir. Consequently the farmers will not get water from 30th of this month. Irrigation of crops has not taken place and the crops have dried up. Some of the canal area falls in district Ganganagar also. That area is also not getting water from Indira Gandhi and Ganga canals.

Right now, Shri Chaturvedi was telling that Bengal is facing the fury of floods while Madhya Pradesh is facing the scourge of drought' while I would like to emphasize that my State is in the grip of both the calamities, i.e. floods as well as drought. Till now the flood water in Loonksar has not been drained out though the people have been evacuated quite early. It was suggested to the State Government to seek the assistance of the army but it was not availed due to the political differences. Several diseases and epidemics are on the rise due to the stagnant flood water. There is no water in the wells, tubewells have sunk down and water is nowhere to be seen. The wild animals like panthers are coming towards the villages and others residential areas. A panther got into a house in Jaipur, probably in search of water. The life has come to a state of helter-skelter in Rajasthan.

My Western Rajasthan is entirely dependent on livestock. Last year, due to famine, the cows were witnessed deserting the villages and dying of thirst and hunger during their immigration. The exodus at mass scale was taking place wherein the entire villages were witnessed to be moving out of Rajasthan. Probably, Rajasthan has never faced such a crisis before. Government notifications in regard to famine has only been issued three days back on our constantly pressurising the Government to do so. The people were making demand for the Central allocation in this regard

and they were doing so for the last three to four months, but the memorandum has been submitted to the Union Government only 3-4 days before. I would like to thank Shri Digvijay Singhji for talking to all the members of the party and meeting the Prime Minister even though the Chief Minister of Rajasthan did not even talk to us. We, the BJP MP's from Rajasthan met with hon. Prime Minister and he assured us to extend maximum assistance in view of the severe famine being faced by Rajasthan. Whether Rajasthan Government do not have any responsibility in this regard?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, though there is no way out to prevent the occurrence of natural calamities but what to talk about a crisis created by the Government itself. Whom shall we approach to the lament that the such a situation is developing in Rajasthan? Sometimes it is the famine which is resulting in the death and killings of people and sometimes it is the lack of fodder for the cattle which is causing the cattle to perish. The adage, "Nero was fiddling while Rome was burning" is most apt in regard to Rajasthan where the Rajasthan Government is busy undertaking the beautification project while the State is passing through a place of severe crisis. Beautification of Jaipur, Kota and Jodhpur is taking place while the Rajasthan Government is fiddling like Nero.

At present, the Government is not providing any financial assistance to the farmers and on the other hand, the banks are indulging in forcible recovery of loans from the farmers. The farmers are suffering on both the fronts i.e. on one hand they are facing the scourge of natural calamity while on the other, they are also being harassed by State administration. Rajasthan is in the grip of severe famine today. Despite the Passage of the proposal seeking to ban the transportation of fodder outside the State, the purpose has not been achieved i.e. fodder is still being sent outside Rajasthan. 'Gawar' which has not been banned, is being sent outside. The reserve forest areas which is opened for the animals during famine, has not been opened. Hand pumps are lying out of order and they are not being repaired. The Government assistance are not being fully utilized. Sir, I submit that during the last three years in 1998-99, 20 district and in 1999-2000, 26 districts were drought affected. Right now, hon. Chaturvediji was telling that 37 districts out of 45 district have been affected by drought in Madhya Pradesh. But in my State all the 31 districts have been affected due to famine and if the total damage is calculated then it comes to Rs. 3248 crores. Year-wise it is Rs. 2155 crores for the year 1999-2000 and Rs. 2283 crores in 1998-99. Consequently, the economic conditions of the State has worsened and become pathetic. Till now, people used to die of hunger but now a Stage has come when they are dying of thirst, for want of drinking water. The

total losses suffered during the three years comes to the tune of Rs. 9533 crore and even this year the crop is not being procured at Minimum Support Price. Sometimes back hon. Minister of Agriculture had said that the Union Government have instructed the State Government to procure the crop at the Minimum Support Price and to install the weighting machines and the loss will be compensated by the Union Government but nowhere in Rajasthan the crop is being purchased at the Minimum Support Price. In this way the farmers are facing the problems from both the fronts.

The State Government had made a demand for allocating Rs. 1900 crore but now they have revised it to 2300 crore. In the year 1999-2000, Rs. 207 crore were provided under the C.R.F., Rs. 21 crore under NFCR and Rs. 102 crore as special Central assistance. In this way a total of Rs. 332 crore was received apart from railway wagons. The interest on this amount comes to Rs. 73 lakhs. The biggest achievement of the Rajasthan Government is to earn Rs. 73 lakhs as interest. Rs. 751 crore were distributed during the year 1998-99 and 1999-2000 under various centrally sponsored schemes out of which Rs. 586 crore have been spent and a sum of Rs. 205 crore remains as balance amount under the head of centrally sponsored scheme and Rs. 105 crore under C.R.P.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now you conclude.

SHRI RAGHUVIR SINGH KAUSHAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I hail from that State which is reeling under severe famine. If I do not say even a few words to apprise the House about the situation prevailing in my State, the people of my State will accuse me for not doing justice to them. I would only like to take two minutes. Shri Sonaramji who is sitting here, will support all the points by me raised in the House. He fully knows as to what I am saying is true. He may speak anything in the House but he is definitely depressed because he also hails from the area which is reeling under severe famine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

SHRI RAGHUVIR SINGH KAUSHAL: I wanted to submit only this much that what kind of situation is prevailing at present. I would like to know as to where the concrete steps have been taken and the expenditure involved therein during the period when the famine had struck last time. Under the right of access to information nobody is prepared to inform us, as to where the

[Shri Raghuvir Singh Kaushal]

permanent work had been undertaken. In fact no such works had been undertaken. Hence, even the Central assistance given to Rajasthan Government was not spent during famine. Sir, though we can cope up with natural calamities yet how can we meet the crisis created by the Government.

19.00 hrs.

The money for accelerated drinking water scheme and DDP was sent by the Centre to the State. Amount to the tune of Rs. 54 crore remains unutilised. Though it would have lapsed but the Centre renewed it. That money was also not spent and then a demand was made to release the first instalment of Rs. 105 crore. The Centre responded by saying that so far not even the allocation made previously has not been utilised but the State Government replied that the State is struck by natural calamity. The Centre released the money. Then again the State Government asked for releasing second instalment. Centre asked for submitting the utilisation certificate of the first instalment and once again the State Government put forth the same plea that the State is facing extraordinary situation and once again Rs. 110 crore was released, only Rs. 15 crore has been sanctioned so far for the approved work but it is yet to start. Now the question is who will monitor whether the money provided by the Centre is actually being utilised or not? Whose responsibility is it to oversee all these things. When we raise with the Union Government, pet comes the reply that it is not under our purview, it will be taken care of only after the CAG report is submitted. But by the time it is submitted, the people and the cattle will die of hunger and it will be no use to pay attention towards this issue. I would like to know whether we will have to move the Court as is being done by the environmentalists? It is the moral duty of the Government to make available drinking water to every person. I support as to what Shri Chaturvedi had stated that the Union Government should ponder over this from a national perspective. Today Rs. 13000 crore are being spent in the field of telephone and communications. Had that money been spent in these sectors then we might have got relief. I would like to submit before you this much only that the schemes which may provide permanent and long term solution to the people, will only ameliorate their lot.

[English]

SHRI PURNO A. SANGMA (Tura): Mr. Chairman Sir, at the very outset, I would like to thank our senior hon. Member Shri Somnath Chatterjee for facilitating this debate. This debate was possible because he and his

colleagues from West Bengal had raised the issue of floods in West Bengal during 'Zero Hour'.

I would like to say that the whole House is with the people of West Bengal. The floods in West Bengal have really been unprecedented. People have suffered and are still suffering. I would request the Government of India to extend the maximum possible assistance to the Government of West Bengal so that the sufferings of the people can be mitigated.

It is more than fifty years since we have achieved Independence. We have completed eight Five Year Plans. Today we are at the end of the Ninth Five-Year Plan and very soon we will be going to the Tenth Five-Year Plan. We have the National Water Policy of 1987. The latest National Agriculture Policy of July, 2000 also has a Chapter on risk management which deals with flood situations. In our country, both at the national and at the State levels, there are a number of institutions for water resource management, including flood control. We have a National Water Development Agency functioning from 1982.

And yet, we are still grappling with the problems of frequent floods, its fury and the toll that it takes on human lives, livestock resources, infrastructure, soil erosion and so on and so forth.

Why has it happened? We have a Policy. We have a plan and yet, we are not able to tackle this problem. Perhaps, one of the reasons is that we have been for the last more than fifty years, tackling this problem on a year-to-year basis. We are just indulging ourselves in a crisis management exercise. The Parliament debates this issue every year and we can see, when this serious issue is being discussed, the attendance in the House. This issue is always tackled by the Minister for Agriculture. I do not know what Agriculture Minister can do to stop floods and other national calamities. The relevant Ministers are not present here. The relevant Ministers do not listen to the debate. I am so happy that Shri Arjun Sethi has come at the last moment because my speech has nothing much to do with Shri Nitish Kumar. My speech has everything to do with your Ministry.

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN SETHI): I was busy in the other House.

SHRI PURNO A. SANGMA: The relevant Ministry is the Ministry of Finance but the Finance Minister will never be present when such discussions do take place. Therefore, not only at the level of the Government, I think, but even at the level of Parliament itself, we will

have to debate this issue in such a manner so that all the Ministers concerned are present here and Government comes out with a long-term policy and plan.

