

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Eleventh Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, August 30, 2007/Bhadra 8, 1929 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock*

(MR. SPEAKER in the Chair)

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Everybody will be given time. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Thomas will soon have a companion.

...(Interruptions)

11.01 hrs.

OBITUARY REFERENCES

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have to inform the House of the sad demise of two of our former colleagues, Shri T. Balakrishnaiah and Shri Jagdish Prasad Mathur.

Shri T. Balakrishnaiah was a Member of Fifth and Sixth Lok Sabha's, from 1971 to 1979, representing Tirupati parliamentary constituency of Andhra Pradesh.

Earlier, Shri Balakrishnaiah was a member of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly from 1962 to 1967 and was member of several Committees of the Legislative Assembly.

An able parliamentarian, Shri Balakrishnaiah was a member of the Public Accounts Committee; Select Committees on Advocates (Amendment) Bill and Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill during Fifth Lok Sabha. He was member of Committee of the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Committee on Absence of Members during the Sixth Lok Sabha.

Shri Balakrishnaiah was a well-known social worker. He worked for upliftment of down-trodden and marginalised sections of the society. He was a member of the Senate of Shri Venkateshwara University, Tirupati. He was also a member of Zonal Railway Users Consultative Committee, Southern Railways.

Shri T. Balakrishnaiah passed away on 26th July, 2007 at Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh at the age of 79.

Shri Jagdish Prasad Mathur was a Member of the Sixth Lok Sabha, from 1977 to 1979, representing Sikar parliamentary constituency.

Earlier, Shri Mathur was a member of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly from 1957 to 1962. Shri Mathur was also a Member of the Rajya Sabha from 1970 to 1976, representing the State of Rajasthan.

An advocate by profession, Shri Mathur was an active social and political worker. A devoted parliamentarian, he actively participated in the proceedings of the House.

Shri Jagdish Prasad Mathur passed away on 4th August, 2007 at Ajmer, Rajasthan at the age of 79, after a brief illness.

We deeply mourn the loss of these friends and I am sure the House would join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved families.

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

11.03 hrs.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

[English]

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be allowed until the Question Hour is over.

*...(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Agra is burning since yesterday. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhansi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am requesting since yesterday. I have given a notice also. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please see that you have to wait till 12.00 noon. That is my earnest request to everybody.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: My earnest request to every hon. Member is to please wait till the Question Hour is over.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will do that. Do not compel me to do anything.

* Not recorded.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do not try to be more patriotic than everybody else.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will do that at a proper time. You have to depend on the Speaker.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have to start the day with a very painful decision. Shri Ram Kripal Yadav, you are also deserving that.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: All of you please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No give and take with the Speaker.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is Question Hour. You are sufficiently long here to know what Question Hour is.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have unnecessarily wasted six minutes.

11.06 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Prem Kumar Dhumal. Q.No. 241.

[Translation]

Railway Tour Package in respect of various States

*241. PROF. PREM KUMAR DHUMAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any proposal of tour package from various State Governments including Himachal Pradesh, to be implemented in their States with their help and coordination;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto; and

(d) the details of the facilities to be provided to the tourists under the said tour package?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

This Ministry have received proposals for tour packages, in the form of running luxury tourist trains from some State Governments. Railway is already operating 'Palace on Wheels', 'Heritage on Wheels' and 'Fairy Queen' tourist train packages in Rajasthan sector and 'Deccan Odyssey' in Maharashtra sector. Further, a 2nd 'Palace on Wheels' train in Rajasthan sector and also a luxury tourist train in Karnataka sector have been planned for introduction. Similarly, a proposal for luxury tourist train in collaboration with Punjab & Andhra Pradesh Governments has also been received. A Buddhist tourist train & Bharat Darshan (Village on Wheels) train is being run by Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC). These trains offer a complete luxury tour package including boarding and lodging, transport, guided sightseeing, etc. Further, a number of package tour programmes have been introduced by IRCTC on various sectors. IRCTC has planned to introduce package tour to Himachal Pradesh covering Barog, Shimla, Shilong Bagh, Nahan, etc. from September, 2007.

[Translation]

PROF. PREM KUMAR DHUMAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister of Railways had been to Simla in May, 2006 and it was decided then by him in the meeting with the State officers that the Railways would extend full co-operation for the development of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. This assurance was also given that tourist information centres would be opened at Chandigarh, Delhi and Jalandhar and Simla Railway Station would be upgraded. I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to what steps have been taken in this direction.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, the Question is about tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The hon. Member wants to know about the upgradation of Shimla and Jalandhar railway stations. Now every year, we are including works programme and classify them; and with reference to the classification, we upgrade them to requirement. In all the headquarters, whether it is Zonal Headquarters or a junction, we provide all facilities to the tourists, maybe, in the form of a Rest Room, Retiring Room or such facilities.

Specifically for Jalandhar and Shimla, I will furnish the details of what has been allotted and what has been given, to the hon. Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your second supplementary. Please restrict to your main Question.

[Translation]

PROF. PREM KUMAR DHUMAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has been mentioned in the statement laid on the Table of the House that special trains like Palace on Wheels, Heritage

on Wheels, Fairy Queen, Deccan Odissey etc. are run in many States to promote tourism there. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether any such special train is proposed to be started from Pathankot to Joginder Nagar and Kalka to Simla.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have any such proposal?

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, the Question is about promotion of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The Himachal Pradesh Government has not sent so far a proposal for introduction of either a luxurious tourist train or, for that matter, any tourist packages. However, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation, which is an extended army of our Railways, has proposed about three itineraries wherein we cover Barog, Shimla, Shilon Bagh, etc. These will be 2-nights-and-3-days or 4-nights-and-5-days itineraries or like that. According to the package, the tariffs are worked out.

Accordingly, the packages are being worked out. They will all become operational from 13 September and 14 September respectively, and it will be more convenient for the tourists. They can entrain on Friday night and come back on Sunday night or entrain on Thursday night and come back on Saturday night. It is partly covered by train and partly covered by luxury buses, and there are also good hotels and many places for sight-seeing. Everything is taken care of by these packages. Therefore, we are taking care of the Himachal tourism.

As regards the Narrow Gauge, it has been examined earlier whether to convert it into Broad Gauge, and we found that minus 24 is the rate of return. We have noted that the Pathankot-Joginder Nagar — which also has the Kangra valley — is also a very scenic place and an important tourist spot, etc. This point is understood, but it is a Narrow Gauge line with high density, etc. What will happen to about Rs. 1,300 crore that would be invested in it? Therefore, at present, this is not being examined by the Railways.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Thank you Mr. Speaker, Sir. The South of Tamil Nadu, though economically backward, has got vast tourist potentiality. Kodaikanal, Madurai, Thekkady, Rameshwaram and Kanyakumari are some of the tourist spots, which attract lakhs and lakhs of domestic and international tourists.

MR. SPEAKER: The trouble is that he knows everything.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Yes, Sir. At present, there is no proper and enough infrastructure in the Railways. I have learnt that there is a proposal pending with the Planning Commission for laying additional Railway track between Villupuram and Dindigul. At present, there is only one Railway track between these two stations.

MR. SPEAKER: This Question is regarding tour packages.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: I am coming to the point. This track is already working at more than 100 per cent. I would like to request the hon. Minister Shri R. Velu, who is always helpful and sympathetic towards. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Are you not asking the Question from the Cabinet Minister?

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: I am asking it to the Minister of State.

MR. SPEAKER: So, you choose your Minister also!

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Yes, Sir. I would request him to take urgent and needy steps to get this project of doubling between Villupuram and Dindigul cleared and funds allotted at the very next opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: It is rejected as it is not a relevant Question.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: No, you may have an arrangement with the Minister, but I will not allow it.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You must learn how to put questions.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Thank you, Sir. All the hon. Members are well aware that Kerala has its importance with regard to tourism, especially, heritage tourism, eco-tourism in the backwaters, coastal areas, hilly areas, etc.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your Question.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Will the hon. Railway Minister consider starting a Heritage Wheel throughout Kerala starting from Chennai to Kanyakumari via Palghat, Kumarakom and other important areas for backwaters up to Kanyakumari via Salem also? Will the Ministry consider this tour package for the important tourist centres in Kerala starting from Chennai?

MR. SPEAKER: You need not repeat your Question. Hon. Minister, you could say 'Yes' or 'No'.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, as regards Kerala, there is no denying the fact that these are very attractive tourist places with backwaters at Kumarakom, etc. I agree with it, but you must now get back to the State Government. They should initiate a proposal, and send it to the Railway Board. We will definitely consider it with reference to the financial and operational viability, and do it. But even without waiting for that, the Southern Railway has now already started a package

of the Sun, Sand and Sea in South in the backwaters of Kerala covering Chennai, Alleppey, Kumarakom, Ernakulam, Chennai for three days and four nights. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not respond to it as I have not allowed it.

SHRI R. VELU: Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, etc. have all sent some proposals. Let Kerala also come forward and initiate a proposal to have a heritage train. Definitely, we will consider it with reference to the financial and, operational viability.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: Through You, I would like to tell the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Lalu Prasadji who is sitting here that there is a proposal to build world class model stations to promote tourism. Allahabad has been a centre of freedom struggle, thousands of pilgrims and tourists visit this place to go to the site of Sangam, Swaraj Bhawan is also there. Fort of Akbar and other tourist spots are there. I would like to ask whether important trains would be stopped there by including Allahabad in the list of world class model stations so that tourism could be promoted there.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The question is whether any proposal has come from the State Governments. That is the main question.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: The decision regarding model station has been taken by the hon. Minister, not by the State Government. The State Government just proposes.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: This is related to tourism package, and he is talking about model stations.

MR. SPEAKER: What can I do if there is no relevant supplementary.

[Translation]

Commercial Use of Vacant Railway Land

+
*242. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA
DESHMUKH:

SHRI RASHEED MASOOD:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have identified, unutilized/ vacant land in the areas under their possession for commercial use;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether bids for the identified sites have been invited for this purposes;

(d) If so, the results thereof and the final action taken thereon; and

(e) the expenditure incurred and the revenue likely to be earned in this process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. To give focused attention to the scheme, Railway Land Development Authority (RLDA) has been set up for commercial development of railway land/air-space. So far 92 sites have been entrusted to RLDA- Zone-wise details of the sites entrusted to RLDA are indicated in the enclosed Annexure-I. Further, Railways have identified 100 locations for setting up budget hotels through Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), as per details given in the enclosed Annexure-II.

(c) Bids for 29 sites have been invited by IRCTC.

(d) Bids for 20 budgets hotels have been finalized and awarded to the successful bidders. Bids for 9 budget hotels are under finalization. The details are given in the enclosed Annexure-III.

(e) Expenditure incurred by the RLDA so far is about Rs 1.01 Crore. It is not possible to ascertain the amount of revenue likely to be earned at this stage. As per the procedure, a feasibility study is to be carried out for each of the site and only after these studies, likely revenue can be assessed. Further, Railways have not directly incurred any expenditure on the Budget hotels. The revenue from the awarded 20 budget hotels is likely to be Rs.3823.01 Crore over a period of 30 years.

Annexure-I

S.No.	Railway	Location of Site
1	2	3
1.	Eastern	Belgharia (Sealdah)
2.		Bidhan Nagar (Sealdah)
3.		Halishahar (Sealdah)
4.		Ballyghat (Sealdah)
5.		Kancharapara (Sealdah)
6.		Budge-Budge (Near Sealdah)
7.	East Central	Gaya (Gautam Budha Institute)

1	2	3
8.	East Coast	Vishakhapatnam-I
9.		Vishakhapatnam-II
10.	Northern	Lucknow (Railway Institute Vidhan Sabha Marg)
11.		Delhi-Sarai Rohila
12.	North Central	Gwalior
13.		Kanpur (Nirala Nagar)
14.		Agra (Idgah)
15.		Mathura Junction
16.		Jhansi (Kampoo Kothi)
17.	Northeast Frontier	Karimganj
18.		Silcher
19.		New Coochbehar
20.		New Alipurduar
21.		Alipurduar
22.		Kurseong
23.		Darjeeling
24.		Kishanganj
25.		Katihar
26.		Jorhat
27.		Makum
28.		Sibsagar
29.		Margherita
30.		Siliguri (Burdwan Road)
31.		Near New Jalpaiguri (Between Road Over Bridge & Jorapani)
32.		Opposite New Jalpaiguri Station
33.		Opposite Power House of New Jalpaiguri
34.		New Jalpaiguri (Tin Batti More)
35.		New Jalpaiguri (Near circulating area)
36.		Siliguri (Mahananda Colony)
37.		Siliguri (Diesel Shed Road)
38.		Siliguri (Panchnai River and Transit hostel)
39.		Siliguri (Hawker Corner)

1	2	3
40.		Amingaon Hajo Guwahati Road-I
41.		Amingaon Hajo Guwahati Road-II
42.		Amingaon Hajo Guwahati Road-III
43.		Aminaaon Rangiya Road-I
44.		
45.		Amingaon Rangiya Road-II
46.		Amingaon-Rangiya Rajiv Gandhi Indoor Stadium
47.		Side of Amingaon - IIT Road
48.		Amingaon near CONCOR complex
49.		Pandu New Colony-I
50.		Pandu New Colony-II
51.		Pandu on Adabari - Pandu Road-I
52.		Pandu on Adabari - Pandu Road-II
53.		Pandu on Adabari - Pandu Road-III
54.	South Central	Between MMTS stations - Bharanagar & Boarabanda
55.		
56.		Near Uppal bus stand
57.		Moula-Ali-I
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64.		Nanded (Washim Station)
65.		Nanded (Mudkhed)
66.		Secunderabad (Hafeezpet)
67.		Viyayawada (Near Railway hospital)
68.		Hyderabad (Opposite TA Camp Staff Quarters)

1	2	3
		Hyderabad (Near Moula Ali flyover)
69.	South Eastern	Adra (Bokaro-I)
70.		Adra (Bokaro-II)
71.		Chakradharpur (TATA)
72.	South East Central	Raipur (Zone-III/Bhilai)
73.		Raipur (Zone-II & III Bhilai)
74.		Raipur (Opposite Zone III/Bhilai)
75.		Raipur (PP Yard/Bhilai)
76.		Raipur (Urkura)
77.		Raipur (Kapa)
78.		Raipur (Wagon Repair Shop Colony)
79.	South Western	Bangalore (Malleshwaram Railway Station)
80.		Bangalore (Yeshwantpur)

1	2	3
81.		Bangalore City
82.	Western	Bhavnagar Terminus side to Manekwadi Station
83.		Bhavnagar (Manekwadi station)
84.		Bhavnagar (Manekwadi station)
85.		Bhavnagar (Takhteswar station)-I
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87.		Bhavnagar (Krishnagar)
88.		Bhavnagar (Krishnagar Station to Chainage 246)
89.		Rajkot (Jamnagar -Old Station Area)
90.		Ahmedabad (Maninagar (West))
91.		Ahmedabad (Maninagar (East))
92.	Integral Coach Factory, Perumbur	Chennai (Kakkapallam Padi)