The second reason as to why this problem is not being tackled effectively perhaps has something to do with the Constitution itself. Under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, inter-State rivers fall under the Union List. Water, irrigation, canals, drainage and embankments fall under the State List. Water Development as such falls under the Concurrent List. Ultimately, water management becomes nobody's baby. I think, we will have to think over it as to whether there is something wrong in the method of handling water resources itself. Every year, flood takes place as it has taken place this year in many parts of India. This has been very effectively articulated by hon. Members from different parts of the country. Shri Somnath Chatterjee has given us a detailed account of it. But what do we see when we discuss it? When we discuss this, the Members from the States affected will usually blame the Central Government saying that the States have been neglected and that the Central Government has not given them any assistance. And what does the Central Government say? They say that the States have not managed it properly. Shri Sudip Bandopadhyay says that Bengal flood was man-made flood. That is his defence. That is the defence of the Central Government. And then, the Central Government says that though it was your failure, we are sending a Central team. The Central team goes there, makes an assessment of the losses, comes back and gives a report to Shri Nitish Kumar.

Shri Nitish Kumar, in turn, goes to the Finance Minister. The Finance Minister says: "Thank you very much. Let me keep your report here. I cannot do anything" Every year, the matter ends like this. I know about it. I had been the Chief Minister myself. The North-Eastern region is very badly affected. Every year, we have natural calamities. I had been coming to the Centre when I was the Chief Minister there. I know how it functions and how the money comes. It is a very sad state of affairs. Therefore, I think, we will have even to go into the real policy of water management. The real policy of water management has to be gone into very deeply.

Sir, I do not want to take much of the time of the House. But I have to speak something about the North-Eastern region. As the House is aware, there are seven States in the North-East. We have six river basins. One is the Brahmaputra basin; the second is the Barak basin; the third is the Sub basin of Tripura; the fourth is the Imphal-Manipuri basin; the fifth is the Kolodyne basin in Mizoram and the sixth one is the Teza basin in Nagaland.

All the States of the North-East are very severely affected by floods and natural calamities. But the State which suffers most out of these floods is Assam because of the Brahmaputra river.

As the House is aware, the Brahmaputra river is one of the largest rivers in the world. It is the principal arm of Ganga-Meghna-Brahmaputra system. Its length is 1,629 kms. in Tibet; 278 kms. in Arunachal Pradesh; 640 kms. in Assam and 363 kms. in Bangladesh. The total annual flow of the Brahmaputra river is 500 billion cubic metres which is 30 per cent of the total surface flow of all the rivers in the country. If somebody has to understand the problem that is being faced by the people in Assam due to the Brahmaputra river, one has to go and see it for himself. Otherwise, it cannot be believed. The miseries of the people are so much that unless you go and see the spot for yourself, see the conditions of the people and talk to them, it is very difficult to appreciate the problem that is being faced. In the last few months, I have been touring in the State of Assam, sometimes extensively. I have been to Dibrugarh. I stayed in Dibrugarh. I studied in Dibrugarh and I also worked in Dibrugarh. The original Dibrugarh town is no more there. It has already been submerged by the river. A new town has come up. Even the new town of Dibrugarh is so much in danger that thousands of hectares of land under tea cultivation are affected. The medical college and the airport are so much in danger of being eroded. I went to Jorhat. I went to a place called Nimotighat. I could see hundreds of refugees being kept in a camp because their whole village had been swept away by the Brahmaputra river. I was there. This had happened. I was in Morigaon district. I went to the places called Moirabari, Lahorighat, Ulubari, Chutiagaon, Tengaguri, Balidunga, Buragaon, Niz-Saharia, Baralimori-Moyong etc.

It is very sad. In the last two or three years, 356 villages have been washed away. They were not visible anymore.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Like in my birthplace in Tezpur.

SHRI PURNO A. SANGMA: So, these villages are not visible at all. But when I met the people and had discussion with them, they told me a very interesting thing. They said: "Sir, you do not worry about floods. We have learnt how to live with water." So, flood is no more a problem. But the problem is erosion. How to protect the villages? That is the problem which needs to be tackled. Giving relief to the flood affected people, whether it comes or not, whether we get shelter or not, we are

[Shri Purno A. Sangma]

used to be, for ages and ages, not worried about our shelter and our food; we are worried about our villages. Please save our villages.

I went to Motichar in Dhubri town. I went to Saliswar, Balijora, Sonari, Goalpara town of Golapara district and the conditions are the same. I know that the Government of India has been taking a lot of interest in that. The Brahmaputra Board has been constituted by an Act of Parliament in 1980. Today we are in 2000. Twenty years have gone. What has happened in 20 years? I have the report — Water Vision for the North-East — 2050. Here, the Chairman of the Brahmaputra Board says that the Master Plan for 48 important river basins, identification of 33 drainage condition areas, the investigation of 17 multi-purpose projects have been carried out. Construction of multi-purpose projects can also be taken up by the Board in consultation with the State Government, which means, nothing has been done so far. So, they are still discussing as to who will execute those projects.

Master Plan-I is very interesting. Master Plan-I is for the implementation of multi-propose projects and schemes — the main stem of Brahmputra. The project outlay is Rs. 91,000 crore. I do not know whether the Finance Minister of this country would ever have courage even to look at this figure.

Master Plan-II relates to Barak river and its boundaries. The proposed outlay is Rs. 4,000 crore. Master Plan-III relates to 39 important tributaries of the Brahmaputra and eight rivers of Tripura, and so on and so forth. Most of the proposals — I do not want to waste the time of the House, I have everything — are lying with the CCEA — the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs. I think, I will pass on those papers. I will have a discussion with the Minister concerned perhaps.

Sir, in the meanwhile, — I will take just two minutes more because it is important for the House to know — I was saying that if one has to understand and appreciate your problem, then, you have to pay a visit. I just give a glimpse of what is happening. I would take the figures of 1988 because that is the only latest figures available with the Ministry. This is your document, Mr. Minister. Fortunately, I talked to some of your officers and they had sent me these documents. These documents have been supplied by the Ministry itself. Population affected in 1988 alone is 10.49 million; damage to the crops, Rs. 334.10 crore; damage to the houses, Rs. 225 crore; loss of lives, 232. This is one year figure. What has been done? Well, I do not want to quote. If I quote this figure as to how much money has been spent to control the Brahmaputra river by the Centre and by the States,

I am sure, it will demoralise the people of Assam so much that I do not really have the courage to quote those figures.

Sir, I think it is time that we wake up and it is time that we have short-term plan, medium-term plan and long-term plan. Of course, there is no dearth of plans; plans are being made, but what is required is the resource, what is required is the will of the Government to do it. I know there is a constraint of resource. I have been in the Government for long. I appreciate it. But, if there is a will there is a way. I hope this Government will have that will.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GUDHE (Amravati): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today except a few States, all the other States especially Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are in the grip of drought. Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have been facing the scourge of drought for the last 3-4 years.

When Shri Chaturvediji who hails from Madhya Pradesh, was speaking, then it was being suggested that we should not look into this matter with political colours. When he was in the ruling party he used to say the same thing and now when he is in the opposition, he has reiterated the same point. But this problem is lying unresolved for the past 50 years. Vidarbha region in Maharashtra produces a variety of crops including sugarcane, orange, cotton and gram but the Government has always neglected the region. The orange produced in Vidarbha is exported to several countries but every year the orange crop suffers damage either due to excess rainfall or deficient rainfall or due to some disease. Every year the cotton crop also suffers damage. This year the situation has been taken such a turn that the entire Kharif and Rabi crops have been damaged completely. Only after this, the State Government have declared Vidarbha as a famine affected region but it has not provided any assistance. The State Government has declared the region to be drought affected but no help has been given. The Chief Minister makes no announcements regarding relief but time and again issue a statement that the State have no money and is almost bankrupt.

Last time, in 1997, similar famine had struck the State. At that time the crop was damaged due to non germination of seeds owing to scarcity of water. However, the then Government of Maharashtra had provided cash assistance to the farmers even without getting any assistance from the Centre and also made available seeds to the farmers. Those who had lost the Kharif crop, got assistance for Rabi crop. But now when this entire region

is famine stricken no one is there to back up the farmers of Vidarbha. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): The assistance should be provided by the Government of India for it is not facing resource crunch.

SHRI ANANT GUDHE: If the Government honestly wish to provide assistance then it should do so like the 1997 regime. The then Government put aside the provision of providing assistance at the rate of Rs. 200 hundred per hectare and instead provided assistance of Rs. one thousand per hectare.

This assistance which was subject to a ceiling of two acres was raised to five acres. The farmers were provided seeds, fertilizers and the cash owing to which the farmers could produce bumper crop. All this happen when there is a will to provide assistance. Due to it the farmers have been committing suicide everyday. Earlier, when the farmers committed suicides due to their inability to repay the loans, their families were provided compensation of Rs. one lakh each. Today when the farmers are committing suicides in Maharashtra, Vidarbha and Marathwara, the assistance worth not a single pie is being given to them by the State Government. It simply means that the State Government do not bother about the farmers. It is only paying attention towards the rich people. It is fairly evident by the example of Marathwada where all the crops, from paddy to cotton have been damaged and the farmers have received no assistance from the State Government.

[English]

SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL (Patan): Sir, hon. Members from Gujarat must be allowed. ...*(Interruptions)* It should be either from this side or that side. Otherwise. I will be compelled to stage a walkout. ...*(Interruptions)* I am very serious about that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please resume your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): We are ready to sit upto 8 O'clock in the night provided you give us an opportunity to speak in the drought in Gujarat.

SHRI ANANT GUDHE: I demand from the Union Government to constitute a Committee of various Departments to combat the drought situation as it had

done earlier. It should send assistance to the States keeping in view the perennial droughts situation in the State. The pending proposals for the construction of dams should be immediately cleared. It is my submission that if the Centre also do not provide any assistance to tackle with drought situation in Vidarbha, as the State Government is doing then the farmers will be left with no other option except committing suicide.

19.28 hrs.

[English]

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY (Berhampore, West Bengal): Sir, I rise to dwell on the debate under Rule 193 regarding damages and losses caused by floods and droughts. I promise to keep myself above petty political wranglings and to restrain myself from extracting any political mileage out of this discussion. There is a good many number of political stalwarts who have already dished out their all possible arguments in a lucid manner. I would like to add a few lines.

Politics does not mean playing hide-and-seek with the affected people or throwing dust their eyes by taking recourse to sheer sophistry, deception and statistical jugglery. What I would like to say is that time has been ripe enough to have introspection about all the natural disasters visiting our lives at regular intervals. The ecological balance has been totally disrupted. Denudation of hills is continuing unabated. It results in soil erosion as a consequence of which a huge siltation is going on in the riverbeds. This is the main reason for floods every year.

Sir, I would consider it prudent to confine myself to the flood of West Bengal in general and the worst affected district Murshidabad in particular. Sir, this year in West Bengal, nine districts have been inundated by the flood; more than two crore people have been affected; 23756 square kilometre of geographical area under West Bengal has been affected; crop area of 15110 square kilometre got submerged; 18.87 lakh houses have been damaged; and 171 blocks and 68 municipalities have also been affected seriously. But now, people of my State are under the impression that the Central Government is not attending to their sufferings and woes, for which they deserved and are entitled to.

Sir, what we are observing in West Bengal is that once the water gets receded, the State Government and the Central Government remain busy of trading charges with one another. The State Government is assiduously passing the buck to the shoulder of the Central

[Shri Adhir Chowdhary]

Government and the Central Government is also doing the same trick. But, in the milieu, people of my State have been under the vortex of profound misery, indescribable woes and excruciating tribulation. Sir, I must seek for the liberal co-operation from the Central Government because the flood in my State has acquired already a national dimension and, therefore, it should be considered as a national problem.

Sir, what is deplorable to say is that when lakhs of people of my State rendered homeless, scurrying for shelter, lakhs of men and women along with cattle huddled together without having even a tarpaulin sheet to save them from rain and Sun, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Shri Jyoti Basu exhorted the people of my State to blame the God and pray to the God. And further more, he preferred to leave for a sojourn, ...*

Sir, today the discussion was initiated by the hon. Member, Shri Somnath Chatterjee. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): Mr. Chairman, Sir, he is not present in this House. Why is he mentioning his name? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY (Berhampore, West Bengal): Sir actually the flood of my State was initiated from his constituency, which is under Birbhum district and here also he initiated the discussion. So, there is a nice coincidence.

Sir, the State Government of West Bengal is exhausting all its energies to convince the people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: My district, Murshidabad, has been the worst affected district in West Bengal. So, please let me have the opportunity to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: I will just take two minutes. The State Government is trying to convince us that it was due to heavy rainfall that flood had occurred. But you see the chart. I would like to present the chart to you. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Sir, the remarks made by him should be deleted from the record. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: What is this, Sir? My privilege should not be scuttled in such a way. My district has been the worst affected district in the State. I will take just two or three minutes' time. Please allow me two or three minutes more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Other hon. Members have their say.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: I am soliciting you for two minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: I am soliciting you for two minutes. My district has been the worst affected district in the State. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. It is a concluding one. I am not allowing you for two minutes.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: May I ask the Central Government two questions? How much time would they consume before implementing the recommendations of Pritam Singh Committee? How much time would they consume before implementing the recommendations of Keshkar Committee? It is because this is very relevant to my flood-affected State. We are under attack from both the sides. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, kindly resume your seat. Now, Shri Nawal Kishore Rai.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please resume your seat. I will not go on record even. It will not go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

19.37 hrs.

*At this stage, Shri Adhir Chowdhary
left the House.*

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI (Sitamarhi): Sir, I have rise to participate in the debate being held under Rule 193 on the problems of flood and drought. Hon. Members of all parties have since put forth their views in this regard. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing else will go on record except Shri Nawal Kishore Rai's speech.

...*(Interruptions)**

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

* Not recorded.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI: Sir, all the hon. Members have put forth their views on flood and drought. I associate myself with them and through you I will place my views precisely before the House and the Government. During every session of the House, we discuss about floods and drought just as a ritual. How long will we continue to discuss these issues in this manner? A permanent solution to these problems have never been considered seriously during the last 50 years. Be it the Tamil Nadu the point of the coastal areas of Pondicherry drought in West Bengal, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh or floods in Bihar and Gujarat, we will continue to debate in this manner till such time a long term plan on management is implemented.

Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards Bihar. I belong to Northern Bihar. There people are facing problems due to frequent floods. It causes damage to the tune of crores of rupees and loss of life and property. This year also hon. Agriculture Minister had visited my Parliamentary constituency Sitamarhi and he made a survey of floods. Just now our hon. Member from Rajasthan made a mention that his Parliamentary constituency is in the grip of flood and drought. Northern Bihar becomes totally devastated by floods. The Central Bihar faces the fury of drought. The third is 'tal' area. In this area water logging takes place on more than 1.5 lakh hectares of land. All these cause problems for the inhabitants.

However, we want solution which is not being done. People of Bihar have been raising this issue for the past 50 years and we have discussed it in Parliament also that a permanent solution to the problem should be found taking up the matter with the Nepal Government. With the present Government coming to power, we entertained some hopes in this regard. Even a discussion was started. Talks were held between our Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Nepal. Therefore, we came to know that a high level team is likely to visit Nepal for holding talks. We made a demand that the public representatives of affected areas should be included in the delegations but that was not done. Shri Brajesh Mishra, Advisor to the Prime Minister had gone to Nepal to hold talks. Later we came to know that in the Secretary level talks held in this regard, the Secretary, Water Resources, Bihar also participated. When we tried to contact the Secretary, Water Resources, we came to know from the hon. Minister and the Secretary who are present in the House today also that there were proposals to construct a medium size dam in Ramnagar Ramaia on 13 rivers of Avadhara group. It is a long standing proposal. A high dam on Bagmati river in Nunthun has also been delayed for the last 50 years. There was also a proposal to desilt

the Bakhia river and repair its embankments and construct a dam in Kamalabalan area of Nepal in Shishapani. However, in the talks held with the Nepal, consensus was arrived only for the Kosi river. I have come to know that the Nepal Government has refused to give its consent to construct the Nathan dam on river Bagmati, the Ram Nagar, Ramaiya dam on Awadhara group and the dam at Shishapani in Kamalabalan. However, Union Government is maintaining secrecy in the matter. Today the people of Tirhoot, Darbhanga and Saran 'parimandals' are agitated. Recently a 'Rasta Roko Andolan' took place under the aegis the 'Sarvadaliya Barh Surksha Sangharsh Samiti.' Thereafter, an all party committee on "Bihar Nav Nirman" has been constituted. People are agitated there. Through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Water Resources to involve the members of Parliament, the legislators of Bihar and the public representative of flood affected areas and the 'tal' area to hold constructive talks. A group should be constituted involving the Finance Minister, Water Resources Minister, the Agriculture Minister and the Flood Minister to solve the problem. Otherwise, the Central Government would be held responsible for any action taken by the agitating people of Northern Bihar. I would like to warn the Government that if the issue of water management is not taken seriously by them, members belonging to both the treasury benches and the opposition join hands to speed up the agitation.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Chairman, Sir, prominent Parliamentarian hon. Shri Somnath Babu has raised the issue regarding people affected by drought and flood. Sometimes cyclone hit areas of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, sometimes areas of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh fall in the grip of drought or sometimes floods play havoc in West Bengal, Assam, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh. Discussion is going on here. Hon. Shri Sangmaji was telling that only those Ministers who are on roster duty are present in the House and the remaining are absent. This shows how serious the present Government is about national calamity. The Government are unable to deal with the situation as they are careless.

The Agriculture Minister has requested the 11th Finance Commission to do away with the system of CRF and NFCR. I do not agree to the suggestion given by the Agriculture Ministry. The Government accepts one suggestion made by it while the other is rejected.

The hon. Minister of Agriculture visited Bihar and West Bengal to assess the flood situation there. He talked to people and inquired about their condition.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): The hon. Member had made a demand so I had gone.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: The hon. Minister did a good thing. The 11th Finance Commission has said that the Bihar would get Rs. 123 crore out of which Rs. 96 crore will be Centre's share and the rest will be from the State. That means $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total funds will be shared by the Central Government and $\frac{1}{4}$ will be given by the State itself. Hence Centre's money is 76 crores and that of Bihar is Rs. 30 crores. He said that the Government have since released the funds. I would like to read out the situation prevailing West Bengal also. A sum of Rs. 101 crores was to be given for the relief works. $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total amount was to be given by the Central Government and $\frac{1}{4}$ by the State itself. That means Rs. 75 crore had to be given by the Central Government and Rs. 25 crores were to be arranged by the State itself. Generally floods and drought occur in several parts of the country at the same time. Therefore, the 11th Finance Commission made the provision that $\frac{3}{4}$ share of the Central Government and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the State would be spent on relief works. Though the hon. Minister is saying that the funds have been released yet till date not a single paise has been given. The National Calamity Relief Fund has been abolished. The hon. Minister cannot be held responsible as he was not in its favour. In such a situation, how will we face the national calamity. In recommendation No. 14.72, the 11th Finance Commission has stated that the "National Calamity Relief Fund should be abolished in its present form." This recommendation was implemented immediately. Thereafter it said that "a national centre should be set up for disaster management under the Ministry of Agriculture which should be empowered to recommended Central assistance to a State." Why it was not implemented? The part of the recommendation on abolition of NICR was implemented immediately but the good part has not been implemented till now.