Annexure-II

S.No.	Railway	Division	Location	Area (in sq.m)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Central	Mumbai	Lonavla (LNL)	2700
2.		Mumbai	Mumbai CST (CSTM)	
3.		Bhusawal	Naskik Road (NKRD)	2030/2030
4.		Bhusawal	Shirdi	2400
5.		Nagpur	Nagpur (NGP)	3000
6.		Pune	Pune (PA)	3302
7.		Pune	Kolhapur (KOP)	2636
8.		Mumbai	Carnac Bunder (Mumbai)	3978
9.	ECR	Danapur	Patna (PNBE)	
10.		Danapur	Rajgir (RGD)	
11.		MGS	Gaya (GYA)	
12.	ECOR	Khurda Road	Bhubaneswar (BBS)	3006
13.		Khurda Road	Puri (PUI)	
14.		Khurda Road	Cuttack (CTC)	

1	2	3	4	5
15.		WAT	Vishakhapatnam (VSKP)	
16.	ER	Howrah	Howrah (HWH)	
17.		Howrah	Sealdah (SDAH)	2165
18.	NCR	Agra	Mathura/Vrindavan (MTJ)	
19.		Agra	Agra (AGC)	2793
20.		Allahabad	Allahabad (ALD)	
21.		Jhansi	Gwalior (GWL)	
22.	NFR	KIR	New Jalpaiguri (NJP)	4225
23.		LMG	Silchar/Lumding (SCL)	N.A.
24.		LMG	Darjeeling (DJ)	570
25.		LMG	Guwahati (GHY)	3000
26.		LMG	Agartala	N.A.
27.	NR	DLI	New Delhi (NDLS)	
28.		DLI	Nizamuddin (NZM)	
29.		DLI	Delhi Cantt (DEC)	
30.		DLI	Anand Vihar (ANVR)	3000
31.		FZR	Sri Nagar	
32.		FZR	Joginder Nagar (JDNX)	
33.		FZR	Ludhiana (LDH)	
34.		FZR	Jammu Tawi (JAT)	1980
35.		FZR	Katra	
36.		FZR	Amritsar (ASR)	360.80
37.		FZR	Kangra (KGRA)	
38.		LKO	Varanasi (BSB)	
39.		LKO	Lucknow (LKO)	2908
40.		MB	Dehradun (DON)	
41.		MB	Rishikesh (RKSH)	2500
42.		MB	Haridwar (HW)	1470
43.		MB	Moradabad (MB)	2500
44.		UMB	Shimla (SML)	1750
45.		UMB	Chandigarh (CDG)	3500
46.	NWR	AI	Udaipur (UDZ)	5000

1	2	3	4	5
47.		All	Ajmer (All)	
48.		All	Mount Abu (Abu Road)	
49.		BKN (BKN)	Lalgarh/Bikaner	3520
50.		JP	Jaipur (JP)	
51.		JU	Jaisalmer (JSM)	7386.50
52.		JU	Jodhpur (JU)	2400
53.		KIT	Kota (KTT)	
54.	SCR	BZA	Vijayawada (BZA)	6510
55.		NED	Aurangabad (AWB)	
56.		NED	Nanded (NED)	
57.		Secunderabad	Hyderabad (HYB)	
58.		Secunderabad	Secunderabad (SC)	3350
59.		GTL	Tirupati (TPTY)	2400
60.	SECR	BSP	Bilaspur (BSP)	2400
61.	SER	CKP	Tata Nagar (Tata)	71.5924
62.		Ranchi	Ranchi (RNC)	328.5424
63.	WCR	Raipur	Raipur (R)	3200
64.	SR	Madras	Chennai Central (MAS)	2500
65.		MAS	Chennai Egmore (MS)	1760
66.		MDU	Rameshwaram (RMM)	2730
67.		MDU	Madurai (MDU)	2200
68.		MDU	Tuticorin (TN)	2000.00
69.		PGT	Coimbatore (CBE)	1920
70.		PGT	Calicut (CLT)	1800
71.		PGT	Mangalore (MAQ)	2160
72.		TVC	Trivandrum (TVC)	356.85
73.		TVC	Kanyakumari (CAPE)	1800
74.		TVC	Ernakulam (ERS)	1288
75.		TVC	Quilon (QLN)	1st count 925 Hotel 161280

1	2	3	4	5
76.		TVC	Kottayam (KTYM)	
77.		TVC	Alwaye (AWY)	
78.		TVC	Cochin (CHTS)	
79.		TPJ	Pondicherry (PDY)	2908.91
80.			Ooty	2800
81.		MDU	Kodal Kanal Road (KQN)	
82.		MYS	Mysore (MYS)	
83.		SBC	Bangalore (SBC)	
84.		UBL	Goa/Vasoca-da-gama (VSG)	
85.		UBL	Belgaum (BGM)	
86.		UBL	Madgaon	
87.	WCR	BPL	Habibganj/Bhopal (BPL)	2400
88.		JBP	Jabalpur (JBP)	
89.			Khajuraho	
90.	WR	ADI	Ahmedabad (ADI)	
91.		BCT	Bombay Bandra (BDTS)	
92.		BCT	Surat (ST)	
93.		BCT	Vapi (VAPI)	
94.		BRC	Mumbai Central (BCT)	
95.		BVC	Vadodara (BRC)	
96.		RJT	Veraval (VRL)	
97.		RJT	Dwarka/Okha (DWK)	
98.		RTM	Rajkot (RJT)	
99.		RTM	Ujjain (UJN)	
100.		RTM	Inodre (IND)	

Annexure-III

*List of 20 Budget Hotels locations where tenders have been finalized
and awarded to the successful bidders.*

Madurai	Vijayawada	Secunderabad	Jodhpur
Chandigarh	Mumbai (Carnac Bunder)	Tirupati	Jaisalmer
Kanniyakumari	Rameswaram	Nagpur	Udaipur
Ooty	New Jalpaiguri	Agra	Sealdah
Pune	Darjeeling	Habibganj	Lalgarh

List of 9 sites for Budget Hotels for which tender are under finalization:

Guwahati	Chennai	Chennai Egmore	Mangalore
Coimbatore	Pondichery	Bilaspur	Raipur
Anand Vihar			

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rasheed Masood – not present.
Shri Subhash Sureshchandra Deshmukh.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, you are losing your subsequent opportunity. If you interrupt, you will lose your opportunity.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All sorts of disturbances are being created.

Shri Subhash Sureshchandra Deshmukh.

[Translation]

*SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Sir, there are proposals to set up 92 hotels at various locations through Railway Land Development Authority. Further, 100 locations have been identified. At Solapur there is about 50 hectares of land. Will this land be handed over to Railway Land Development Authority for development and Solapur Yatri Nivas be constructed there?

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, the Railway Land Development Authority came into existence only to see how the vacant lands can be commercially exploited. Accordingly, 92 sites have been identified and given to the Railway Land Development Authority without necessarily going into the aspect of whether that can be put to alternative use or used for commercial purposes. Consultants will be appointed and they will go into the whole question of its viability, etc., and then take a decision as to what is to be done, that is, whether it should be leased, or whether there should be a joint venture or the PPP route should be taken, etc. Regarding the pointed question about Solapur, it will have to be examined as to whether it can be put to such use.

[Translation]

*SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH : Sir, metre-gauge Solapur-Bijapur section has been closed down. This land is in possession of South Central Railway. It

* English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

does not come under the purview of Solapur division. The encroachment on the land is increasing. Will this land be handed over to Railway Land Development Authority for development?

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: The Land Development Authority will not be laying track, etc., etc., whereas eviction, etc., will be done by the Zonal Railway. The Land Development Authority will have no business in that because they only develop the sites.

Regarding encroachment, etc., we will definitely take action to remove the encroachment, whether it is soft or hard encroachment because this issue has gone up to the Supreme Court level. The Supreme Court said that the Railways are competent to remove the encroachments. The suggestion of the hon. Member is welcome in this regard. We will get all those encroachments removed.

SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY: Sir, there are acres of land under Railways in India. Some lands are located in the heart of the cities. Though Railway Wasteland Authority has been formed, no further action has been taken to use these wastelands. In my constituency, Cannanore, Railways has 54 acres of land. Out of this, wasteland constitutes 20 acres. Being a Member of Parliament, I have submitted a full-fledged project which includes administrative block, flats, hotels and car parking facility, shopping mall and other passenger amenities. I would like to know whether the Railways would accept this project.

SHRI R. VELU: First of all, we do not have a Railway Wasteland Development Authority; we have Railway Land Development Authority. The hon. Member is suggesting some kind of a project for utilizing these wastelands. After getting it examined, I will get back to the Member to say whether it is feasible or not.

SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPAPARAI: Madurai and Srivilliputhur are some important cultural towns in South Tamil Nadu. In this connection, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has identified any railway vacant lands in Madurai Division for commercial use and, if so, the details thereof.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the way – everyone is asking about his constituency.

SHRI R. VELU: In Madurai, we already have budget hotels.

MR. SPEAKER: In Madurai, you are interested.

SHRI R. VELU: In Madurai, we will be having budget hotels. Similarly, in the course of time, it may be examined. Of

course, in Rameswaram, Kanyakumari and in all other places, we already proposed budget hotels.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: The Minister is aware of the fact that in South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur is one of the largest railway stations, which is having a huge tract of land there. Why has Kharagpur been not identified by the Railways for using this land for commercial operations?

MR. SPEAKER: If every hon. Member asks about his constituency, the Minister will say that he will look into it.

SHRI R. VELU: The hon. Member knows very well that I had visited that area, and I had perambulated that entire area along with him. It has been found that some land has been earmarked for shops; some land has been given to cooperative societies, to some schools, and land has also been given for religious purposes. Coming to the question of using the land for commercial exploitation, we will have to see if it is necessary to have that land with reference to traffic potential because it is exploited only with reference to the traffic potential. If such a potential is there, we will definitely get it examined, and the land will be utilized for that purpose.

MR. SPEAKER: Q. 243 — Shri Subhash Maharia — not present; Shri Kishanbhai V. Patel — not present.

Q. 244 — Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey — not present; Shri Dharmendra Pradhan — not present.

Q. 245 — Ch. Munwar Hassan — not present.

Q. 246 — Shri Narhari Mahato.

Construction of Airports by Private/ Foreign Companies

*246. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to allow participation of private Indian and foreign companies in the development/construction of airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of airports developed in the country during the last three years, State-wise and those proposed to be developed in near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The extant policy on Airport Infrastructure facilitates construction of new greenfield airports in public or private sectors or to be taken up as a joint venture subject to obtaining technical clearance and licence from the competent authority

and approval of the Central Government. The policy also provides for 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Greenfield airport development only. However, FDI in restructured Delhi and Mumbai airports, has been limited to 49%.

Two International Greenfield airports are being constructed at Shamshabad near Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh) and at Devanhalli near Bangalore (Karnataka) through Public Private Partnership (PPP) and would be operational by April 2008. In addition, Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) at New Delhi and Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport (CSI) at Mumbai (Maharashtra) have been restructured and handed over to Joint Venture Companies in May 2006 for operation, management and development through PPP model.

Government has also given 'In-Principle' approval for setting up new Greenfield airports at Mopa in Goa and Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra through PPP model.

SHRI NARHARI MAHATO: The Government has already given the 'in principle' approval for setting up the new Greenfield Airports at Mopa in Goa and Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra through PPP model. I would like to know whether the Government will give 'in principle' approval for setting up a new Greenfield Airport at Purulia in West Bengal in the near future.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, this proposal for setting up a Greenfield Airport at Purulia has not been given to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Government of India. If the hon. Member is keen and the West Bengal Government is equally keen, they approach the Government of India for the same. We will examine it and then we will get back to them. As of now, we have no such proposal with us.

SHRI NARHARI MAHATO: When will the Airport at Cooch Behar be operationalized?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: The Airport at Cooch Behar is ready for operation. I think that in a month's time, the commercial operations initially by a private carrier and then maybe even by the public carrier may commence. Within a month, I would expect that the commercial operations would begin.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: There is an abandoned airstrip near Purulia town. The Government of West Bengal has recommended construction of airstrips not only at Purulia but also near Durgapur and Malda. May I know from the Minister whether the Government of India has received a proposal from the Government of West Bengal in regard to starting of new greenfield airports at three or four sites and whether the Government consider and make investments for their operationalisation?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: We would be happy to examine any proposal, as I said earlier. As far as new greenfield airports are concerned, it is a policy of the Government of India that we do encourage new greenfield airports usually through the public-private partnership route. The West Bengal Government has also in the past mooted that a new greenfield airport should in future be made even in Kolkata. As far as Durgapur, Asansol and all this area is concerned, there is a proposal which is being examined at the moment by the Ministry. Again, for setting up new airports, new greenfield facilities, the Government of India would be very happy because infrastructure is the key to the growth of aviation industry in the future.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Infrastructure already exists.

MR. SPEAKER: No further questions. It is the most popular Ministry and every hon. Member has a question to ask.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: The asset must be owned by the Government of India. If it is not, then the proposal will have to come from the State Government; and then we will examine it and support that project for a public-private partnership route.

SHRI VIJAY BAHUGUNA: Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that there is a tremendous potential of tourism in Uttarakhand State. There are four airfields and three of them are lying idle with no work. The fourth one is the airfield at Dehradun, I would like to know as to why there is so much of delay in the construction of the fourth airfield of Dehradun. Whether it is the airfield of Gauchar, Chinyalisaun, or Nainital, all the airfields are lying idle which is affecting the tourism of the State.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: As far as the airfield at Dehradun, which is the major airfield for the State of Uttarakhand, is concerned there is no delay. The entire airfield is being redone because the facility that existed in the past was either not of good quality or the expansion was not possible on that facility. So, we have started the work to redo the entire airfield to also handle operations by larger aircraft. I would say that a substantial amount of money has also been earmarked. I can give the details. As for the other airfields in the State, Pantnagar is also now ready for operation. I probably do not have the details now with regard to the other airfields which the hon. Member has mentioned. I do not also think that they are owned by the Airports Authority of India; they may be owned by the State Government. So, you may please approach them for the other airfields which do not belong to the Government of India.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know the hon. Minister because he has made a great contribution in the progress being made for the last eight years by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. A lot of progress done during the times of Shri Anant Kumarji also during the regime of NDA Government. The Government are talking about developing hundred per cent greenfield airports. In the present scenario when there is tough competition from foreign airlines. I would like to know whether the Government propose to develop the existing airports of Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Delhi as greenfield airports for which work of modernization has been initiated to match international standards and I would also like to know whether the Government have received any proposal from the State Governments particularly from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh for developing any airport as greenfield airport. If so, by which time the Government propose to approve them.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell Harinji only this much that as far as existing airports are concerned, the work of their modernization is going on, but as for greenfield airports we have received proposals for developing Mopa and Navi Mumbai airports as greenfield airports and they have been approved. I have got the proposals for these two airports. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government of Kerala wants that Kunnur Airport be developed there but they have not completed the formalities on their part. The Government also intend to approve it. As far as the question of developing greenfield airports in Gujarat and other States is concerned, I would like to tell them that no such proposal has been received from the concerned State Governments conveying their wish to develop greenfield airports.

[English]

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Under the dynamic leadership of our hon. Minister, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has shown a lot of improvement through its joint ventures and modernization programme. A lot of development is taking place in the aviation sector in this country. Through the development of Greenfield airports and through joint ventures, the Ministry is developing airports. I would like to know from the hon. Minister this. Would the Ministry undertake the work of construction of Greenfield airports through Airports Authority of India? If it the work is given to the joint venture, will it affect the Airports Authority of India financially? ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He is a very popular Minister. I had once allowed a full discussion on this.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: You have allowed it twice. We have had a very extensive discussion on this.

MR. SPEAKER: But it seems that you were not able to satisfy them.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: The policy is very clear. I have been stating it in the past and I repeat it today that the Greenfield Airport Development Programme is not necessarily to be done only by the Airports Authority of India. It could be 100 per cent even in the private sector; it could be promoted by the State Government; and it could be even promoted by the Central Government also. There is no bar on that. Airports Authority of India has almost 125 airports under its fold. We need to develop those airports and the new airports can be left either to the State Government or to the Public-Private Partnership mode.

Even in the airports, namely, Navi Mumbai or Goa, which we have proposed, the AAI has a stake in it. In the development of new airports at Hyderabad and Bangalore, both the AAI and the State Government are stakeholders. Of course, minority stakeholders. It is a programme which I am sure over a period of years, the States would realise that the potential of aviation can only be realised by creating more infrastructure and no better way than to go Greenfield route and in the Public-Private Partnership mode.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Muzzafarpur is an important place in Northern Bihar where an airport of Airport Authority is already situated there. Earlier air services operated from there but now a days, it is totally stopped. In the same way, airports were constructed at Raxaul and Hathwa during the Second World War. The land of these places is being vacated and ready for allotment. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the Government propose to acquire these airports at Muzzafarpur, Raxaul and Hathwa situated on the Indo-Nepal border which are important from strategic point of view.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I do not have any immediate information. All airports which the hon. Member referred to may not necessarily be the airports of the AAI. Therefore, offhand, I will not be able to give a categorical reply because I do not have information. But I would assure him that I would sent all the relevant information to him.

MR. SPEAKER: Q. 247—Shri Tufani Saroj—not present.

Q. 248—Shri Naveen Jindal—not present.

Q. 249—Dr. Satyanarayan Jatiya—not present.

Q. 250—Shri Rewati Raman Singh.

[Translation]

LNG from Iran

*250. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Iran has demanded price hike for supply of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) to India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether India has accepted the price hike proposal; and

(d) if so, its likely impact on the economy of the country?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) No formal proposal has been received from Iran regarding price revision of LNG.

(b) to (d) In view of (a) above, do not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the predecessor of hon'ble Minister had stated in this House that we have started negotiations with Iran and expected that the work of this pipeline would commence next year. But now from the reply of hon'ble Minister it seems that no negotiations have been held with Iran because it does not want to supply us Gas having been angree due to our nuclear deal with America.

MR. SPEAKER: Your had put the main question on price revision.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Yes, Sir, but it is possible only when gas will be available.

[English]

SHRI MURLI DEORA: This has no relevance to the LNG contract. We are talking about the pipeline contract. Pipeline is a different issue. Just to tell you, there is a contract between Indian PSUs and an Iranian Company to supply 5 MMT per year for 25 years. We are trying our best to request Iran to see that this order is completed.

MR. SPEAKER: He has said that there is no price revision.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Sir, I would like to ask a supplementary related to this question from the hon'ble Minister. It's okay that price will not be raised but will the hon'ble Minister tell us whether this gas pipeline from Iran will come via Pakistan or not?

SHRI MURLI DEORA: I cannot answer this question just now but we are making all efforts to do this.

[English]

MD. SALIM: Of late, there is much talk about the energy security.

MR. SPEAKER: Please stick to only price revision.

MD. SALIM: Yes, Sir, this is a part of our important source of energy. Economy is related to the availability as well as future guarantee. Recently, the Minister has visited Iran and there is, of late, talk about the price revision, the competitiveness of the pipeline, the involvement of the two Governments and how we bring this because price is not stand alone per unit cost as transportation cost is also included. So, may I ask the hon. Minister, through you, as to what transpired between the two Governments, Iran and India, and where does this entire project stand?

SHRI MURLI DEORA: We have discussed this several times with the Government of Iran. I have myself met the President and the Iranian Oil Minister. The Iranian Oil Minister and his Deputy came and visited India twice. Our Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh himself met the President there. These are all under consideration and we cannot reply it today.

[Translation]

**Public Welfare Works Undertaken by
the Oil Companies**

+

*251. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

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

(a) the details of the works undertaken for public welfare by Hindustan Petroleum, Indian Oil Corporation and Bharat Petroleum during the last three years in various States, particularly in Gujarat;

(b) the company-wise allocation of funds made for the said works during the above period; and

(c) the norms laid down for undertaking such works in public interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Public Sector Oil Marketing companies (OMCs) viz. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) & Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) have reported that they have been carrying out activities related to welfare and economic development of weaker sections of the society under their community development programmes including Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan. These activities are

mostly undertaken by OMCs near their installations mainly in the areas of providing clean drinking water, expansion of education and health & medical care etc. as a measure of discharging OMC's social responsibility towards the community/society. The activities undertaken by OMCs in the State of Gujarat includes provision of drinking water, health related activities, medical camps, organizing training camps through NGOs, renovation of school building, organising cultural activities, etc.

(b) The company wise allocation of funds for corporate social responsibility during the last three years are as under:

Sl.No.	Name of the OMCs	Allocation of funds (in lakhs)		
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1.	IOC	5253.62	3668.54	3686.34
2.	BPCL	65.08	56.44	34.96
3.	HPCL	525.00	700.00	700.00

(c) As per the approved policy of IOC and HPCL on Corporate Social responsibility, expenditure not exceeding 0.75% of the net profit of the previous year can be incurred towards donations/contributions and community development (CD) activities every year. In case of BPCL, a budget of 0.5% of the net profit of the previous financial year is earmarked for expenditure towards corporate social responsibility. While utilizing the community development funds, more emphasis is laid on projects for providing clean drinking water, health and medical care and education. The community development programme adopts a multi-disciplinary approach incorporating health, family welfare, education, environment protection, drinking water and sanitation, empowerment of women and other marginalised groups. Out of the total allocation under community development programme, about 25% is spent under special component plan and tribal sub-plan for improving the quality of life of the people belonging to SCs and STs.

SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the people of the area where public sector oil and gas companies work have to face various difficulties. The roads and fields of those areas are damaged and drinking water gets polluted. That is why these companies undertake works in public interest and welfare for it. I would like to ask from the hon'ble Minister as to what are the objectives of undertaking these public welfare works and whether these objectives are being fulfilled in my district Mehsana? What is the reaction of the Government thereto?

MR. SPEAKER: What is he talking? I could not get it.

[English]

You might have understood it because it is related to Gujarat.

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: There is no objection if he asks in Gujarati also.

MR. SPEAKER: It is about Gujarat not Gujarati. I could not get it.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Sir, companies provide facilities like drinking water, health facilities, schools, computers for the development of the villages in the areas from where oil is extracted. Besides this, these companies also provide funds for health facilities in Adivasi areas. State Government also spends money for the development of that area from the royalty given to it.

SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my supplementary question is, what is the amount spent by O.N.G.C. in its various workplaces in Mehsana district during the last three years?

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: I do not have details of every village just now; I will send it later.

[English]

SHRI KIREN RIJJU: Sir, the hon. Minister has been kind enough to give policies for the North-Eastern region because in the NELP-VI, we could not get any kind of blocks for Arunachal Pradesh. But this time the hon. Minister has been kind enough and the social responsibilities of the corporate bodies are also being reflected in the Consultative Committee meetings. I have written several letters to the corporate bodies and the hon. Minister has also given assurance. But despite the assurance some of the companies, particularly, Bharat Petroleum, Hindustan Petroleum and ONGC are not really understanding the corporate responsibility. Here I must mention that I am thankful to Oil India and Indian Oil Corporation. As regards rest of the corporations, I want to know from the hon. Minister if he could give some kind of directives for them to take care of the social responsibilities which have been given to them.

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I said earlier that Navratna company provides funds for the development of the villages and for the facilities like drinking water, school and all the necessary facilities for the area where it undertakes its work and from where it extracts oil. I would try to find the details regarding the question asked by hon'ble Member and whatever be the problem, I will try to solve it. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Sir, my supplementary is on the specific question that they are spending money for the people's welfare in different States. It is all well known that they are spending money. There is nothing new in it. But will the Minister be kind enough to let us know the percentage of profit and percentage of revenue they spend for the social and public welfare and if it is on the rise or if it is on the decline for the last three years?

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have the figures?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): Sir, the figures which the hon. Member wants to know are not available with me right now. I will make these figures available to him later on. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: How can he immediately give particulars regarding some percentage? You want to know the percentage of amount spent vis-a-vis the profit.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Sir, I wanted to know either the percentage of profit or revenue whatever is available. The Minister must be aware of it. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, I will make these figures available to him.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH: Sir, the refineries pollute environment and it is known to everyone. But I do not know whether the Government of India has made any policy in respect of protection of environment. For this purpose, I would like to know whether the public sector oil companies have adopted any policy for investment of money in public welfare so that the environment could be protected from pollution as also the people.

MR. SPEAKER: Does it include the pollution?

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Hon'ble Member was talking about environment just now. Refineries think about environment also just as the case — Koyali refinery in Badodra. Nearly 12 lakh trees have been planted in Koyali. Refinery thinks about environment also. All the companies do not plant trees. Maximum trees have been planted. Companies see that no harm is caused to people in environment. They think about tree plantation.

Old Railway Bridges

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*253. SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP:

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has identified railway

bridges in the country especially in Andhra Pradesh which are 100 years old and more;

(b) the number of bridges out of them need early replacement to avoid any untoward incident; and

(c) the steps taken to replace them in a phased manner?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD):

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The life of a Railway Bridge is not based on its age but on physical condition as ascertained by inspections. Rehabilitation/rebuilding/strengthening of Bridges is an ongoing process on Indian Railways. Railway undertakes rehabilitation/rebuilding/strengthening of Bridges on the basis of their physical condition as ascertained during regular inspections carried out in the field. Certain Bridges which may show signs of deterioration of physical condition indicating need for rehabilitation etc., are classified as Distressed Bridges. These, however, are neither unsafe nor dilapidated Bridges. Based on such identification of Bridges, allotment of funds is made annually to carry out their

rehabilitation/rebuilding/strengthening duly prioritizing the works as per requirement. In 2001-02, to clear the backlog of such identified Bridges on Indian Railways, 2370 Bridges were sanctioned for rehabilitation/rebuilding/strengthening at a cost of Rs. 1530 Crore under Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF). Apart from SRSF, additional funds are also made available annually in Railway Budget to undertake rehabilitation/rebuilding/strengthening of fresh accruals of Bridge works mainly under Depreciation Reserve Fund (DRF).

The statistics of rehabilitation/rebuilding/strengthening of Bridges is maintained Railway Zone-wise not State-wise. During the last 5 years, a total of 6838 no. of Bridges have been rehabilitated/rebuilt/strengthened on all sixteen Zonal Railways. This includes 1209 no. of Bridges rehabilitated/rebuilt/strengthened on four Zonal Railways i.e. East Coast Railway (ECoR), South Central Railway (SCR), Southern Railway (SR) and South Western Railway (SWR) which serve the state of Andhra Pradesh also. During 2007-08, a total of 276 no. of Bridges have been targeted for rehabilitation/rebuilding/strengthening on four Zonal Railways which serve the state of Andhra Pradesh. The year-wise progress of Bridge Works on Indian Railways during last five years is given as under:

Year	SRSF		DRF	
	No. of Bridges Rehabilitated/ Rebuilt/ Repaired	Expenditure (Rs. in Crore)	No. of Bridges Rehabilitated/ Rebuilt/ Repaired	Expenditure (Rs. in Crore)
2001-02	280	44.10	445	63.96
2002-03	496	151.60	655	47.50
2003-04	530	157.27	1033	71.28
2004-05	375	274.26	1204	116.00
2005-06	239	248.61	1192	161.98
2006-07	167	261.20	947	215.15
2007-08	190	445.50	1254	157.10
	(Target)	(Budget Allotment)	(Target)	(Budget Allotment)
Total	2277*	1582.54	6730	832.97

* This excludes 84 bridges dropped subsequently and 9 bridges which would be completed in 2008-09 and including these, total no. of bridges is 2370.

[English]

SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP: Sir, in our country the total number of railway bridges are 1,27,000. Out of this, 51,000 bridges have been identified as more than 100 years old. Presently the Railways have increased the carriage capacity and consequently the load on the old bridges has also

increased. To meet the demands, the speed of the trains has also increased accordingly. The Ministry is making efforts to find suitable diagnostic techniques available world over for monitoring the health of the old bridges. If it is so, what techniques are being adopted? Can the Ministry assure that the life of the new bridges would get extended beyond a period of 100 years?

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I agree with the concern of the hon. Minister for the old bridges. ...*(Interruptions)* I stand corrected, I agree with the concern of the hon. Member. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Maybe, a Minister in the making!

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I have already mentioned in the reply that the age is not the concern of the bridges. It is the physical condition with reference to usage. Every year we undertake annual inspection, not necessarily by lower level officers. If there is a distressed bridge we undertake inspection by senior level officers. In fact, the Special Fund Committee, namely, the Khanna Committee went into this question and has identified 262 bridges as distressed bridges which required rehabilitation. We have done that. The question here is whether we take into account some kind of a foreign technology etc. for rehabilitation, renewal or reconstruction of the bridges.

Consultants have been invited for this purpose. The research has been done on these bridges. We are doing it. Instrumentation is being done regularly for those bridges. One point has been raised about axel load being increased. We do take care to see that the bridges are kept in good condition. Before increasing the axel load we had taken every care to see that these bridges are strengthened; the tracks are upgraded and also the rolling stock is being upgraded. We take into account all the foreign technology available to see that these bridges are kept in good condition.

MR. SPEAKER: I hope, Indian technology also is being considered.

SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP: Sir, generally the engineering section fixes up the life of a bridge. My intention of asking this question was to how best undue incidents could be avoided and confidence could be created in the public.