19.48 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

Somnathiji was reading out recommendations number 14.74. It says, "in order to provide assistance to States by the Central Government for calamity relief works, financing should be done by levying a special surcharge on Central Taxes for a limited period. The amount so raised should be deposited in a separate fund which will be known as National Calamity Contingency Fund."

The National calamity fund has been abolished but assistance that was to be given by NCCF has not been given. Recommendations of the Finance Commission were implemented by the Government from their side. The Government are not serious about the issue. What assistance will provided under National Calamity Fund? Recommendations number 14.75, 14.76 and 14.78 are about national calamity. These recommendations have not been implemented till now. I demand that these may be implemented immediately. Just now Shri Raghunath Jha and Shri Nawal Kishore Rai raised the issue that an agreement should be signed between India and Nepal because large parts of Bihar are ruined by floods and drought. This year damage to the tune of Rs. 712 crore has been caused. 31 districts are affected by floods and 216 people have drowned. I do not know what happened to the special Calamity Relief Fund of the Central Government. Havoc played by floods in Bengal and Bihar but in the absence of Financial assistance, people are agitated there. Therefore, a memorandum has been given to the Central Government requesting for an assistance of Rs. 975 crore.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, farmers in Bihar are not getting remunerative prices. The Central Government should take action in this regard immediately.

[English]

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperumbudur): Thank you, Sir, for the opportunity given to me.

The States of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Rajasthan and Gujarat are facing drought like situation in varying degrees. Drinking water, food and fodder are in shortage and there is forced migration of men and cattle.

I also learn that in the State of Rajasthan, 31,058 villages in 31 out of 32 districts are found to be scarcity-affected. Human population of 325 lakhs, cattle population of 400 lakhs and crop in an area of 87.49 lakh hectares are severely affected by drought.

Floods and droughts are perennial calamities which adversely affect the country. Floods, caused by heavy monsoon rains, destroyed large parts of Andhra Pradesh, U.P., Bihar, West Bengal and North-Eastern States. They damaged crops worth thousands of crores, took a large number of human lives and made over eight million people homeless. Yesterday also there was a heavy cyclone in coastal areas of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry which caused floods and destruction. Large number of trees

were uprooted, houses were damaged, communication links were destroyed and many people lost their houses due to soil erosion. Many fishermen have not returned. In this regard, our State Government has taken speedy steps to recover those people who were affected by the cyclone, but unfortunately, my learned friend Shri P.H. Pandiyan misled this House. I deny his charge. Our Transport Minister and our Backward Classes Minister went to the spot immediately yesterday and have taken speedy measures to get relief to the affected people. But the usual practice of Shri Pandiyan is to speak utter untruth in the court, so, here also he uttered some untrue things. I deny his allegation. ... (*Interruptions*)

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram): Sir, when a Member is not present in the House, his name should not be taken? ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Sir, it is unfortunate that even after fifty years of Independence, the rivers causing floods on a regular basis could not be tamed and controlled. We all know that reckless deforestation of the Himalayan region and other mountains, and the age-old agrarian practices have been responsible for increasing the chances of floods. Serious attention is, therefore, required to check deforestation.

Despite the regular feature of floods, this subject is treated merely as seasonal problem and there is hardly any debate for long-term solution. This year a sum of Rs. 1,093 crore has been spent through financial institutions for flood relief only in four States. This figure spent on flood relief may cross Rs. 2,000 crore. This amount has been spent mainly on medium and short-term relief on emergency caused by floods and drought.

I am of the firm view that if money is utilised for preventive measures in advance to prevent floods or at least to minimise their impact by way of a long term strategy, we shall be able to utilise it for other developmental activities.

I urge this Government to think seriously about linking of rivers and construction of barrages to ensure the availability of water in summer season because when we find flood in a district in winter season, we find scarcity of water in the same district in summer season. When I was a member of the Consultative Committee, we usually discussed with the Chairman of our Committee and the Minister of Water Resources about the linking of Ganga-Cauvery project.

But whenever the hon. Minister gives the reply, he used to say that it will be a very expensive plan. I would request that the hon. Minister should look into this aspect.

Water goes and falls into the sea and there is a lot of wastage of water. We suffer without any ground water. Particularly in my constituency the crops have been damaged as there is no rainfall and the farmers have allowed the cattle to graze in the agriculture land. I give here some of the suggestions made by some scientists of the Delhi University regarding floods and drought.

The steps involved in implementation of the zoning measures include:

- Demarcation of areas likely to be flooded
- Preparation of detailed contour plans of such areas
- Fixation of reference river gauges and determination of areas likely to be inundated by different water levels and magnitudes of floods
- Demarcation of areas liable to be flooded by floods of different frequencies like once in two years, once in five years, once in ten years or once in twenty years etc., and its effect on accumulated rainfall.

Sir, flood management is a better mitigation tool than flood control. Similar steps may be taken for drought-prone areas also.

There is a proverb in Tamil which means 'Prevention is better than cure'. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to earmark sufficient funds for Centre-sponsored schemes for flood and drought control throughout the country. I am sure this will be a better investment in the long run. The Central Government is requested to rush immediate financial assistance to the victims of the cyclone in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry.

MR DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Ajoy Chakraborty to speak now.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA (Chhota Udepur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, out of 18358 villages of Gujarat, 12240 are affected by drought. ... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I called Shri Ajoy Chakraborty. Nothing will go on record except what he speaks.

... (*Interruptions*)*

* Not recorded.

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): Sir, floods continue to play havoc in Gujarat. Not a single Member from our State spoke till now. We are waiting. We are in no hurry. Please allow some Members from Gujarat also to speak.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will call from both the sides.

[English]

Shri Ajoy Chakraborty to speak now.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, in our country, people belonging to different States have always been the victims of natural calamities some time or the other. This year, nine districts of West Bengal are severely affected by floods which have devastated the State by the unprecedented floods. In some parts of Bihar as well as in Jharkhand, floods played havoc. The States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh etc. are badly affected by drought. Recently, there were floods and cyclone in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry.

Sir, I am the victim of the floods. My constituency is also badly affected by these unprecedented floods. Nine districts out of 17 districts of West Bengal are particularly affected by the floods which have devastated the State. I will not go into the details as to how many lives have been lost etc. as our senior colleague, Shri Somnath Chatterjee has spoken about it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Ajoy Chakraborty, please wait for a minute.

Hon. Members the House was extended up 8 O'clock. There are four to five Members yet so speak. We can give them two or three minutes each and the hon. Minister can then reply. Therefore, is it the pleasure of the House to extend the time of the House upto 8.30 p.m.?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Thank you. Shri Ajoy Chakraborty, you please continue.

20.00 hrs.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY: Sir, I need not go into details because the mover of this Motion, our senior and hon. colleague, has narrated elaborately about how many lives have been lost, how many persons are affected

and how much land is badly affected. In one word, I can say that people of nine districts out of 17 districts have been totally devastated. All the mud houses have collapsed. Roads have been destroyed. Railway lines have been destroyed. The entire paddy and other vegetable crops have been totally destroyed due to severe flood in the nine districts of West Bengal.

My constituency is also badly affected. When I visited my constituency, I saw people taking shelter on the branches of the trees. Monkeys and people were taking shelter on the branches of the trees. Sir, this has been the position. The Army personnel and BSF personnel were called in for the rescue of the people, but due to turbulent character of water, Armymen and BSF personnel could not reach the remote corners of the villages and were compelled to return to the mainland. Such was the gravity of the situation.

Our hon. Agriculture Minister visited West Bengal and expressed his view that it was a national disaster. We appreciate his visiting West Bengal and also his comment, but in spite of such a declaration, nothing has happened. The Government of India has not yet provided a single farthing, paisa for the flood affected people of West Bengal.

I need not go into the details of what are the reasons for the flood. Our hon. colleague has already stated the reasons. Some persons with ulterior motives are campaigning that was man-made. I categorically, with all my conviction, refute this charge. In reply to the Unstarred Question No. 519, the hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Water Resources has categorically stated the reasons for such a flood. I hope, our Agriculture Minister will also tell the reasons for that flood in his reply.

Sir, my demand is this. Now, the cat is out of the bag. Hence, I advise our Chief Minister that if he wants to visit the Prime Minister of India, he should go through the future Chief Minister of West Bengal because without her green signal, nothing can happen and no money will be provided for West Bengal.

I want to say that not only the flood but the erosion of rivers is also one of the reasons of this occurrence. Sir, village after village has been washed away due to the erosion of rivers, and one two-storeyed school building was submerged by the erosion of the river. I met the hon. Water Resources Minister of Government of India. I had requested him to visit this area to personally see the gravity of the situation.

Another reason is siltation of rivers. All the rivers and canals are silted and excavation is very much

needed. It is not possible on the part of the Government of West Bengal to spare money. So, I would request the Government of India to come forward to provide and spend money for the excavation of the silted rivers and canals.

Lastly, I want to identify myself like this. First I am an Indian, then I am a Bengali, Bihari, Assamese or Punjabi. I ask the hon. Minister that West Bengal is a part of India. Why is the Government refraining from promulgating an Ordinance in respect of financial assistance for West Bengal. So, I urge upon the Government of India to immediately constitute Calamity Relief Fund for financial assistance not only to West Bengal but also to other States which are affected by natural calamities.