Sir, my second supplementary is this. There are 13,000 bridges under the South Central Railway. Out of this, 4700 bridges are over 100 years old. How much of the Railway Safety Fund has been allotted for the re-construction of these bridges? What is the status of the fund allotted? How many bridges have so far been completed and how many are under construction?

SHRI R. VELU: It is not the question of the State of Andhra Pradesh alone. The State is served by four other Railway segments. Other Railway segments like the east coast and such other also cover the State. The question here is, how much of the SRSF has been spent. When the SRSF was constituted, we identified about 2370 bridges involving an outlay of Rs. 1530 crore. The entire amount has now been spent and we have overshot the amount and spent about Rs. 1582 crore. We have now rehabilitated about 2277 bridges. Besides that, through our internal generation of funds, namely,

the DRF we have now rehabilitated about 6,730 bridges involving a sum of Rs. 832 crore. The hon. Member asked as to how much fund has been allocated for the State of Andhra Pradesh for this purpose. This year a sum of Rs. 101.3431 crore has been allocated for rehabilitation of the bridges for Andhra Pradesh, putting together the other four Railway segments.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Finance Minister has stated in his reply that renovation of the railway bridges is done keeping in view their physical condition and not on the basis of their life. I would like to know the conditions under which a rail bridge should be renovated? Will they be renovated only after an accident occurs? I want that a certain life span of a rail bridge should be fixed. Through you, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister whether in addition to Andhra Pradesh any policy has been envisaged with regards to renovation of dilapidated railway bridges in Uttar Pradesh also.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: We do not go by State-wise allotment of funds. As I have mentioned earlier, we go into the physical condition of the bridges. We do not wait for the distressed bridges to collapse. I have already mentioned that the number of identified distressed bridges is 262. We have either rehabilitated or reconstructed those bridges on a priority basis. We also join your concern and would like to say that we will not run a train on a bridge when it is found to be distressed or in a repairable condition. If a bridge is found to be in such a condition, then we also put speed restrictions till it is reconstructed. I would like to assure the hon. Member that the Indian Railways will take care of such things because this is a safety item. We will not do anything that would go against the interest of the traveling public or the freight.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Virendra Kumar. Please be brief. My attempt is to cover as many Questions as possible. This is the sixth Question.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know the number of bridges which have been identified in Madhya Pradesh which need to be renovated urgently? Many bridges on Bina-Katni section rail of Western Central railway ahead of Damo are very old. The said bridges were constructed before independence. A bridge was damaged two years ago. The movement of trains remained disrupted on that line for around two-three months due to repair work of that bridge. Through you I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister whether any action plan is being prepared for the

renovation of all the bridges falling on railway line between Bina-Katni?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have the information?

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, right now I do not have the information. I will supply the information to the Hon'ble Member.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ram Kripal Yadav.

You should speak when I call your name, not before that.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: I always obey you.

MR. SPEAKER: All right, you are very obedient, now ask your question.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: How can I ask the question without your permission.

MR. SPEAKER: I have permitted you to ask the question.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Minister has apprised the House regarding the bad condition of the railway bridges across the country and the measures being adopted to renovate them. Through you, I would specifically like to state that there are several railway bridges in Bihar which are in dilapidated condition. Recently a bridge in Bhagalpur collapsed. I would like to know the number of bridges in Bihar which are in dilapidated condition and which are more than hundred years old and the number of bridges which have been identified for renovation and amount which has been allocated for their renovation.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, this is a State specific question. I have to cull out the information and furnish it to the hon. Member. As I have said earlier that we are undertaking annual inspection. If necessary, a three level inspection is carried out. Our hon. Minister, Shri Lalu ji comes from that State and he would not hesitate to allot sufficient funds if anything gets damaged.

MR. SPEAKER: This should also be for West Bengal.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, that also will be done.

Gauge Conversion

*254. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the total track in kilometres proposed for Gauge Conversion in each Zone during the Eleventh Five Year Plan; and

(b) the total quantum of funds required for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The 11th Five Year Plan has not yet been finalized, as such details are not feasible to be given at this stage. However, as mentioned in Budget Speech 2007-08, efforts would be made to convert the majority of the Metre Gauge lines to Broad Gauge during the 11th Five Year Plan. There are 55 ongoing gauge conversion projects which require about Rs.11,500 crore (as on 1.4.2007) for completion. These projects on completion would add about 7500 kms of broad gauge lines.

[Translation]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has been stated in the reply given to the House that there are 55 ongoing projects of gauge conversion with a cost of Rs. 11500 crore. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister as to how much time in years will be taken to complete the work of these 55 on going gauge conversion projects? Have the Ministry of Railways envisaged Public Private participation or any other way of raising funds so that the projects could be completed expeditiously?

MR. SPEAKER: When and how this work will be completed?

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, gauge conversion is a unigauge policy announced way back on 1.4. 1992 saying that we have to put the Indian Railways on the unigauge mode. Accordingly, the Railways identified about 27,349 kilometres of metre gauge lines. We have so far converted about 13,289 kilometres leaving a balance of 13,399 kilometres. In the last budget, the hon. Minister has announced that a majority of metre gauge lines will be converted during the Eleventh Plan Period. Accordingly, we have planned for about 1800 kilometres of conversion.

Now the question is about the time to be taken for it. In fact, we are trying to achieve at least majority, if not cent per cent, by the end of the Eleventh Plan Period.

The other question is whether we are going on the PPP route or not. We are not concentrating on the PPP project.

[Translation]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Gujarat has around 2200 Kilometers of meter gauge and narrow gauge lines which is highest in the country. The Hon'ble Minister

has stated that there is a plan of laying 7500 kilometers of broadgauge lines in the 11th Five Years Plan, I would like to ask him as to how many kilometers of these lines are supposed to be laid in Gujarat, which has maximum meter gauge and narrow gauge lines. How many railway lines in Gujarat will be converted into broadgauge?

MR. SPEAKER: You may send him a letter, later.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I will give him the details but, I think, seven projects are now under gauge conversion. Regarding the balance, as I mentioned, we will try to help you to see that the metre gauge lines are converted. About the narrow gauge, we have not yet taken a decision. As far as metre gauge is concerned, we will try to see that the majority of them will get converted.

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: How much time will it take?

SHRI R. VELU: I will furnish you the details.

SHRI K.S. RAO: Sir, I am happy that the Government of India has taken a decision to have a uniform gauge in the entire country and that would bring a lot of economy in the transport of both cargo and manpower. The hon. Minister has said that, out of about 27,000 kilometres, they have completed only about 13,000 kilometres so far since 1992 and they are doing only 1800 kilometres this year.

In this background, I wish to know from the hon. Minister whether, due to lack of funds, they will consider in terms of getting things done under BOT through private investment.

MR. SPEAKER: These are suggestions for action.

SHRI K.S. RAO: Sir, it is very easy to get it done through BOT.

SHRI R. VELU: We had an experiment of that sort in Mehsana area as regards BOT but then, at present, we are not contemplating on that. We will get the hon. Member's suggestion examined.

SHRI ALAKESH DAS: Sir, in the budget of 2007-08, the Minister talked about conversion of metre gauge to broad gauge but there is no hope about conversion of narrow gauge to broad gauge. I am speaking about lines which are more than 100 years old. I am referring to Shantipur to Nabadwip line. I want to know whether there is any planning of the Railways about the gauge conversion of the section from Shantipur via Krishnagar to Nabadwip. I am talking about conversion of narrow gauge to broad gauge.

SHRI R. VELU: As I mentioned earlier, the balance of about 2000 kilometres of narrow gauge are not taken up on priority because most of the lines do not have sufficient traffic. Secondly, we have to examine whether conversion will add to the traffic. It is a policy decision which we have to take on the narrow gauge.

SHRI SALEEM SHERVANI: In 1996, the metre gauge line from Kasganj to Badaun was taken up for conversion into broad gauge. It is now more than 11 years but the project is not yet complete. I would like to know, through you, from the hon. Minister about target date and when do they hope to complete the whole project. ...*(Interruptions)*

12.00 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER: How is it possible to give information about the individual project?

SHRI R. VELU: In all these gauge conversions, we do not give a date for completion because there is a constraint of resources. That is why, it is not possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan. There will be no more opportunity for you today.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Doubling of Mangalore-Shornur line is going on for a long time. Kottayam-Ernakulam-Kayamkulam line is also still pending. So how many decades will you take for its completion? It is because it was started in the Tenth Plan. Will it be continued in the Eleventh Plan also? Hence, I am putting this question to the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This is a problem regarding the information about the individual project.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, for your safety, you please call him to your office.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): In the Tenth Plan it was not completed and it is continued in the Eleventh Plan also. That is why I am asking how many decades will you take for its completion?

MR. SPEAKER: Question Hour is over. Mr. Minister, you need not reply.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Production of Crude Oil

*243. SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA:
SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

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

(a) whether Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL)/ONGC have been nominated by the Government to undertake crude oil production in the Western States, particularly in Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to set up an Oil Refinery at Barmer in Rajasthan; and

(d) if so, the steps taken thereon and the target fixed for its commercial production?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL)/ONGC have not been nominated by the Government to undertake crude oil production in the Western States, particularly in Rajasthan. Production activities in Block RJ-ON-90/1 in Rajasthan will be carried out by the contractor company, namely, Cairn Energy India Pty. Limited. Government has nominated Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL), a subsidiary of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) as its nominee to receive crude oil produced from the Block RJ-ON-90/1, as per the provisions of Production Sharing Contract.

(c) and (d) Consequent to de-licensing of refinery sector since June, 1998, a refinery may be set up anywhere in India by a Private or Public Sector Enterprise depending on the promoter's assessment of its viability. Therefore, it is not the Government but the Private/Public Sector Enterprise, which has to decide on setting up of refinery based on commercial considerations.

The proposal for setting up a refinery at Barmer in Rajasthan is under consideration of ONGC, which is a Navratna company. ONGC has carried out the following studies in this regard:

- (i) Technical Feasibility Study by Engineers India Limited (EIL)
- (ii) Market Study by M/s Nexant
- (iii) Financial Appraisal by M/s SBI Caps
- (iv) RoU Survey by M/s SECON

A decision will be taken by ONGC based on commercial consideration.

Considering that Rajasthan crude is heavy and viscous which needs to be kept heated for transportation, very short duration of peak production necessitating import of crude and its conveyance inland, limited market potential in Rajasthan necessitating export of products and other factors, ONGC has approached the Government of Rajasthan for incentives/concessions to make the refinery project financially viable.

[Translation]

Increase in Prices of Medicines

*244. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of medicines are increasing constantly despite the efforts made by the Government on its part as reported in the 'Navbharat Times' dated August 6, 2007; and

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

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) The news item published in Navbharat Times dated 6th August, 2007 relates to the increase in prices of medicines. At present, the 74 bulk drugs specified in First Schedule of Drugs (Price Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control and their prices are fixed/revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of Para 7 of the DPCO, 95. The details of prices fixed/revised by NPPA are available in the compendium of prices placed in the library of Parliament and also available on the website of NPPA.

Only two bulk drugs used in the treatment of Diabetes namely Insulin and Glipizide and formulations thereof are Scheduled bulk drugs and their prices are fixed/revised as per Para 7 of DPCO, 95. As mentioned in the News item, NPPA has not revised the price of 10 ml Insulin from Rs. 130 per vial to Rs. 150 per vial. No price increase has been detected in case of Insulin in the last 7 months (from 1.1.07 to 21.8.07).

Recently, NPPA has conducted a market survey in Delhi in case of Insulin which is placed at enclosed statement. The analysis shows that in most cases the prevailing market prices of Insulin (10ml vial) are not more than the price fixed by NPPA.

As regard to the medicines used in the treatment of Malaria mentioned in the News item, Chloroquine is the Scheduled bulk drug and the prices are fixed by NPPA as per the norms prescribed in DPCO, 95. The price of Chloroquine 250 mg. 10 strips has been fixed at Rs. 5.68 excluding local taxes and the medicine is being sold in the market at Rs. 5.91 for 10 tablets including local taxes. The other medicine mentioned in the News item, Arthomether Lumesinetyrime is a non-Scheduled medicine and therefore, the prices are fixed by the manufacturers on their own.

In general, the prices of anti-asthmatic drugs are reasonable. Some most important and commonly used drugs in this group include Salbutamol and Theophylline and both the drugs are in price controlled category. The prices are fixed regularly under the provisions of DPCO. The Glucometer and strips are medical devices and their prices are not fixed under DPCO, 95.

Recently, this Department has asked the Drug Controller General (India) that intimation of any approval of new formulations should be sent to NPPA so as to enable it to keep a track of its prices in the market.

Statement

Analysis of samples purchased from market.

Sl.No.	Formulation with Composition	Name of the Company	Threupateic Category	Schedule/ Non-Schedule	Batch No./ Manufacturing Date	Pre-revised Price (NPPA)	Price Fixed by NPPA	Actual MRP (Rs.)	Remarks
1	Huminsulin 30/70 40 IU/ml, 10ml Vial	Eli-Lilly	Anti-Diabetic	Schedule	J63373/ Dec.'06	Rs.162.02 dt. 6.05.98	Rs.160.46 NCP order dt. 19.05.06	Rs.158.00/Vial	Actual MRP is inclusive of local taxes
2	Human Mixtard 40 IU/ml, 10ml Vial	Navo Nordisk	Anti-Diabetic	Schedule	D5738/Nov.'06	Rs.197.62 dt. 6.05.98	Rs.152.56 NCP order dt. 19.05.06	Rs.158.66/Vial	Actual MRP is inclusive of local taxes
3	Humstard Insulin 30/70 40 IU/ml, 10ml Vial	Cadilla Pharmaceutical	Anti-Diabetic	Schedule	6002 / April'06		Rs.121.80 NCP order dt. 20.09.05	Rs.123.10/Vial L.T. extra	xx
4	Insucare M 30 (30/70) 40 IU/ml, 10ml Vial	Ranbaxy	Anti-Diabetic	Schedule	9063214 / March'07		Rs.129.70 NCP order dt. 07.02.06	Rs.129.78/Vial inclusive of local taxes	Actual MRP is
5	Insugen 30/70 40 IU/ml, 10ml Vial	Biocon	Anti-Diabetic	Schedule	B06213/ March'07	Rs.131.52 dt. 20.10.04	Rs.122.20 NCP order dt. 29.03.06	Rs.127.00/Vial	Actual MRP is inclusive of local taxes
6	r-humar Insulin (Regular) 40 IU/ml, 10ml Vial	Wockhardt	Anti-Diabetic	Schedule		Rs.228.26 dt. 9.07.03	Rs.117.05 NCP order dt. 29.03.06	Rs. 121.73 Vial*	Actual MRP is inclusive of local taxes
7	r- humar Insulin NPH 40 IU/ml, 10ml Vial	Wockhardt	Anti-Diabetic	Schedule		Rs.228.50 dt. 9.07.03	Rs.117.28 NCP order dt. 29.03.06	Rs. 121.97 / Vial*	Actual MRP is inclusive of local taxes
8	r- humar Insulin (30/70) 40 IU/ml, 10ml Vial	Wockhardt	Anti-Diabetic	Schedule		Rs.228.50 dt. 9.07.03	Rs.117.22 NCP order dt. 29.03.06	Rs.121.91/ Vial*	Actual MRP is inclusive of local taxes

*As given by representative of M/s. Wockhardt as these products were not available with the Chemist.