[Translation]

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Sambalpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this serious issue in the end.

Sir, our's is a very vast country and one or the other part of it always experiences natural calamities. Bengal experienced floods. Maharashtra, Gujarat Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Orissa are affected by famine. I do not want to talk much on this issue but I would like to draw the attention of the Government and the House to the issue that last year cyclone and super cyclone played havoc in 2/3 of Orissa and approximately 50 thousand people died there. I do not know what are the Government figures but the reality is that 50 thousand people and 7 lakh animals died more than 100 villages went down the sea water. The whole of Orissa was devastated.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Orissa is grateful to the Union Government, Government of Andhra Pradesh and other States also which helped in the crisis. However, a severe famine occurring within one year of previous disaster is a matter of serious concern. 1/3 of Orissa is affected by drought. 24 out of 30 districts are affected by it. Especially in Western Orissa 10-11 districts are most affected by it. A Central team has visited there to assess the situation and today is the last day of that visit. I do not know the places which this committee has toured and what report will be submit. However, it is painful to me that the Government did not take any preventive measures in advance though the record show that there was 33 per cent shortage of rainfall during the month of July. It is but natural that difficulties would arise in the coming months. 71 per cent shortage in rainfall was from July to October. Since then Orissa Government has been writing to the Central Government time and again. The

issue was raised several times but the Central Government did not respond in time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am not levelling charges against the Government but it is a fact that had the Government reacted timely on the issue. Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Gujarat would not have faced such a grave situation. Drought is a slow poison. Sir, I am the lone speaker from my party. Therefore, please do not ask me to sit down. I will complete my speech in two minutes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, floods and cyclone occur all of a sudden and without any warning but drought always come with a prior warning. I do not know what the Central Government was doing when it was repeatedly appraised of the deteriorating situation by the State Government of Orissa. Therefore, now I would like to request the hon. Minister of Agriculture to direct the visiting Central team on telephone to properly undertake the tour and give an authentic report. We are making a demand for the past two months but the Central Government has sent the team now to assess the situation there.

Sir, I myself have visited my own district and the adjacent district also. 150 villages are affected. 90 per cent people of Beeropur village of Nuapara district flood their houses. Even a farmer having 10 acres of land is not living there. Only old people, the unemployed and incapable people are there. An adivasi residential school with 350 students is situated there. I have been told by the school teacher that only 50 students have been left in the school. 300 students have left the village. Some of them left the village with their parents and some left the place alone for begging alms outside. The same situation is prevailing in Titlagarh, Jharasguda, Kalabhanji and Sambalpur. Villages bear a deserted look. Anybody will be moved by the plight of the people if he visits them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that at least crops worth Rs. 750 crore have been damaged. We have not made any unjust demand from the Government. We have made a demand for Rs. 570 crore only. The Government say that there is plenty of food-grains, there is no shortage of food-grains. However, people are dying of starvation in Orissa and Chhattisgarh.

This is the situation prevailing at present. I do not understand what type of rule is this. As you are not giving me more time I conclude by saying one sentence. Shri Amritya Sen is the prominent Economist of the world. He has received Nobel Prize also. He has written—

[Shri Prasanna Acharya]

[English]

Poverty and famine: Starvation is the characteristic of some people not having food to eat. It is not the characteristic of their not having enough food to eat.

[Translation]

There is no lack of food-grains in our country but people are dying of starvation. I request the Central Government to make a self analysis of the issue. As many hon. Members have stated that very often we get only an inkling that analysis is going on but no results are achieved. Therefore, a long lasting blue print should be prepared. With these words I conclude though I had to say much more.

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA (Alipurduars): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on such a serious subject. Since the time is less and people of various regions are speaking on this serious subject. Once more, we have been going through the experience of rains, flood, land sliding and massive destruction which has become the destiny of this country all these years. The kind of problems the poor farmers of West Bengal are facing due to flood, we were expecting that Union Government will immediately address this problem. Along that we were also expecting from constituent groups of Union Government in West Bengal that they will also take initiative in providing funds to West Bengal from the Central Government and this fund can be utilized in providing relief materials to the flood affected people. Instead of waiting for relief fund from Centre, the Government of West Bengal immediately provided food, medicine and other necessary things to the flood affected people and even now it is doing so.

But it is a matter of regret that this natural calamity is a national loss. It was declared by the Hon. Prime Minister equivalent to national loss but nothing happened afterwards. Sh. Nitish Kumar ji visited West Bengal but did not utter anything after his return. Not a single rupee was received by West Bengal. Today we lack strong will power at national level. I am telling you that national will power is necessary otherwise every year we will keep on facing natural calamity. If you want to find a solution then we have to resolve and chalk out a master plan to find a permanent solution of such natural calamities.

I would like to ask the Union Government whether they have prepared any scheme to combat such natural calamities?

The flood situation of West Bengal not only created inconvenience to the people of West Bengal but also created hindrances in moving food supplies to seven North Eastern States. Due to closure of road and rail services, the people of north east have also to bear the burnt. Therefore, I think Union Government is responsible for this crisis and I would like to request them that if you want to seek the solution of this calamity, then you have to discuss it the way we are discussing today in House for seeking its permanent solution.

Today I met the Minister, Shri Arjun Charan Sethi and apprised him that cities and villages of Jalpaigudi, Alipurduars and Coochbehar are being destroyed by the rivers of north Bihar, originating from Bhutan. The over flowing flooded rivers are destroying industries, houses of farmers and jungles. Therefore, I would request them that a master plan should be chalked out and in association with neighbouring country Bhutan, an Indo-Bhutan joint river commission should be constituted. With this request I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I thank Shri Somnath Chatterjee also for raising this very important issue for discussion in this august House.

As everybody has said, the whole country is facing floods and drought. In Gujarat, this year's famine is the third consequent famine. North Gujarat, Saurashtra and Kutch are very badly hit by famine. Out of 80,000 villages, about 12,214 are affected by drought this year. Out of 25 District, 20 Districts are affected by drought. The problem of drinking water is so acute that we people in North Gujarat, Saurashtra and Kutch are unable to get drinking water. Groundwater level has been going down year after year. We have got no other source of drinking water. The level has gone to a depth of about 700 feet to 1,000 feet.

Kutch, the place where I come from, has been cyclones in 1998 and 1999 successively. In the cyclone of 1998 we lost 3,000 precious lives. More than 50,000 cattle, three lakh fruit-bearing trees, and property worth crores of rupees have been lost in the cyclones. The only other source of drinking water for people living in North Gujarat, Saurashtra and Kutch areas is the perennial rivers Narmada and Mahi. Narmada waters, as we all know, we entangled in six years of litigation. Ultimately when we saw a ray of hope in the Supreme Court Judge, certain activists, under the umbrella of Narmada Bachao Andolan, are attempting to see that these five crore

people, who have got no source of drinking water, suffer permanently. Even after the judgement, certain activists have started making wild allegations and contemptuous statements. They are misusing the Government media like Doordarshan.

I urge upon the Government to ensure that this type of misuse of media is stopped. My humble request to hon. Minister of Agriculture is that he should send a team to Gujarat, as is done for other parts of country, to assess the situation prevailing there.

The area I come from is adjacent to the country's border with Pakistan. More than 50 per cent of the population of this area has already migrated from there. If people migrate like this, it would be dangerous for the country from defence point of view. The Central Government should, therefore, give as much assistance to Gujarat as possible to ensure that all facilities extended to other parts of the country are given to the State of Gujarat.

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): Sir, I associate my name with Shri Gadhvi on this subject.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Okay. All Members of Parliament from Gujarat are taken to have associated with Shri Gadhvi.

SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL (Patan): Sir, while thanking you are allowing all the Members of Parliament from Gujarat to associate themselves with Shri Gadhvi, I wish to put the record straight.

Gujarat is the only State which has suffered almost all types of calamities. First it was Kandla tragedy, the greatest cyclone where Kutch, Bhuj, Kandla and Jamnagar were affected.

It was followed by periods of no rain during 1999-2000. Then, it was followed by 20 inch rain within a few hours in the city of Ahmedabad. Then, it was followed by an earthquake in the city of Bhavnagar and the entire city had sleepless nights for about ten days. Now, again this year, one of the worst droughts has occurred in the State of Gujarat.

Sir, I want to quote only one figure for the information of the hon. Minister of Water Resources. During the year 1999-2000 under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme, the Government of India had released an amount of Rs. 68 crore to the Government of Gujarat. But as against that amount, the Government of Gujarat had spent Rs. 200 crore. I do not want to give the

comparative figures of other States where the money released by the Central Government is more than the money spent by the concerned State Government. But, Sir, Gujarat is the unique case where the Central Government had given only Rs. 68 crore and the State Government of Gujarat had spent Rs. 200 crore.

Sir, here, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Agriculture. Shri Nitish Kumar as well as the hon. Minister of Water Resources, Shri Arjun Sethi that the Government of Gujarat has sent three specific projects. So, this year, if they do not give adequate assistance to Gujarat, it will be very difficult. They want an amount of Rs. 492 crore from HUDCO in the form of loan and not assistance. That is where they want the help of the Central Government.