[English]

**Unapproved and Overpriced
Drug Formulations**

*245. CH. MUNAWAR HASSAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has come across with 39 unapproved formulations and 58 overpriced formulations in the list of 886 medicines of the drug companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith names of the companies; and

(c) the action taken / proposed to be taken by the Government against those companies?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has come across with 39 unapproved formulations and 58 overpriced formulations in the list of 886 medicines of the drug companies.

A compilation of a list of 886 medicines, whose prices were voluntarily agreed to be reduced by eleven companies,

is available on this Department's Website www.chemicals.gov.in. It has also been placed in the library of the Parliament. The list covers formulations in all dosage forms such as tablets, capsules and syrups, etc. and they find usage in the treatment of a large number of diseases. The medicines covered are antibiotics, cough syrups, painkillers as well as those used during the surgical operations, for the cure of the infectious diseases and for the treatment of hypertension etc. The revised prices were to be implemented by the companies on packs manufactured after 2nd October/2nd November, 2006.

(b) and (c) On scrutiny by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) of the reduction in prices in respect of 886 formulations packs, NPPA has detected prime facie violation of para 8 of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) in respect of 39 formulation packs, which relate to manufacture and marketing of Scheduled formulations by companies without prior price approval. The details of these cases are given in the enclosed Statement-I. Further in respect of 58 formulation packs, NPPA has detected overcharging by the companies concerned under para 13 of DPCO 95. The details of these cases are given in the enclosed Statement-II. In all these cases, action has been initiated for violation of the respective provisions of DPCO 95.

Statement-I

Summary of Para 8 violation Notice issued against 39 packs

Sl.No.	Sl. No. of the list (886 medicines)	Name of Company	Product / Composition /Pack Size
1	2	3	4
1	59	M/s. Alembic Ltd.	Bivinal Syrup 200ml
2	84	M/s. Alembic Ltd.	Bivinal Syrup 10 Tab
3	165	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadibion Syrup 100ml
4	166	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadibion Syrup 200ml
5	207	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Tobracad-D Eye Drop 10ml
6	214	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zydexa Injection 30ml
7	216	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zygenta 30ml Injection
8	229	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadiquin Suspension 30ml
9	234	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zydexa CH. Eye Drop 5ml
10	238	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zythrocine Suspension 60ml
11	239	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zadibion Elixir 100ml
12	240	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zadibion Elixir 200ml

1	2	3	4
13	255	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Becomed Inj. 10ml
14	267	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gementa Inj. 30ml/vial
15	315	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Nortee-Z Tab LB
16	316	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Nortee 400 Tab LB
17	343	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Becomed Forte Syrup 200ml
18	353	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gemodyl Syrup 100ml
19	354	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gemodyl Syrup 50ml
20	369	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Becmed-G 10gm
21	370	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Becomed-GM/10gm
22	377	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Otrex-D 10ml Syrup
23	379	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gercip-D Eye/Ear Drop 10ml
24	380	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Germenta Eye/Ear Drop 10ml
25	381	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Klorum-D Eye/Ear Drop 10ml
26	382	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Nortee-D Eye/Ear Drop 10ml
27	384	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Tobramed-D Eye/Ear Drop 10ml
28	407	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadiplex Injection 10ml
29	408	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadiplex Plus Syrup 200ml
30	409	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadiplex Syrup 100ml
31	410	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadiplex 200ml Liquid
32	445	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Tobracad-D Eye Drop 10ml
33	453	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zydexa-N Eye/Ear Drop 10ml
34	454	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zydexa-O Eye/Ear Drop 10ml
35	464	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadiplex Injection 10ml
36	556	M/s. Wockhardt Ltd.	Miltiwocx 10 Cap
37	742	M/s. Lupin Ltd.	Lupiqyl Gel 30gm
38	875	M/s. Medley Pharmaceutical Ltd.	Ultiseng Cap 10's
39	885	M/s. Medley Pharmaceutical Ltd.	Vitaseng Cap 10's

Statement-II*Summary of cases of where suspected overcharging noticed out of 58 packs*

Sl.No.	Sl. No. of the list (886 medicines)	Name of Company	Product / Composition /Pack Size
1	2	3	4
1	132	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Glipimet TAB
2	134	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Madrox 125 MG DT
3	135	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Madrox 250 MG DT

1	2	3	4
4	136	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Madrox 500 MG DT
5	185	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Fourdus AF Cream 5GM
6	186	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Fourdus AF Cream 10GM
7	192	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Magalox LB Caps Capsules
8	212	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zydexa Injection 10ML
9	213	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zydexa Injection 20ML
10	241	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadiquin 250 Tablets
11	242	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadiquin 500 Tablets
12	261	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gencef Injection 1 gm
13	262	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gencef Injection 250mg.
14	265	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Germenta Injection 2ml
15	268	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gertac injection 2ml
16	285	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Dexagee Tab
17	288	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Fedexil 125 mg Tab
18	289	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Fedexil 250 mg LB Tab
19	290	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Fedexil 500 mg LB Tab
20	297	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gercip-TZ Tab
21	306	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gertac 150mg Tab
22	307	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gertac 500 mg Tab
23	309	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gexofen Tab
24	368	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	G-Derm
25	442	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Quadridus AF Cream 10 GM
26	443	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Quadridus AF Cream 5 GM
27	475	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Eliminate SUSP. 30ml
28	476	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Eliminate 250 DT Tab 10's
29	477	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Eliminate 500 Tab 4's
30	479	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Furamet Syrup 50ml
31	481	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Painwin Tabs 10's
32	482	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Rimpazid Kid TAB. 10's
33	215	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zygenta 20ml Inj.
34	235	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zy G Dexta Eye Drop
35	237	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zyrifa Kit
36	243	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Streptocad 750 Inj.

1	2	3	4
37	244	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Streptocad 1000 Inj.
38	263	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gerciclox Injection
39	264	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Germenta Injection 40mg
40	266	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Germenta Injection 40mg
41	294	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gatrima DS Tab
42	295	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gatrima SS Tab
43	298	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gercip 250 mg Tab
44	299	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gercip 500 mg Tab
45	306	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gertac150 Tab
46	308	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gertac DM
47	341	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Spasmon Caps
48	376	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Germenta-D
49	383	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Nortee Eye/Ear drops
50	385	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Gercip Eye/Ear drops
51	433	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Negaflox Eye/Ear drop
52	490	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Cadicycln Injection
53	497	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zoxclox 500mg Caps
54	498	M/s. Cadilla Healthcare Ltd.	Zoxclox Lb 500mg Caps
55	608	M/s. Emcure Ltd.	Ciprobiotic-250 1x10
56	609	M/s. Emcure Ltd.	Ciprobiotic-500 1x10
57	610	M/s. Emcure Ltd.	Ciprobiotic-TN-250 1x10
58	611	M/s. Emcure Ltd.	Ciprobiotic-TN-500 1x10

[Translation]**Production of Chemical Fertilizers**

*247. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the year-wise details of production of fertilizers in different production units of IFFCO during the last three years vis-a-vis its installed capacity;

(b) whether the Government proposes to expand its operational capacity; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Details regarding unit-wise installed capacity and production

of fertilizers by IFFCO during 2004-05 to 2006-07 are given in the enclosed statement.

(b) and (c) Since Phosphatic and Potassic fertilizers are decontrolled, all companies are free to install/ enhance production capacities without reference to government.

Similarly, under the New Pricing Scheme Stage-III, policy regarding prior permission of the Government for additional urea production capacity has been dispensed with and the producing units are free to enhance production capacity.

It has been informed by IFFCO that they are implementing capacity enhancement project at Aonla and Phulpur units which is expected to be commissioned in April, 2008. The capacity after implementation of the enhancement project will be 19.998 Lakh MT for Aonla unit and 16.978 Lakh MT for Phulpur, as against present capacity of 17.292 Lakh MT for Aonla & 14.157 Lakh MT for Phulpur respectively.

Statement**Unit/Product-wise Annual Installed Capacity and Production of Fertilizer
by IFFCO from 2004-05 to 2006-07**

('000' MTs)

Name of Unit/Plant	Product Name	Installed Capacity (as on 1/4/2006)	Production		
			2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
IFFCO: Kandla	10:26:26	515.4	386.6	583.4	572.0
	12:32:16	700.0	762.6	1122.6	1100.3
	DAP	1200.0	1290.9	980.6	804.4
Total (IFFCO/Kandla):		2415.4	2440.1	2686.6	2476.7
IFFCO: Kalol	Urea	544.5	554.4	544.5	559.9
IFFCO: Phulpur	Urea	551.1	565.1	551.1	573.8
IFFCO: Phulpur Exp	Urea	864.6	864.7	884.6	882.8
IFFCO: Aonla	Urea	864.6	864.6	863.0	885.3
IFFCO: Aonla Expn.	Urea	864.6	865.3	874.6	880.5
Total (IFFCO):		6104.8	6154.2	6404.4	6259.0
IFFCO: Paradeep	DAP	1500.0	600.4	92.3	418.2
	20:20	100.0	32.8	156.6	332.2
	10:26:26	160.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	12:32:16	160.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total (IFFCO: Paradeep):		1920.0	633.2	248.9	750.4
Total IFFCO		10440.2	9227.5	9339.9	9486.1

*[English]***Garbage Management in Railways**

*248. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made regarding the waste and garbage generated in trains, railway tracks, in and around the stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether adequate arrangements are in place to clear this garbage; and

(d) if not, the steps being taken to upgrade the garbage management and keep the trains, tracks and stations absolutely clean?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD):

(a) No aggregate assessment has been made of the quantity of waste and garbage generated in trains, railway tracks, in and around stations.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Arrangements are in place to clear garbage from different areas. Garbage generated in coaches / trains is collected during the cleaning of the trains in coaching terminals after the termination of the train journey. Garbage from select trains is also collected enroute at their nominated "Clean Train Stations". Cleaning Staff escorting prestigious trains like Shatabdi/Rajdhani etc. collect the garbage On Board these trains.

Left over food/other catering waste from trains is also collected. Similarly garbage from station premises, platforms, yards, track in the station area is also collected on a regular basis.

Garbage so collected from trains, station premises, yards and tracks in station area is transported to Garbage dumps at identified location within Railway premises, from where it is finally cleared to Garbage disposal locations of local Municipalities. Garbage on the Railway track outside the station premises is generally small and mostly gets disposed off by prevailing weather conditions. However, wherever any significant quantity of garbage is available on track outside station area the same is cleared by Track maintenance staff as per maintenance needs.

Up-gradation of garbage management and of steps being taken to keep trains, tracks and stations clean is a continuous process.

2007-08 is also being observed as Cleanliness Year on the Railways. Some of the recent initiatives taken by the Railways are:

- Progressive adoption of mechanized Cleaning of coaches /trains and coaching depot premises.
- Mechanized enroute cleaning of nominated trains during their stoppage at "CLEAN TRAIN STATIONS" spread over the Railways,
- Cleaning and house keeping in prestigious trains during run.
- Mechanized high pressure jet cleaning of platforms, Track, Drains etc., in station area.
- Launching of special cleanliness drives.
- Motivational schemes for cleaning staff like Special uniforms & protective gear.
- Provision of adequate nos. of dust bins, Garbage bins and large sized bags for ease of disposal.
- Educational publicity campaigns and announcements at stations.
- Improved supervision by significantly increasing the strength of Health Inspectors in field Units.

[Translation]

Wholesale/Retail Prices of Chemical Fertilizers

*249. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of wholesale and retail prices of each type of major/ important chemical fertilizers in the country during each of the last three years; and

(b) the mechanism adopted by the Government to monitor the retail and wholesale prices of such fertilizers?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a)

Government declares a Maximum Retail Price (MRP) for each of the chemical fertilizers under the subsidy/ concession scheme, except SSP. MRP of SSP is notified by respective State Governments from time to time. No separate wholesale prices are recognized under the subsidy/ concession Scheme.

The following rates of MRP are applicable from 2002 till date including the last three years:

Chemical Fertilizers	MRP (2002- till date) Rs. Per MT
DAP	9350
Urea	4830
MOP	4455
11 grades of NPK complexes	6980 - 9080
SSP	
2004-05	2600 -3740
2005-06	2600 - 4300
2006-07	2780 - 4472
2007-08	2700 - 4300

For payment of concession/ subsidy, Government computes total delivered cost/ total cost of respective fertilizer. The difference between the total delivered cost / total cost of fertilizer and the MRP paid by the farmer is given as concession/ subsidy. In case of SSP, the concession is fixed at Rs. 975/- per MT.

Dealers' Margin/ Distribution Margin, as applicable to different fertilizers, is treated as part of total delivered cost/ total cost. Currently, the dealers' margin is Rs. 180/- per MT for Urea through other than Cooperative channel, Rs. 200/- per MT through Cooperative Channels, Rs. 275/- per MT for DAP and NPK and Rs. 200/- per MT for MOP.

(b) Mechanism of price control of fertilizers is administered by the State Governments as per the guidelines under the Fertilizer (Control) Order (FCO), 1985 issued by the Central Government and administered by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.

Clause 3 of the FCO provides for fixing prices of fertilizers by the Central Government. No dealer, manufacturer, importer or pool-handling agency shall sell or offer for sale any fertilizer at price exceeding the MRP or rate fixed under the FCO.

It is mandatory under Clause 4 of the FCO that every dealer, who makes or offers to make a retail sale of any fertilizers, has to prominently display list of prices or rates of such fertilizers fixed by the Government under Clause 3 of the FCO.

Under Section 7 of the Essential Commodities Act, any violation of Clause 3 of the FCO is punishable offence for imprisonment up to 7 years. Further, under Clause 21 of the FCO, every manufacturer/ importer and pool-handling agency is required to print 'FERTILIZER' and also maximum retail price in bold.

The State Governments are implementing and enforcement authorities for FCO. Regulation and monitoring of dealers in the respective State is done by respective State Governments under Clauses 26 and 27 of the FCO.

Mega Food Park Scheme

*252. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any discussion with the Planning Commission about the Mega Food Park Scheme;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) the salient features of the Mega Food Park Scheme and the subsidy or other incentives being provided by the Government to attract private sector in this scheme; and

(d) the benefits likely to accrue to the farmers from this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY):

(a) to (d) Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) has submitted a proposal to Planning Commission for Mega Food Parks under 11th Five Year Plan. The scheme aims to provide a mechanism to bring together farmers, processors and retailers and link agricultural production to the market so as to ensure maximizing value addition, minimizing wastages, increasing farmers' income and creating employment opportunities in rural sector. Mega Food Park envisages a well-defined agri/horticultural-processing zone containing state of the art processing facilities with support infrastructure and well established supply chain. The primary objective of the scheme is to facilitate establishment of an integrated value chain, with processing at the core and supported by requisite forward and backward linkages. The scheme also envisages Public Private Partnership (PPP) models for its implementation.

The Scheme proposes financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid upto 50% of the project cost in general areas and up to 75% of the project cost in special category states subject to a maximum of Rs. 50.00 Crores or the cost of approved facilities, whichever is lower, for all implementing agencies including private sector. The proposal also

envisages infrastructure status under section 80 (1) (A) of Income Tax Act for mega food parks to attract private investment. The scheme is under finalization in consultation with Planning Commission for inclusion in the 11th Five Year Plan.

Plane Accidents

*255. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA:
SHRI GANESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether air accidents are taking place frequently these days;

(b) if so, the details of air accidents that had taken place in the last three years and till date and the reasons for such accidents;

(c) the action taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government thereon;

(d) whether the Government proposes to make use of any new technology to check air accidents; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) There have been 3, 4 and 5 accidents to Indian Civil Registered aircraft during the year 2005, 2006 and 2007 (till date) respectively. The reasons are improper decision of the pilots, poor crew co-ordination, mechanical/technical problems, poor maintenance, lack of experience and weather disturbances. The safety recommendations emanating from the investigations have been implemented to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

(c) to (e) Safety recommendations emanating from investigation of aircraft accidents are followed up for implementation with the agencies concerned to prevent their recurrence. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) ensures, on a continuous basis, strict compliance of safety norms by all air operators by way of safety audits. Besides, spot checks on maintenance activities are also carried out by the DGCA. DGCA also keeps updating the Civil Aviation Requirements/Circulars to strengthen aviation safety aspect. To provide better airworthiness schedule for enhancement of air safety aspect, Government is running two international training programmes for the officials of DGCA and airlines, viz., Co-operative Development of Operational Safety & Continuing Airworthiness Programme (COSCAP) and European Union-India-Training Programme.

[Translation]

Railway Projects and Compensation to Farmers

*256. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals for construction of new railway lines, doubling of railway lines in each of the State in the country approved by the Government in the last three years and current year till date;

(b) the details of the steps taken by the Railways to pay compensation to the farmers for acquiring their land to start work on the approved projects/proposals;

(c) whether any policy for providing job and compensation to the farmers in lieu of the acquisition of their land has been framed;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which land acquisition in each state for construction of new railway lines in the country is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD):

(a) State-wise number of new lines and doubling projects falling fully/partly in the State and included in the Budget in the last 3 years and the current year is as under:-

Name of the State	No. of New Line Projects	No. of Doubling Projects
Andhra Pradesh	5	4
Assam & North East Region	2	1
Bihar	9	7
Chhattisgarh	0	7
Delhi	0	1
Gujarat	1	0
Haryana	0	3
Himachal Pradesh	1	0
Karnataka	1	5
Kerala	0	4
Madhya Pradesh	1	0
Maharashtra	0	3
Orissa	0	6
Punjab	1	0
Rajasthan	0	4
Tamil Nadu	2	1
Uttar Pradesh	3	13
Uttarakhand	1	0
West Bengal	0	5

The above does not include Harsauli-Rewari doubling project falling fully/partly in the State of Rajasthan & Haryana, which has been proposed in Supplementary Demands for Grant 2007-08 in the Monsoon Session.

(b) Land for approved projects is acquired under Land Acquisition Act. Compensation is paid through the concerned Revenue/State authorities. Railways only deposit the amount as advised by Land Acquisition Officer of the State concerned.

(c) and (d) As per policy, no cognizance by way of offering employment to displaced persons should be given wherein only a strip of land viz. for construction of a line has been acquired but the same can be considered in Group 'D' posts only wherein large area, house and substantial livelihood has been taken away/snapped in the process. Offering appointment in Group 'D' on Railways is an exception rather than a rule whenever any land acquisition take place.

(e) No fixed time frame can be given for land acquisition as it depends on the State authorities and the conditions differ from place to place.

Import of Urea

*257. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the import price of urea since 1999-2000 till date;

(b) the quantity of urea imported during the said period, total money spent on this account and the subsidy outgo for the import; and

(c) the projected consumption of urea in the country during the next plan period and the steps taken by the Government to bridge the gap between demand and indigenous availability of urea?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The weighted average C&F price of urea imported on Government account since 1999-2000 is as below:-

Year	Wt. Average C&F price (US \$ per MT)	
	For import from other sources	For imports from OMIFCO under UOTA
1	2	3
1999-2000	86.00	Nil
2000-2001	Nil	Nil
2001-2002	106.50	Nil
2002-2003	Nil	Nil

1	2	3
2003-2004	Nil	Nil
2004-2005	237.88	Nil
2005-2006	258.56	155.23
2006-07	248.85	168.66
2007-08 (up to 07/ 07)	336.53	212.28

(b) The urea imports on government account, gross expenditure and the net subsidy paid on imported urea since 1999-2000 is as under:-

Year	Urea Imports (in lakh MT)	Gross Expenditure (Rs/crore)	Net Subsidy (Rs/crore)
1999-2000	5.33	293.00	74.07
2000-2001	0.00	11.85	0.98
2001-2002	2.20	147.50	47.34
2002-2003	0.00	1.16	0.00
2003-2004	0.00	0.82	0.00
2004-2005	6.41	742.64	493.91
2005-2006	20.57	2164.71	1201.43
2006-07	47.19	5071.06	3274.09
2007-08 (upto 07/07)	20.72	2838.19	2206.15

(c) The actual sales of urea during 2006-07 was approximately 245 lakh MT. The estimated demand during the current year 2007-08 is 276 lakh MT. The requirement of urea during 2011-12 which is the terminal year of the 11th plan, as estimated by the Working Group on Fertilizers is 287.50 lakh MT.

All efforts are being made to encourage increased production indigenously to meet the projected requirement of urea.

Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline Project

*258. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:

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

(a) whether India, Pakistan and Iran have agreed over the price formula for the gas pipeline known as Peace Pipeline;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the present status of Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline Project;

(d) whether India and Pakistan have reached an in-principle agreement on transportation charges that India would pay to Pakistan for Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline; and

(e) if so, the facts in this regard and the details of the hurdles faced by India in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (c) India has been pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through the Iran-Pakistan-India transnational gas pipeline. For this purpose, two sets of separate Secretary-level bilateral Joint Working Groups (JWGs) have been set up with Pakistan and Iran. Three meetings of India-Iran Special JWG (SJWG) have been held, the last meeting being on December 28 & 29, 2005. Five meetings of India-Pakistan JWG have been held; the last meeting was held on June 27 & 28, 2007 in New Delhi.

A tripartite Joint Working Group (JWG) of Iran, Pakistan and India has been formed. Six meetings of the trilateral JWG have been held so far, the last meeting being held in New Delhi on June 28 & 29, 2007.

At the 4th tripartite meeting held in Tehran on January 24 & 25, 2007, a gas pricing formula regarding pricing of gas at Iran-Pakistan border was agreed between Iran and Pakistan sides, subject to approval from the respective Governments. The Indian side agreed to respond to the pricing formula. India conveyed to the Iranian side, vide letter dated 28.2.2007, that the total price payable for the gas at India-Pakistan border would also depend on transportation cost and transit fees payable by India to Pakistan for passage of gas through Pakistan; as there was no clarity on these, it was not possible for India to decide regarding the final price. Subsequently, Iran demanded introduction of provision for a price revision, in the 5th. Tripartite JWG meeting held at Tehran during May 27-30, 2007, which both India and Pakistan disagreed with. The Sixth Tripartite meeting was held in New Delhi on June 28 & 29, 2007. The issue of gas price review clause was interalia discussed amongst the participating countries. It was decided to carry forward the discussions to the next round of meetings for resolution of this and other important issues.

(d) and (e) During the 5th India-Pakistan JWG meeting held in New Delhi on June 27 & 28, 2007, the issue of transportation tariff for passage of gas through Pakistan was discussed. It was agreed that it should be based on cost of service to be achieved through International Competitive Bidding (ICB). However, there is no agreement yet on the

transit fees to be payable by India to Pakistan for the passage of natural gas through Pakistan.

[Translation]

**Projects undertaken abroad by
Indian Railways**

*259. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Railways are undertaking works/projects in the technical and economic fields in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the details of the countries and the projects executed by Railways there including their cost; and

(c) the details of the payments received for the execution of the projects, country-wise?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD):

(a) Indian Railways do not undertake projects in technical and economic fields abroad. Public Sector Undertakings of Ministry of Railways, namely RITES Ltd. and IRCON International Limited undertake projects in technical and economic fields abroad.

(b) and (c) The country-wise details of foreign projects executed by RITES Limited, details of costs of projects and the payments received by RITES Limited for the projects/works executed are given in the enclosed Statement-I and the similar information for IRCON International Limited are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

Statement-I

Details of Cost of Projects executed by RITES Ltd. abroad for Consultancy, Survey, Detailed Project Report etc. (Details From 01.04.1997 to 31.03.2007)

Figures in US \$

Sl. No.	Country	Project Costs	Payment Received	Bal. Outstanding	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Angola	126,000.00	Full		
2	Canada	7,801.00	Full		
3	Colombia	2,985,542.19	Full		
4	Ghana	151,321.90	Full		
5	Nepal	783,047.74	Part	23,905.07	Being pursued
6	Iran	319,152.33	Full		
7	Jamaica	144,900.00	Full		
8	Jordan	5,000.00	Full		
9	Kampala	540,868.60	Full		
10	Malaysia	6,300,269.91	Part	144,008.67	Being pursued
11	Kenya	19,337.30	Full		
12	Liberia & Nigeria	5,333.00	Full		
13	Malawi	242,031.13	Full		
14	Bangladesh	418,787.35	Part	89,586.41	Being pursued
15	Manila	36,493.30	Full		
16	Mauritius	38,271.00	Full		
17	Myanmar	373,714.03	Full		
18	Philippines	36,147.50	Full		

1	2	3	4	5	6
19	Saudi Arab	11.7.97.50	Full		
20	Senegal	134,275.56	Full		
21	Sri Lanka	207,567.88	Full		
22	Tanzania	712,722.45	Full		
23	Uganda	722,994.67	Part	7,894.35	Being pursued
24	Tunisia	21,219.98	Full		
25	Turkmenistan	123,951.34	Full		
26	Zambia	494,660.86	Part	61, 527.00	Being pursued
27	U.K.	15,452.78	Full		
28	UAE	479,038.83	Full		
29	Uzbekistan	475,096.70	Full		
30	Training Projects	190,901. 40	Full		
		16,123,698.23		326,921.50	

Figures in Great Britain Pound

31	U.K.	6,114,818.73	Full		
32	Sudan	8,606.41	Full		
		6,123,425.14			

Details of Costs of Projects executed by RITES Ltd. abroad (for export of Rolling Stock)

From 01.04.1997 to 31.03.2007

S.No.	Country/Client	Rs. In lakh	Payment Received
1	2	3	4
Bangladesh			
1.	Bangladesh Railway - 7 Years Service Contract for Maintenance of 10 MG Locomotives	2121.15	Full
2.	Bangladesh Railways - AC Coach Conversion Contract	258.22	Full
3.	Bangladesh Railway - Supply of 13 Nos. Broad Gauge Locos, Training of BR Experts & Provision of Service Engineer	10161.25	Full
Sri Lanka			
4.	Supply of 01 No. WDM6 B.C. Locos	380.95	Full
5.	Sri Lanka Railways - Supply of 04 Nos. Locomotives	1952.89	Full
6.	Sri Lanka Railways - Supply M&P for Upgradation of ELS	589.08	Full
7.	Sri Lanka Railways - Supply of 02 Nos. of Locomotives	1169.1	Full
8.	Sri Lanka Railways - Supply of 02 Nos. of Locomotives	1472.86	Full

1	2	3	4
9.	Sri Lanka Railways - Rehabilitation of 3 Bridges	849.82	full
	Vietnam		
10.	Vietnam Railways - Supply of 72 Units 1000 MG Coach Bogies	745.81	Full
	Hydraulic Shock Absorber 700 Units of Slack Adjusters		
11.	Vietnam Railways - Supply of 10 Nos. 1000 MM MG Locos	4573	Full
	Maintenance Spares including Training of VNR Experts		
	Sudan		
12.	Sudan Railway Corporation - Supply of in ser. 4 Locos	1067.38	Full
13.	Sudan Railway Corporation - Supply of in ser. 6 Locos	1520.96	Full
14.	Sudan Railway Corporation - Supply of 3 Nos New Locos	1859.72	Full
15.	Sudan Railway Corporation - Rehabilitation of 4 Nos Hitachi Locos	1660.96	Full
16.	Sudan Railway Corporation -Supply of 5 New 2300HP locos	3788.3	Full
	Myanmar		
17.	Myanma Railways - Supply of 10 Inservice Locomotives & Capital	2108.57	Full
	Spares Spares		
18.	Myanma Railways - Supply of 1350 HP 11 Locomotives	8387.89	Full
19.	Myanma Railways- Supply of 36 Coaches	4094.25	Full
20.	Myanma Railways - Technical Study (MEA)	104.66	Full
	Senegal		
21.	Supply of 5 Nos. Inservice locos	1303.54	Full
22.	Supply of 20 Nos. Coaches	2358.68	Full
	Mali		
23.	Supply of 1 Nos. Inservice loco	334.13	Full
24.	Supply of 3 8 Nos. Coaches	1340.95	Full
	Tanzania		
25.	Tanzania Railway Corporation - Wet Leasing of 10 Nos. YDM-4 Locos	8312.73	Full
26.	Tanzania Railway Corporation - Rehabilitation of Wagons	1013.11	Full
	Mozambique		
27.	Mozambique - Wet Leasing of 10 Nos. YDM-4 Locos	394.35	Full
	Angola		
28.	Angola Railways (CFM) - Technical Assistance & Equipment	1883.51	Full
29.	Angola Railways (CFM) - Supply of Pick up Vehicle and Buses	397.19	Full
30.	Angola Railways (CFM) - Supply of Coaches	3069.51	Full

1	2	3	4
31.	Angola Railways (CFM) - Supply of Locos	2615.8	Full
32.	United States of America - Supply of 02 Nos. of old Steam Locos	45.31	Full
33.	Misc- Supply of spares, consultancy etc.	3711.5	Full
Total		75647.13	