Sir, the Government of Gujarat has also sent a project known as Bhaskarpura Scheme. This is a project of Rs. 1,422 crore. The Government of Gujarat has already submitted a detailed project report to the World Bank, the Asian Development and the Government of Japan through the Government of India. The Government of Gujarat is only requesting the Central Government to see that they get the required loan from the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank or the Government of Japan. So, this should be done. In this regard, the Government of Gujarat has already given an undertaking that if this scheme of taking Narmada water from Narmada to the Saurashtra region is completed within two years, then the problem of drinking water of the entire Rajkot, Jamnagar and Kutch districts will be solved permanently, and the Government of Gujarat or the Central Government need not worry as far as the supply of drinking water is concerned.

So, Sir, I want to request the Central Government that we want only drinking water. The people of cities of Rajkot and Jamnagar will be forced to migrate in the month of January if no arrangement is made for the supply of water. So, water must be sent there by tankers, steamers and trains. Then only, the people of the entire Saurashtra will be able to survive. The situation is very serious there. Both the Ministers are sitting here. I am requesting them to kindly depute team of officers there to look into the supply of drinking water.

I also want to know from the Central Government about the legitimate dues to the people of Gujarat. Forget about the assistance. But what about the legitimate dues of crop insurance? What about legitimate dues of loss of trees? What about the legitimate dues of people who died in Kandla cyclone? What is the amount of assistance given to them?

[Shri Pravin Rashtupal]

According to my information, as against Rs. 600 crore requested by the Government of Gujarat for relief measures after Kanda cyclone, we got only Rs. 154 crore. Sir, last year the Central Government had given us some advance. That was only an advance and not an assistance. But the situation is worse this year.

So, I would request both the hon. Ministers, particularly the hon. Minister of Agriculture to kindly look into this issue.

Now, lastly, I want to request the Central Government to kindly call a meeting of the four beneficiary States. Now, the Narmada case is out of Court. I received a written letter from the hon. Minister that the meeting would be called when the matter is out of Court. Now, it is my request that the Central Government should get us our dues, our undisputed amount from the States of Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

With these words I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Coochbehar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I fully support the proposal raised by our senior leader, comrade Shri Somnath Chatterjee regarding drought, flood and natural calamity, at 4 O'clock today.

No matter what is the name of NDA but it is a fact that the NDA Government came into power, national disaster started.

[English]

Now, NDA means national disaster assured.

[Translation]

You see, it has started from Orissa, a super cyclone hit Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. Drought hit Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Flood occurred in West Bengal. More cyclones hit Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our Minister of Agriculture visited West Bengal after the massive flood occurred there. I congratulate him. He made an aerial survey there and evaluated the entire situation from air. But then on ground conducted a meeting and termed it a national disaster which is also right. I congratulate you for this as well. But you should also estimate the number of people and cattle killed. The crop worth four thousand crores of rupee was destroyed there. Nitish ji you are in the Government. People are crying for help October and November have

also passed, kindly tell how much money you have provided? The condition of people there is very pitiable. Thousands of people have become homeless. They are living beneath trees in these wintry days. They are not getting anything to eat, they are not getting cloths. You have not provided funds on human grounds either. Forget the human rights. At least you come forward to save human life. You can start from tomorrow.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir much has been said about 11th Finance Commission and N.C.C.F. I support this but I don't want to discuss it. Our colleague Sangma ji has raised the question that only providing relief is not the solution since we have to provide it every year. We have to take some measures to control the flood. I would like to add two more things with it. Firstly, there was a proposal to Brahmaputra, Ganga and Kaveri in second five year plan. A national water grid should be constituted on the lines of national power grid. In this regard, I would like to request Nitish ji and Sethi ji that they should consider it. I would also like to request Mr. Prime Minister to consider this. Until such scheme is drafted you cannot save the country from flood and drought. We had a meeting with Sethi ji today. I told him that the rivers causing flood in Bengal, Assam and north Bihar flows from Bhuan and Nepal. A joint river commission should be constituted with these countries. These are our neighbouring countries and we should reach any decision with these countries in cordial atmospheres. Otherwise they will release water from there and consequently we have to face flood here.

I would say that the river will keep on flowing like this. If no agreement is reached at with Nepal and Bhutan then you have to speak. Mr. Speaker, Sir, if they will ask where is river then you have to tell that look, there flows the rivers and then they will say that they have erected embankments, constructed dams but it is not going to help. You have to check the siltation and for this you have to enforce afforestation. You have to stop mining. For this we have to improve and establish cordial relations with Nepal and Bhutan at the earliest. I would like to request Nitish ji to send relief and funds and save the people of West Bengal.

[English]

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Sivaganga): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry are now affected by cyclone. Three persons had died in Pondicherry and five in Tamil Nadu. More than 20,000 trees were uprooted in Neyveli and Cuddalore areas alone. Pondicherry is also affected in the same way.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that Tamil Nadu was worst affected in the cyclone which hit in 1955. At that time, Shri Kamaraj was the Chief Minister and Pandit Jawahar! Nehru was the Prime Minister. They then created a system for disaster management. Whenever there was any cyclone or flood, how to control it, was the thinking the State Government had. The State Government stated thinking about it and it had a very clear plan about that. They had got a system to communicate to the villages immediately and the people living in coastal areas also. Then they would be asked to go to safer places. The same system was further improved during the period of Shrimati Indira Gandhi and Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Scientifically it was improved.

As you know, in the Agriculture Ministry itself there is a separate cell to monitor it for the whole of India, to find out what are the areas to be affected by cyclone or the areas to be affected by drought, etc. They are having a scientific analysis. They are having a plan to communicate to the State Governments and they would be geared up to tackle the situation.

Tamil Nadu was in executive line and it was a perfect system, which they created. Therefore, this time when cyclone hit, a proper communication was sent to all parts of the State and to Pondicherry also. Thus, the damage to people reduced to that extent. The trees and other things could not be protected because it is out of our capacity. Therefore, I would like to suggest that the Central Government should not have political in this regard.

West Bengal is now affected by floods. Here, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the interventions of the Supreme Court in each and every aspect. The Supreme Court has given directions in regard to drainage, drinking water, garbage removal, sanitations, maintaining schools, reducing pollution regulating traffic, regulating the movement of motor vehicles, regarding Yamuna water, Ganga water, Cauvery water, Narmada water, raising social afforestation, protecting forests, etc. They intervened in everything. So, I am surprised that it may also intervene in giving money to the West Bengal Government to tackle the situation, if the Central Government is not going to have an unbiased view to look at the States. The Central Government has to take humanitarian view rather than political view.

SHRI M.V.V.S MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): Sir, all the while we are doing only crisis management as stated by Shri Somnath Chatterjee and Shri P.A. Sangma. We are discussing this issue every year, in every Lok Sabha and in every Session. Why are we not having any long-term

policy? It is high time that we should have a long-term policy. Agriculture Minister alone cannot do anything. He can only provide relief to agriculturists. These floods are creating havoc. The Ministries of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Energy can sit with Ministry of Finance and should find out a solution. They can stop floods. That would in turn stop drought also. On the one hand we have flood and on the other we have drought. Andhra Pradesh is reeling under drought now. I appeal to the Government of India to take steps and involve all the political parties and all the Chief Ministers and form a comprehensive policy.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is a very good suggestion.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE (Malegaon): Sir, I rise to support the suggestions put forward by hon'ble Somnath ji. I remember the emancipation of Gajendra. Once a crocodile caught the leg of Gajendra and tried to drag him deep into the river. At that time Gajendra prayed the God for the emancipation. The God appeared and emancipated him. Once the crocodile saw the God it also demanded for its emancipation. My submission is that whatsoever may be the ideology of the Government the Centre should not discriminate any one and should provide justice to all.

Sir, there are 22 districts of Maharashtra in the grip of drought and Nasik district is also among them. 15 Tehsils are in the grip of drought. There is shortage of water, fodder, foodgrains and employments. Though the Government of Maharashtra is performing well but it is very difficult for the State Government to cope up with the existing crisis without the assistance of the Central Government. Therefore my request is that a committee should be sent there to assess the situation. You please provide assistance to those districts also.

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY (Barmer): Sir, please allow me to speak for two minutes as I represent a region that has lot of problems. ... (Interruptions) I am a disciplined soldier so I would not like to disobey the Chair. I belong to Rajasthan and the western Rajasthan, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Pali and Jalaur suffer from the severe famine. My constituency has suffered 36 famine during the last 50 year. A little ago Sangma Saheb and Somnath ji were talking about water Resource management. Shri Jawahar Lal Nehru had a vision who had started the construction of Rajasthan canal which is now called Indira Canal in 1952. Earlier the work was in progress but for last two-three years no

[Col. (Retd.) Sona Ram Choudhary]

work is being done in this direction. The Government of India used to give approximately hundred crore rupees for this work every year, but for last two years releasing of the fund has been stopped. The Government of Rajasthan have no money so it stopped the work. Now situation is such that machines are lying idle there. The entire strength of engineers and staff are not getting their salaries so it should be considered.

Sir, I have raised this question several times in House. My colleagues had earlier too stated about Rajasthan that out of the 32 districts 30 are suffering from famine.

Out of the thirty five thousand villages 30583 villages are suffering from famine and in 19817 villages more than 75 per cent of the Kharif crop has been destroyed. Presently nearly four lakh livestock are suffering. If water and fodder are not provided to them they will be perished. In Western Rajasthan nearly 80 per cent of population is dependent on livestock. There are of no river, rivulet and the source of water and for the third consecutive year the people of this region are suffering from drought. Presently there is serious discontent and the people are migrating to other region as there is scarcity of water.

There are nearly 3 thousand villages in my Parliamentary constituency and the entire region is having famine like situation. Last year 2900 and the year before last 2800 villages had suffered famine. You may understand the situation of a region which has suffered famine for the last three consecutive year. Recently you have sent a Central team there. I would like that a committee of Parliament should be sent to those regions which are suffering from severe famine. They should also visit Gujarat for making assessment of damage.