Statement-II

*Country wise details of foreign projects executed & payments received by
IRCON International Ltd.(From November 1984 to June, 2007)*

S.No.	Place	Date of Completion	Name of Project	Value in Million US\$	Payment received from the Client US\$
1	2	3	3	4	5
1	Algeria	May, 1989	Turnkey construction of railway siding for cement plant at Benisor of In Algeria construction of 2 nos. ROB and 2 RUB, 6 nos. viaducts and 27 nos. minor bridges was a part of Turnkey project.	87	Full
2	Bangladesh	December, 2003	Rehabilitation and dual gauging the existing B G rail line, 245 route 295 km track between Parbatipur to jamtoli of Bangladesh railway including signaling & telecommunication and other allied works for Jamuna bridge rail line project, Contract no. 2.	68	Full
3	Brazil	February, 2006	Rendering engineering services to FCA (Ferrovia Centro - Atlantica S.A.) PMC, Brazil	0.1	Full
4	Indonesia	April, 1990	D.C. Electrification of central line track addition phase IV - Jabotabek railway project	5	Full
		April, 1991	D.C. Electrification of Jatinegara-Bekasi Section		
5	Iran	October, 2006	Signaling project on SharudMashad section of Iranian state railways	30	Full
6	Iraq	December, 1984	Mussayeb-Kerbala-Najaf-Samawa railway project construction of 4 nos. bridges and 7 no. road bridges in Iraq	350	Dues US\$ 14.98 million (correspondence with Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) is in process for getting back this amount). US\$ 8.89 million on
		April, 1989	Construction of 18 kms long railway branch line to Fertilizer plant at Baizi.	10	
		July, 1987	Al-Muthanna cement factory branch line project in state Iraq	122	

1	2	3	3	4	5
			construction of 1 no. railway bridge and 3 nos. of road bridges		Deferred Payment Agreement & US\$ 6.09 million on Non Deferred Payment Agreement
7	Jordan	April, 1987	Aqaba workshop extension project	18	
8	Malaysia	October, 1984	Design and construction of new double line from Rawang to Seremban (PBK 30 of 1990) in Malaysia	57	Full
		October, 1984	Design construction completion, commissioning and maintenance of 2nd track and rehabilitation of the port klang line (PBK 33 of 1991) including Super line to Subang and Sentul in Malaysia	61	
		January, 2002	Design & construction of rail link (including bridges and vaueducts) from Pelabuhan-Pelepas-Johor in Malaysia	129	
		May, 2005	Leasing and maintenance of diesel loco to KTMB Malaysian Railways	5	
		December, 2006	Leasing and maintenance of diesel loco to KTMB Malaysian Railways	6	
		October, 1994	Rehabilitation of 327 km track from Paloh to Singapore and Slim river to Seremban	67	
9	Saudi Arabia	April, 1992	Design, supply and commissioning of heavy machinery equipment for a major maintenance workshop of Saudi Railway Organisation	18	Full
10	U.K	April, 2001	Railway Signalling Project	48	Full
		April, 2001	Provision of designers technicians & supervisors for modification of Catenary works in Leeds area of UK.	16	Full
11	Liberia	June, 2006	Survey work and preparation of DPR for rehabilitation of Railways line from Buchanan to Yekepa in Liberia	0.43	Full
			Total	1097.53	

[English]

Norms for Domestic Carriers to Fly Abroad

* 260. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the norms laid down to allow domestic carriers for flying abroad;

(b) whether the Government proposes to relax the norms to allow domestic carriers for flying abroad;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the time by which such relaxations will be implemented in the aviation sector; and

(e) the manner in which the commuters will be benefited by such changes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Under the existing guidelines, Indian private scheduled carriers having experience of continuous operations of 5 years in the domestic sector and having a minimum fleet size of 20 aircraft are permitted to operate on international routes.

(b) and (c) The issue is being addressed in the proposed National Civil Aviation Policy, which is presently under consideration of a Group of Ministers (GoM).

(d) and (e) Do not arise at this stage.

Surplus Employees in PSUs

2365. SHRI NARAYAN CHANDRA BORKATAKY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to start a special Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) to control its surplus employees in Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for the welfare of surplus employees in PSUs?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) was notified by the Government in 1988. The Scheme was revised in May 2000.

(c) In order to provide a safety net for separated employees of CPSEs, Government have been implementing a Scheme of Counselling, Retraining and Redeployment (CRR) from 2001-2002. The scheme aims at rehabilitation of the employees who have taken VRS, through short duration training programmes. Continuation of the Scheme during the 11th Five Year Plan is under consideration.

Provision of Information to Corporate World by RailTel Wing

2366. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways through its RailTel Wing is planning to help Corporate World by providing them information and images from their remotely located plants using Wide Area Network Technology (WAN);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue to the Railways therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. RailTel has built a

nationwide Wide Area Network (WAN), which can be used by corporate world for exchanging the information from their remotely located plants.

(b) This is based on VPN (Virtual Private Network) technology, which provides cost effective network connectivity to the user. The connectivity can be extended to large number of places along the RailTel's 31,000 Route Kilometer Optical Fibre Network, thus making this facility available in remote, rural and semi urban areas apart from large cities.

(c) This will generate revenue for Railways by utilizing the surplus capacity on its Telecommunication network.

[Translation]

Creamy Layer for Scheduled Castes

2367. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to implement the condition of creamy layer for Scheduled Castes as already implemented in the case of Other Backward Classes to benefit the poor sections among them;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any demand has been made to introduce amendment bill to provide adequate benefits of reservation to the poor people of Scheduled Castes; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) There is no proposal to introduce the concept of creamy layer amongst Scheduled Caste.

(c) and (d) No such proposal is under consideration.

[English]

Low Cost Petroleum Pumps in Rural Areas

2368. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation has any proposal to set up low cost petroleum pumps in the rural areas of the country, State-wise; and

(b) if so, the details of locations identified for setting up of the same particularly in Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) During the year 2007-08, Indian Oil Corporation

Limited (IOCL) propose to set up 1000 Kisan Seva Kendra (KSK) Retail Outlets (ROs), which are low-cost outlets in the rural areas. State-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

During the current year i.e., 2007-08, IOC propose to commission a total number of 77 KSK ROs in the State of Tamil Nadu. During April to July, 2007 IOC has commissioned 19 KSK ROs. To achieve the target of balance 58 KSK ROs. IOC has issued Letters of Intent (LOIs) for 47 locations, details of which are given in the enclosed Statement-II and in remaining 11 cases selection of dealer is yet to be made.

Statement-I

Number of Kisan Seva Kendra (KSK) Retail Outlets (ROs) proposed to be opened in the country by Indian Oil Corporation Limited during the year 2007-08.

S.No.	State/Union Territory	Number of KSK ROs
1	2	3
States		
1	Andhra Pradesh	70
2	Assam	14
3	Bihar	65
4	Chhattisgarh	11
5	Gujarat	60
6	Haryana	75
7	Himachal Pradesh	3
8	Jammu and Kashmir	7
9	Jharkhand	15
10	Karnataka	70
11	Kerala	40
12	Madhya Pradesh	49
13	Maharashtra	60
14	Manipur	2
15	Meghalaya	4
16	Orissa	50
17	Punjab	75
18	Rajasthan	80
19	Tamil Nadu	77
20	Uttaranchal	2

1	2	3
21	Uttar Pradesh	109
22	West Bengal	60
23	Pondicherry	2
Total		1000

Statement-II

Details of locations where Letters of Intent (LOIs) issued for setting up Kisan Seva Kendra (KSK) Retail Outlets (ROs) in the State of Tamil Nadu by Indian Oil Corporation Limited.

S.No.	Location	District
1	2	3
1	Nerumbur	Kanchipuram
2	Desur	Tvmalai
3	Pudupalayam	Tvmalai
4	Beemapatti	Vellor
	Gudiyatham	
5	Mappedu	Thiruvallur
6	Kattur	Thiruvallur
7	Salavakkam	Kancheepuram
8	Ponmar	Kancheepuram
9	Cheyyur	Kancheepuram
10	Kayarampedu	Kancheepuram
11	Muthandikuppam	Cuddalore
12	Kacharapalayam	Villupuram
13	Sendurai	Perambalur
14	Killai	Cuddalore
15	Periamanali	Namakkal
16	Poolampatti	Salem
17	Kelamangalam	Krishnagiri
18	Kamaneri	Salem
19	Peripatti	Coimbatore
20	Pannimadai	Coimbatore
21	Pulikkurai	Dharmapuri
22	Ayyarmalai	Karur
23	Alappatti	Krishnagiri

1	2	3
24	Muthukapatti	Namakkal
25	Singalanthapuram	Namakkal
26	Oilpatti	Namakkal
27	Jedarpalayam	Namakkal
28	Ernapuram	Salem
29	Mallikuntham	Salem
30	Kuttappatti	Salem
31	Chinnalapatti	Dindigul
32	Mangai Mallur	Nagapattinam
33	Sirukampur	Trichy
34	Analyur	Madurai
35	Sarugani	Sivagangal
36	Wathraluppu	Virudhnagar
37	Puthanatham	Trichy
38	Alakrishnapura	Dindigul
39	Vadugapatti	Theni
40	Thiruppanandha	Thanjavur
41	Pudur	Tuticorin
42	Tirumangalam	Nagapattinam
43	Srivaigundam	Tuticorin
44	Thirumarugal	Nagapattinam
45	Pappampatti	Dindigul
46	Asaripallam	Kanyakumari
47	Narthamalai	Pudukottai

[Translation]

**Augmentation of Coaches
in Trains**

2369. SHRI RAKESH SINGH:

SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the problems of non-availability of reservation due to inadequate number of coaches in the trains;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to augment the number of reserved and unreserved coaches in proportion to number of passengers;

(c) the norms adopted for fixing the number of coaches in trains alongwith number of different category of coaches attached in a train;

(d) whether the Railways propose to increase the number of coaches in the trains to 24 to deal with the said problem; and

(e) if so, the progress made in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Railways monitor the availability of reservation on day to day basis. Based on waiting list, additional coaches are attached to clear the rush wherever feasible.

Augmentation of trains is an ongoing process subject to traffic pattern, operation feasibility and availability of resources. In addition to this Railways also introduce new trains, increase the frequency of trains, extend the run of trains to take care of the growing demand. Railways also run special trains to clear the seasonal rush of traffic.

(c) Different category of coaches are provided in the composition of a train keeping in view the traffic demand in the sector and patronisation of particular type of coaches.

(d) and (e) Popular trains are augmented to 24 coach length and it is an ongoing process. At present 56 pair of trains are running with 24 coaches.

[English]

**Employment for Physically
Challenged Persons**

2370. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether 3% reservation given to the disabled is fully utilized;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which the scheme of employment for the physically challenged persons in the organized sector proposed in the Budget 2007-08 is going to help the disabled persons to improve their social and economic status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) During 2005, 5600 direct recruitments were made in 47 Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India out of which 389 vacancies were provided to the persons with disabilities. This works out as 6.94% of the total recruitments made against the mandatory requirement of 3%.

(c) The Scheme provides for employment of one lakh

persons with disabilities per annum with a total outlay of Rs. 1800 crore during the 11th Five Year Plan.

Unauthorised Entry in Reserved Compartments

2371. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH:
SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware about the unauthorised forcefull entry of ticket-less travellers and general ticket holders in reserved compartments;

(b) if so, the details of such incidents during 2007, the loss of revenue to Railways alongwith amount of penalties recovered therefrom, zone-wise;

(c) whether the Travelling Ticket Examiners (TTEs) and other security personnel behave as mute spectators to such unlawful acts and never discharge their duties;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto;

(e) whether the Railways are considering checking of entry in railway platforms with proper ticket at all important railway stations, like airports, to check ticket-less travel in Railways;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the other measures taken by Railways to stop ticket-less travel in trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Some cases come to notice.

(b) No separate statistics regarding number of unauthorized entry of passengers in reserved coaches is maintained. However, a statement showing the number of persons detected travelling without ticket/irregular travel including unauthorized travelling in reserved coaches and the amount realized including penalties from them during the regular checks conducted in the year 2007 (January '07 to July '07), zone-wise is enclosed.

(c) and (d) All out efforts are made by the ticket checking and other staff to curb entry of unauthorized passengers in reserved coaches. Unauthorized persons, found travelling in reserved coaches, are penalized as per provisions of law and detained with the help of Railway Protection Force/ Government Railway Police.

(e) and (f) Ticket Collectors are posted at the entry and exit gates at important stations for checking the entry of ticketless/unauthorized passengers into platforms. However, Airport-like checking is not possible due to numerous porous

points which are difficult to be sealed for making entry foolproof.

(g) Apart from regular and surprise checks, the minimum penalty for ticketless/irregular travel has been increased from Rs.50/- to Rs.250/- with effect from 01.07.2004.

Statement

Railway	Number of persons detected travelling without ticket/with improper ticket (in lakhs) January to July 2007	Amount realized (in crores) January to July 2007
Central	4.73	18.37
Eastern	2.29	5.55
East Central	1.88	5.23
East Coast	0.60	2.15
Northern	7.04	27.59
North Central	2.81	11.08
North Eastern	2.06	7.51
Northeast Frontier	0.86	3.62
Northwestern	1.66	5.68
Southern	1.84	6.76
South Central	3.53	13.93
South Eastern	0.92	2.78
South East Central	0.74	2.41
Southwestern	0.89	3.29
Western	4.22	14.96
West Central	1.64	6.90
Total	37.71	137.81

Airport at Baljek

2372. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far made in the construction of Baljek Airport in Meghalaya indicating the projected length of the runway and the nature and number of flights to be operated therefrom;

(b) the cost of the project and the expenditure incurred thereon so far; and

(c) the time by which the said work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The Baljek Airport belongs to the State Government of Meghalaya. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has taken up the work of construction of new runway, taxiway, apron, New Terminal Building and Control Tower as "Deposit Work". The Work has been substantially completed except some finishing works. Due to law and order problems, the balance work could not be taken up and the work was foreclosed in September 2000. After assurance from State Government in April 2007 to provide security to the project site, AAI has taken up the execution of balance works. The runway dimension is 1200 m x 30 m and is suitable for operation of 20 seater (Dornier) type of aircraft in fair weather conditions.

(b) The cost of the project is Rs.12.21 crores and expenditure incurred so far is Rs.8.40 crores.

(c) The said works are likely to be completed by February 2008.

Financial Assistance to Welfare Association for the Disabled

2373. SHRI PRATIK P. PATIL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal for financial assistance to the Welfare Association for the Disabled at Miraj District Sangh has been received from the Government of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, whether the proposal has been considered by the Union Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith financial assistance released in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (d) Being a new case, the proposal of the NGO was considered by the Screening Committee and Committee recommended the case. However, no financial assistance under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) has been released to the organization due to non availability of relevant documents.