I would like to submit that this year we have demanded Rs. 2380 crore and last year it was Rs. 1140 crore and the year before that it was Rs. 960 crore. Three year back we had received only Rs. 23 crore, last year it was Rs. 125 and this year nothing is known about Rs. 2380 crore. Hon'ble Nitish Kumar ji is present here, I request him to please release the fund as soon as possible so that livestock may not die and the people may not commit suicide. Your policy and intention should be honest. Though the Congress party is in power in that State but you should not treat the people of that State differently. I have some doubt, but Nitish Kumar ji will do justice and immediately release the fund.

You should give some thought to the issue of Calamity Relief Fund. The sources of drinking water are gradually getting dried up and new machines are required for the Department of Water Resources, so that dried

sources may be drilled much deeper and water may be provided to the people by newer sources.

I had requested the Prime Minister that western Rajasthan should be provided a package similar to that given to the North East region. Two years back the Prime Minister has also consented to provide assistance but till date nothing has been given.

Lastly, my submission is that war footing operation is required to cope up with the situation arising out of the famine. Every possible assistance should be provided for improving the situation prevailing in Rajasthan. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to submit the hon'ble Minister that he should immediately provide relief to the people by way of releasing fund for the region.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Somnath Babu has initiated the present discussion in the House regarding the measures that should be taken by the Government for coping up with the situation arising out of the flood and drought and natural calamity. Nitish Kumar ji, we have not come to take anything from you, rather we have come to provide information regarding drought and flood. We have not come to allow you to remain in the House for a longer period. Rather we have come to remove you from the House as soon as possible. ... (*Interruptions*)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, several parts of the country suffer from the floods. The flood prone rivers should be tamed by branching out the main course of the river. ... (*Interruptions*) It is not a matter of laughter. It is a question of flood. The flood causes damage. A plan should therefore be formulated for this. It is the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture to protect the crop. You cannot protect., What can you do, even Atalji cannot protect it? Planning is required for controlling the flood. We discuss this subject in every session. You please make efforts to divert water from excess rainfall region to the drought prone areas. Bombay enjoy heavy rainfall every year. Konkan region also witness rainfall. It causes closure of all the roads to Bombay.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please call it Mumbai not Bombay.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Since, Shiv sena Members are not present here, that is why you have raised this issue. Since Shiv Sena Members are not present here that is why I called Bombay. I mean that planning should be made to collect excess rain fall. Mumbai, Gujarat, Kerala, Tamilnadu Lakshdweep, Andhra

Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal have sea. Can we divert sea water to the drought prone areas. It should be considered. Salty water may be converted into non-salted and may be used for drinking purpose. The Government should pay attention in this direction. Unless you pay attention in this direction, very soon, you can not escape from the responsibility. How will you protect us? It is a personal matter. I do not think that you will quarrel yourself. You will quarrel when we will be united. You will not fight unless we are united. The Government should think seriously on this matter. There was earthquake in Maharashtra, Latur and Usmanabad districts were affected by it. At least 10 thousand people had lost their lives. My colleague was telling that more than 50 thousand people have lost their lives in Orissa but compensation could not be given to the family of deceased. The Central Government have immense fund. The money should be given to the people. That money is not meant only for Ministers and you people. We also have right over that money. In democracy the opposition party has full right to make demand. I do not want my share from the budget but fund should be released meant for the people. The Government should make efforts to release fund. It is good if you perform well otherwise you will have to pay for your ill-performance.

[English]

SHRI PURNO A. SANGMA (Tura): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, can I intervene for one minute?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI PURNO A. SANGMA: Sir, today's debate has been a very good and a fruitful debate. Three things have come out of it clearly. First thing is that the situation all over the country is really bad. Secondly, it requires urgent attention of the Government.

Thirdly, the Ministry of Agriculture alone will not be able to tackle this problem. It requires the coordinated effort of all the Departments of the Government of India. Therefore, on behalf of the whole House I would like to plead that the final reply to this debate be given by the Prime Minister. The Agriculture Minister's reply be treated as an intervention. Because the House will not have another opportunity to debate on a serious issue like this, we would like the Prime Minister to give the final reply.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): We are keen to hear Shri Nitish Kumar. But in view of the fact that every Member has expressed serious concern as it seems every State is affected, I think the Government

should think of some comprehensive action and the Prime Minister may give the final reply. Let the Prime Minister take a few days' time and let him reply next week. This is the wish of the Members in this House.

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY (Barmer): The Minister of Water Resources is not here. I need reply from him. We want your ruling on this issue. Sir....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the Minister reply.

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): His reply should be treated as an intervention.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): Ultimately we want the reply to be given by the Prime Minister. ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a very long discussion has taken place here regarding the destruction caused by natural calamities in various parts of the country. Many hon'ble members participated in this discussion. First of all, I would like to share with the House the latest information regarding the situation in the cyclone hit areas in Pondicherry. Andhra Pradesh and coastal regions of Tamil Nadu which I have received during the course of discussion. In Pondicherry one person is dead, many people had got head injuries, some people got fractures and trees were uprooted on large scale, power supply had been snapped and coconut trees suffered extensive damage. According to the report received from Tamil Nadu seven people are killed there. Out of these, three people were killed due to the collapse of a wall and one other was crushed by the falling of a tree. There is also informations regarding other such incidents.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, some parts of our country specially Rajasthan and Gujarat had been reeling under drought continuously for three years. Much affect of drought was also seen last year. According to our information the water level in reservoirs is much less than last year. Therefore, the situation today is very grave. Besides that, I had talks with the Chief Ministers of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. The situation of these States is very grave.

On receiving the information in this regard the first possible action we have taken is that we have constituted an Inter Ministerial team. The team had undertaken the tour of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh and is touring

[Shri Nitish Kumar]

Orissa. We also have a proposal to send the team to Rajasthan and Gujarat to collect the entire information of drought there. We do not want to collect the information only, but sending a team there is first step in this regard. Earlier, these States were affected by flood and this year the worst flood hit State is West Bengal. Many other places other than West Bengal were also affected by flood. I must not fail to mention the name of any State, but many States were affected by this. Bihar was affected, Assam was also routinely affected. I had been to Andhra Pradesh. There was also some affet in Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh. Some districts of Kamataka were also affected and a report about some other places is there too. Many States were affected by the flood. But the maximum destruction took place in West Bengal. It does not mean that the destruction which took place in other places can be taken lightly. Wherever people are suffering, the relief work, whatever possible should be started for them. The action should be taken for the reconstruction and restoration.

I had also visited Arunachal Pradesh where natural calamity struck before West Bengal. The incidents of Arunachal Pradesh was the fall out of the incidents in Tibbet. Cloud burst was reported in Tibbet which caused the destruction in Himachal Pradesh. The home state of Hon. Sangma ji also witnessed some destruction due to cyclone in the month of October. We have decided to send a Central team there. There is no doubt about it that proper action should be taken after the report is received about any place. A lot has been said about Bengal. As soon as the Hon. Prime Minister gave directions about Bengal we went there immediately.

Some Hon. Members alleged that we conducted aerial survey. However, in such conditions only aerial survey is possible. We went there with the entire team. There we held talks with the State Government. We met the workers of various parties and had extensive discussions with them also. The Chief Minister and other Ministers, alongwith the officers of various Departments who accompanied us did had extensive talks with the officers of the Union Government. Afterwards on being probed by the journalists about our assessment of the situation comprehensive reply was given.

Sir, it is a fact that it is not possible for the State Government of West Bengal to single handedly tackle the destruction caused there. We had uttered these words that such a situation when destruction caused in widespread the assistance at national level is necessary. That is what I said and all the people were present there. With regard to West Bengal, politics of many types

is seen both within and outside the House. I would like to tell Somnath Babu that there is no discrimination. Here Sudip Babu put forth his views, like you did. Besides that Ms. Mamata Banerjee also told us that West Bengal should get assistance on the basis of whatever assessment you have made from here. I don't think that it involves a matter of political discrimination and we, you and the entire House has seen that the people of all parties have spoken in this regard whether they belong to the National Democratic Alliance or to any other party. The Minister of Water Resources Sethi Saheb is sitting here and our friend from BJD party are speaking too. To give the reply of this question the president of the State Branch of our party is on the toes. There is nothing like that, people from TDP are speaking, people from Trinamool are speaking. People from BJP are also speaking. There is no single party which is not expressing their heart felt feelings in the House regarding the destruction which took place there and which is not highlighting the pain and suffering of people there. Therefore, first of all I would like to make it clear that the question of discrimination on political grounds by the Union Government does not arises in the matter of providing assistance.

21.00 hrs.

No matter which part of the country the destruction took place, the Union Government will shoulder its responsibilities.

Sometimes certain contentious issues crop up between Union and the States. I would like to humbly request that the issue of natural calamities should not be politicized between the Union and the States. Managing the relief work is the fundamental and statutory responsibility of the States and we cannot interfere with it. But it is also the duty of the Union to help them in their works. Thus, it is not right to say that nothing has been done and that no help has been provided by the Union. Union provided every possible assistance. We don't want to elaborate the relief given by the Centre. The Government data of destruction is also highlighting the same story as had been explained by Somnath Babu, because our data is the compilation of the data sent by the State Governments. We do not have any independent mechanism to collect data, but rely on the statistics furnished by the States. There is no politics involved. Help is provided through various means. As far as the question of West Bengal is concerned, the Minister of Finance of West Bengal came here and held discussions with Union Minister of Finance Shri Yashwant Sinha ji. Today, the Chief Minister of West Bengal met the Hon. Prime Minister and discussed the matter with him. I was

not present when the Finance Minister of West Bengal met the Union Minister of Finance Yashwant Sinha ji. I discussed over phone with Shri Yashwant Sinha ji. The information regarding every aspect and everything is being provided. It is a fact that the National Calamity Fund which was created on the basis of the recommendation of 10th Finance Commission does not exist today and there is no doubt about it that a new calamity contingency Fund has to replace it and in the transition period between these two stages in which the arrangements are not made the way they were made earlier to provide help at the time of any calamity. A new arrangement has to replace the old one. In the mean time there arise some problems. We want to assure you that when discussion was scheduled to be held in this House or in the other House tomorrow on the same issue, we were not going to raise any issue merely on the basis of figures provided by the Ministry of Agriculture. I had spoken to the Finance Minister before putting forth my views. I asked the big wigs in the Ministry that what are you doing? The question arises whether the Government helped the States as per their demand? It was not only disclosed in the House but at other platform also. In some of the cases, norms laid down, are relaxed or removed. Payment is released after obtaining utilisation certificate. In some of the cases, the relaxation is provided so that maximum funds may be credited in the account of the States so as to facilitate carrying out relief work and problem of liquidity in the form of ways and means does not arise. The Hon'ble Finance Minister informed me that the amount being spent by the State Government will be adjusted against the allocations to be made by the Central Government to the State Governments under National Calamity Contingency Fund shortly going to be created. Therefore, I want to assure you that I would not take much time of the House as I share all the worries. Our Ministry is continuously maintaining the things. Action is going to be taken on the creation of National Centre for Calamity Management according to the recommendation of 11th Finance Commission. Objective behind its creation is to enable the permanent centre to monitor natural calamities occurring in different parts of our country. Sufficient funds should be allocated to NCCF. But as long as such organisation is not constituted we would keep sending teams. As per old practice first a team used to tour affected areas than an inter-ministerial meeting used to be held under the chairmanship of Minister of Agriculture, which used to decide regarding quantum of funds to be provided as relief. Since today, such practice is no more in vogue, so what is the logic behind sending a team. This proposal was put to me for approval. I said that till new arrangements are made, a team should be despatched.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, inter-ministerial team should fully assess the situation and submit its report so that the amount can be released on creation of such a fund. Therefore, we continued old practice. There was a confusion, as to what is to be done. We contacted the hon. Finance Minister in this regard. Therefore, we want to assure you that National Calamity Contingency Fund will be created in this very session itself. An action plan is being prepared with regard to creation of National Centre for Calamity Management and other issues related to it. Soon it will be before you. Our endeavour is to create the fund first, rest everything can be taken up later.

Dr. Raghuvansh Prasadji asked about Bihar. I would like to inform him that Centre has no intention of holding back CRF share of Bihar. My concern is that the Government of Bihar should get its Central Share. Infact the Government of Bihar was required to open an account reportedly for CRF which they had failed to do. But, during this debate itself, I got an information from the Ministry of Finance that the Government of Bihar has taken action to open a separate account for CRF. My endeavour is to see that Bihar gets its Central Share at the earliest. Infact, the funds should have been released three to four months ago, but since the Government of Bihar belatedly opened an account, therefore the payment got delayed.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I never said that we released much more funds to the Government of Bihar than what was due. I often said that three fourth of the total share due to Bihar is to be released by the Bihar Government. Though we appreciate that this amount is inadequate to carry out relief measures. I have never expressed the desire to score a debating point over the Government of Bihar. I belong to a simple peasant family. Raghuvansh Babuji, as you know I did never say such things nor propagated such things. On the contrary, campaign was carried against me. By virtue of my belonging to a farmer's family, I am in the Government. I did never level baseless charges against the Government of Bihar or gave any statement of this kind to the press.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Sir, Bihar's CRF share has not been released so far. Please expedite its release.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: I have already told CRF has not been released so far. The Government of Bihar was required to fulfill some formalities which they did not fulfill expeditiously. Since, now those formalities have been fulfilled the funds will be released soon.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: CRF could not be released because of lethargy of the Government of Bihar and lethargy of Central Government lead to non-release of NCCF. So both the Governments have made the people of Bihar suffer. It should be stopped.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: The Central Government is not going to be lethargic. As I have assured you, now the funds will be released at the earliest.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): I know, he is so persuasive that it is very difficult to annoy or get angry with him. The question is that in July, the Action Taken Report was given. Since then, one Session was over. Until we have raised this issue, the Government has not even thought of bringing this law. What is the reason for delay? As Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh said, the other NCRF was abolished. But in place thereof, which has to come, has not been brought, although you have said that immediately we are bringing it. That is why we want to know.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Somnathji, I have spoken to hon'ble Finance Minister. Only the question of time was there. It would have been done after the report was placed in the House. The Hon'ble Finance Minister stated in the House that provision will be made in this very session. I am speaking on behalf of the hon. Minister of Finance too. I am representing the Government but as far as this matter is concerned, I am particularly speaking on his behalf. He has assured that the report will be placed during this session itself and NCCF will be constituted during this session only. Based on the report of our team we will take necessary action. I want to assure drought affected States that no reports of starvation deaths have poured from any where.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: You should plead our case for some adhoc release. Adhoc release should be given.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Shri Somnath Babu may obtain complete details regarding the decision taken during the talks held between the Chief Minister and the Prime Minister. I do not want to give those details in the House and waste more time.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Atalji patiently listened only and did not utter anything. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Several issues were discussed. But whatever type of aid is required under Food for work scheme will be definitely given. If in any of the State or area, people are badly affected by drought are migrating in search of employment, then the Central Government would surely provide the desired help to the State Government. Every possible help will be given by the Central Government to the State Governments. Everyone of you know that natural calamities come uninvited. Several hon'ble Members expressed desire that there should be a permanent solution for all this. I don't understand floods can be prevented totally. And we can't even think of preventing natural calamities, such as earthquake or cyclone. Similarly, flood also cannot be prevented totally but we can surely prepare action plan to minimise the damage caused by it and whatever possible steps we can take in this direction, we would definitely march ahead. Just now what Shri Sangmaji had said was right. Definitely, Brahmaputra is a major river of the country. People of that area face a major problem concerning land erosion and it is to be seen to be believed. Take our case we are living in areas adjoining Ganga, so we understand their plight. We know now even the villages are washed away because of land erosion. All of us know that such issues and structural changes. To sum up such an arrangement should be made whereby the impact of natural calamity is minimised and it causes minimum damage even if non structural measures need to be taken in this regard. The House is aware that a High Level Disaster Management Committee has been constituted. This high level committee has divided natural calamities into five categories. It's report is expected by March end. After that, right from national level right down to village level, district level, Disaster Management Committees would be constituted and then we will take up the measures required to be taken. Several Governments are working on interim report. Thus we are prepared for that also.

Whatever it may be, at the end I would like to say that the Central Government is always prepared to meet any eventuality and would never shirk its responsibility of providing any sort of relief whatsoever may be possible within the resources.

With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am sorry that he has made only some vague promises. The whole House has showed its tremendous concern for the damages caused in the State of West Bengal due to floods. Everybody supported our cause and I am obliged for that. But it is not that only West Bengal has suffered, many states have suffered due to natural calamities. Today, we are shocked to learn that a lot of damage has been caused in one day in the Union Territory of Pondicherry due to cyclone. Then, the State of Tamil Nadu has suffered again. There is a very serious situation in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Therefore, we wanted that the Prime Minister should also reply to this debate, because this does not come strictly under the purview of the Minister of Agriculture. But there is no response from the Government and only a vague reply has been given. We are not going to see a single paise being given as relief. He is a sweet-tongued Minister, but he has made only vague promises and assurances. Even though we respect, him, we are walking out in protest.

21.14 hrs.

At this stage, Shri Somnath Chatterjee and some other hon. Members left the House.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: (Vaishali): Why be verbose simply release the funds to the States. We stage a walkout in protest.

21.14 hrs.

Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh then left the House.

[English]

SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL (Patan): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we accept the reply given by the Minister of Agriculture, but before you came to the Chair, a suggestion was made by Shri Sangma and others that this is a national issue and so, the hon. Prime Minister should reply to the entire debate so that a comprehensive policy is evolved. We want your observation.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there anything from the Government?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Sir, I respect what Shri Sangma has expressed. He has a point in saying that as far as natural calamities are concerned, they go beyond the purview of the Ministry of Agriculture.

But I have a small problem. You and he, as a former Speaker, will also understand that during a debate under Rule 193, the Minister has to make a final reply. It cannot be kept inconclusive for a reply by the Prime Minister.

At the most, what I suggest is that I will consult the Prime Minister on this issue. If he agrees, according to his convenience, he can make some kind of a statement on this subject during next week. But he cannot reply now. He can intervene. I do not have to tell you about the Rules because it is the Minister who replies. So, my request would be that please do not treat this debate as conclusive after this reply.

In the light of the discussion, I will request the Prime Minister to make a statement on this issue during the next week, that is, any time from Monday onwards according to his convenience. If the House agrees, I think, that is the solution.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members as has been mentioned by the hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, the hon. Prime Minister will make a statement, as desired by you, at his convenience later, that is, during the next week. Accordingly, the Short Duration Discussion concludes today with the reply of the hon. Minister of Agriculture.

Now, the House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow, the 1st December, 2000 at 11 a.m.

21.18 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on December 1, 2000/Agrahayana 10, 1922 (Saka)

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