[Translation]

Permission to Foreign Airlines

2374. SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK:

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some foreign airlines have shown their

interest in operating flights for other cities in the country besides Delhi and Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to grant permission to such airlines;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the permission is likely to be granted by the Government to foreign airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) The grant of points of call in India for operation by the designated airlines of foreign countries with which India has Air Services Agreement are reviewed from time to time and decided in bilateral talks which are held with the respective foreign countries. At present 28 foreign airlines are operating to/from points of call in India other than Delhi and Mumbai.

[English]

Award of Tube Oilfield to ONGC Videsh

2375. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Iraq refused to honour award of Tube Oilfield to ONGC Videsh for exploration and production of oil; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Under the old regime in Iraq, ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) was under negotiation for Tube Oilfield along with Reliance and Sonatrach of Algeria. However, in view of prevailing situation in Iraq, the contract could not be finalized or signed.

(b) As per available information, now the oil fields would be awarded as per new petroleum law expected to be passed by Iraqi Parliament by the end of the year. OVL will pursue the same as and when the opportunity arises.

Conservation of Temples in Pakistan and Afghanistan

2376. SHRI RANEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has recently taken any step to help the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan in rehabilitation and conservation of Hindu and Buddhist temples in those countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the financial

assistance, architectural expertise and other help proposed to be given to Pakistan and Afghanistan for the purpose; and

(c) whether the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan have given any indication as to when the work on the proposed projects at various places would start and the time likely to be taken for their completion?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The Government has responded to the requests made by the Government of Pakistan and the Government of Afghanistan as detailed below:

Pakistan: A request was received for technical assistance for restoration of Kataraj Temples Complex. The Government sent an official of the Archaeological Survey of India to visit Kataraj. The detailed report prepared by ASI has been sent to the Government of Pakistan. A response is awaited.

Afghanistan: A request was received for India's assistance for restoration of the historic 'Stoor Palace' in Kabul. CPWD was asked to undertake a pre-feasibility study for the restoration.

Afghan Government has also requested for India's cooperation in the field of Archaeology, Archives, Monuments and Museums. A team of officials from Archaeological Survey of India visited Afghanistan and submitted a report. Four projects have been identified (a) Conservation, preservation and restoration of Museum Objects at National Museum (b) Conservation, preservation and restoration of Manuscripts at National Archives (c) Setting up of field conservation laboratory at Institute of Archaeology and (d) Setting up of Photo Laboratory at Institute of Archaeology. These projects are in initial stages of consideration.

[Translation]

Irregularities in Diesel Supply

2377. SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are receiving complaints of irregularities in the matter of High-Speed Diesel being supplied for Railway Diesel engines;

(b) if so, whether the Railways have investigated the matter;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof;

(d) the zone-wise details of irregularities committed in the matter of diesel during the last three years; and

(e) the steps being taken/undertaken in this regard?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Setting up of Greenfield Steel Plants by SAIL

2378. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has proposed to set up Greenfield Steel Plants in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the estimated capacity thereof; and

(c) the time by which the Greenfield Steel Plants are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) has planned to set up two Greenfield plants, one each in the States of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. The plant in Jharkhand, envisages to achieve a capacity of 6 Million tonne per annum by 2012-13 and 12 Million tonne per annum by 2019-20. The plant in Chhattisgarh also envisages to have a capacity of 4 Million tonne per annum and would be joint venture with RINL and NMDC.

(c) The time by which the greenfield plants will be set up would depend upon the feasibility reports including site selection report for the respective projects.

Physically Challenged Passengers

2379. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some private and public airlines are charging money from physically challenged passengers for helping them to board or disembark from aircraft through the specially designed lift;

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

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to provide the user-friendly facilities at airports/aircraft to the physically challenged?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) All Scheduled airlines except Air Deccan are providing wheel chair facility free of charge. However, Air Deccan is charging Rs. 200/- for providing wheel chair facility. The charges levied by different airlines are based on their Revenue Model and Company Policy.

(c) Most of the airports managed by Airports Authority of India (AAI) have basic facilities for physically challenged passengers. The details of the facilities available are given in the statement.

Statement

Facilities provided to Physically Challenged Passengers at Airports

1. Wherever booking facilities are provided at the airports these are barrier free.
2. Security check enclosures are designed so as to permit movement of wheel chairs, through the security check area.
3. Toilets for the physically challenged passengers in each facilitation area.
4. Elevators to enable physically challenged passengers to move from one level to another. Opening size of the elevator doors is /maintained for easy wheel chair entry and exit.
5. A separate ramp and a loading dock on the air side is provided for wheel chair movement into the commissary truck for transporting physically challenged passengers from and to the remote parked aircraft.
6. Ramps for physically challenged passengers in terminal and kerb side.
7. Parking slots in the Car Parking area, specially earmarked for physically challenged passengers driving their own vehicles.
8. AAI has placed fourteen ambulifts at the following airports for the use of airlines on chargeable basis:-
 - (i) Chennai
 - (ii) Ahmedabad
 - (iii) Lucknow
 - (iv) Guwahati
 - (v) Coimbatore
 - (vi) Calicut
 - (vii) Jaipur
 - (viii) Amritsar
 - (ix) Nagpur
 - (x) Goa
 - (xi) Patna

(xii) Bhubaneswar

(xiii) Agartala

(xiv) Dibrugarh

Railway Safety Fund

2380. SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a non-lapsable 'Special Railway Safety Fund' is in existence;

(b) the total amount available in the fund as on date; and

(c) the amount spent out of this fund during the last three years?

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

(b) Total amount available in Special Railway Safety fund as on 31.03.2007 is Rs. 829.54 crore.

(c) Amount spent during the last three years are as under:

	(Rs. in crore)
2004-05	3677.78
2005-06	2783.14
2006-07	1955.60

[Translation]

Food Processing Industries in Orissa

2381. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of food processing units running in Orissa at present, location-wise;

(b) the total investment and production by these units; and

(c) the details of financial assistance provided by the Government during the last three years for setting up of new food industries and cold storages in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY):

(a) and (b) Ministry of Food Processing Industries extends financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid to implementing agencies/entrepreneurs for Technology Upgradation/ Modernization/Establishment of Food Processing Units. Food Processing Industries are both in organized and unorganized

sectors and as such data of production and investments in food processing units in the country, including that of Orissa, is not centrally maintained. During the Tenth Plan period, namely, 2002-03 to 2006-07, 57 applications claiming grant for Setting Up/Expansion/Modernization of Food Processing Industries in various districts of Orissa have been received in the Ministry.

(c) The details of financial assistance provided by the Government during the last three years for setting up of new food industries in Orissa are as follows:

Year	Number of cases approved	Amount (Rs. Lakhs)
2004-05	01	50.00
2005-06	04	44.47
2006-07	03	150.00

No cold storage project was approved for assistance during the above period in the State.

Wagon Workshop at Poorna

2382. SHRI TUKARAM GANPATRAO RENGE PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up a carriage wagon workshop at Poorna under the South Central Railway; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Does not arise.

Train Service from Barhaj

2383. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no train service available from Barhaj in Deoria to Gorakhpur, Chhapra and Varanasi;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Railways to provide rail connectivity to the people of this area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. At present, there is no direct train service connecting Barhaj Bazar to Gorakhpur, Chhapra and Varanasi. However, 4 pairs of train services connect Barhaj Bazar to Salempur which is well connected to all these places. Introduction of direct train services from Barhaj Bazar to Gorakhpur, Chhapra and

Varanasi is not feasible at present due to operational and resource constraints.

[English]

Charter on Rights of Air Passengers

2384. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to formulate a charter on rights of air passengers in order to check errant airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure liberal compensation to air passengers for delayed flights, lost baggage and overbooking?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Government, rather than regulating the level of services, will encourage airlines to maintain certain basic level of services for passengers. Government will also encourage airlines to introduce a mechanism of self regulation either through an ombudsman or through any other suitable means.

(c) All scheduled domestic airlines have displayed on their websites the procedure for refund of air fares in the event of cancellation/delay of flights, lost baggage, etc. In this regard, passenger claims are settled by the airlines as per their company policy.

Prices of Petroleum and Petroleum Products

2385. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to appoint a regulator for fixing prices of petroleum and petroleum products;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) In view of the steep rise in international prices of sensitive petroleum products Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are modulating the price increase in petrol and diesel besides maintaining the prices of subsidized products like domestic LPG and PDS kerosene, in consultation with the Government. The Government has also set up the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board under 'The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006'. As per Section 11 of the Act, the Board shall inter alia, monitor

prices of notified petroleum products and their transportation rates and take corrective measures to prevent restrictive trade practices by entities engaged in the marketing of petroleum and petroleum products.

Cultural Equipments

2386. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme for the supply of cultural equipments to the educational institutions are in force in the country;

(b) the essential features of the scheme;

(c) the projects undertaken/ implemented under the Schemes during the last three years, State-wise particularly in the State of Bihar and UT of Delhi;

(d) the financial assistance granted during the last three years, State-wise; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Ministry of Culture is not directly implementing any Scheme for supply of cultural equipments to educational institutions in the country. However, the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) under Ministry of Culture has a Scheme titled "Propagation of Culture amongst students" for supply of cultural kits as and when teachers from various schools (educational institutions) are deputed by different states to attend the Orientation Training Programme from time to time. The essential features of the Scheme are mentioned in the enclosed Statement-I.

(c) The information is furnished in the enclosed Statement-II.

(d) and (e) The information is furnished in the enclosed Statement-III.

Statement-I

The teachers who are trained in the Orientation Training Programme are provided with Cultural Kit (equipments). It consists of the following:

- (i) One Cassette Tape Recorder
- (ii) One 35 mm Slide Projector
- (iii) Slide Album -1 consisting of 520 slides on nature, environment, architecture, painting and handicrafts;
- (iv) Slide Album -2 consisting of 348 slides on musical instruments, dances, traditional theatre forms, folk and tribal musical instruments.

(v) 9 nos. of pre-recorded audio cassette tapes on various aspects of Indian Art and Culture.

(vi) 20 nos. of Cultural Packages on various aspects of Indian Art and Culture.

Statement-II

The CCRT has issued the following numbers of Cultural Kits in various Orientation Training Programmes to Educational Institutions in different states of the country as per the following:

States	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	61	32	59
Arunachal Pradesh	0	6	8
Assam	37	39	109
Bihar	11	13	24
Chhattisgarh	45	18	31
Goa	3	6	-
Gujarat	39	18	45
Haryana	7	5	4
Himachal Pradesh	12	4	6
Jammu and Kashmir	5	3	18
Jharkand	2	3	2
Karnataka	99	96	80
Kerala	7	23	31
Madhya Pradesh	23	22	23
Maharashtra	85	154	140
Manipur	1	12	-
Mizoram	-	4	11
Nagaland	1	-	11
Orissa	16	13	25
Pondicherry	5	-	-
Punjab	19	9	7
Rajasthan	21	41	59
Sikkim	1	-	-

1	2	3	4
Tamil Nadu	57	40	52
Uttaranchal	32	26	21
Uttar Pradesh	2	27	16
West Bengal	30	59	53
Delhi	3	3	-

Statement-III

State-wise expenditure incurred (financial assistance) on the supply of Cultural Kits during the last three years:

(Amount in lakh)

States	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	6.71	3.52	6.49
Arunachal Pradesh	-	0.66	0.88
Assam	4.07	4.29	11.99
Bihar	1.21	1.43	2.64
Chhattisgarh	4.95	1.98	3.41
Goa	0.33	0.66	-
Gujarat	4.29	1.98	4.95
Haryana	0.77	0.55	0.44
Himachal Pradesh	1.32	0.44	0.66
Jammu and Kashmir	0.55	0.33	1.98
Jharkand	0.22	0.33	0.22
Karnataka	10.89	10.56	8.80
Kerala	0.77	2.53	3.41
Madhya Pradesh	2.53	2.42	2.53
Maharashtra	9.35	16.94	15.40
Manipur	0.11	1.32	-
Mizoram	-	0.44	1.21
Nagaland	0.11	-	1.21
Orissa	1.76	1.43	2.75
Pondicherry	0.55	-	-

1	2	3	4
Punjab	2.09	0.99	0.77
Rajasthan	2.31	4.51	6.49
Sikkim	0.11	-	-
Tamil Nadu	6.27	4.40	5.72
Uttaranchal	3.52	2.86	2.31
Uttar Pradesh	0.22	2.97	1.76
West Bengal	3.30	6.49	5.83
Delhi	0.33	0.33	-

Tapa Mandi Retail Outlet

2387. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that HPCL is illegally pressurizing its regional office (RO) dealer of Tapa Mandi to lease out its valuable land of Ludhiana in favour of HPCL on illegal and untenable terms and conditions;

(b) whether the partial relocation of MS facility of more than 100 Kms. from its original location is permitted in the policy as is done in this case of Tapa Mandi retail outlet;

(c) whether the Government propose to pass necessary directions to cancel this illegal partial relocation; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has reported that M/s. Budh Ram Agarwal, Tapa, Sangrur, Punjab was commissioned in 1966 as a Dealer-owned Retail Outlet (RO) with Shri Vijay Kumar as the sole proprietor. The average sales at the RO was 19 KL MS and 173 KL HSD per month based on April 2002 to January, 2003 sales volume. The Motor Spirit (MS) facility of M/s. Budh Ram Agarwal, Tapa, District Sangrur, Punjab was resited at Haibowal, Ludhiana in February, 2003. The resitement proposal was approved under the condition that the original and resited site would be leased to HPCL alongwith the superstructure. The original site at Tapa, Sangrur, Punjab was taken on lease on 1.8.2003. The lease for the resited location was not registered before commissioning the MS facility at Haibowal. The dealer did not register the lease even at a later date. Therefore, MS supplies to partially resited location at Haibowal, District Ludhiana were suspended from July, 2005. The dealer had committed default in the terms of settlement between the parties, and therefore, HPCL had filed specific performance

suit in the Court on 16.1.2006 for signing the lease for Haibowal, Ludhiana.

Partial resitment of HSD and MS was allowed to a new location in any class of market/trading area and in any district/state prior to the introduction of the new guidelines dated 17.11.2005 on resitment. As per the current guidelines on resitment of ROs, the partial resitment of RO is not allowed.

Production of Petrochemicals

2388. SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for the production of petro-

chemicals and achievements made during the Tenth Five Year Plan, year-wise;

(b) whether the Government has taken steps to increase the production of petrochemicals; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) The projected Compounded Annual rate of Growth (CARG) of petrochemicals during the Tenth Five Year Plan was 11% and actual growth achieved has been 6% (CARG). The details of the production of the major petrochemicals year-wise during the tenth Five Year Plan are as follows:

Production (000' MT)					
Major Petrochemicals	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Synthetic Fibres / Yarn	1755	1868	1875	1906	2244
Polymers	4175	4499	4776	4768	5183
Elastomers (Synthetic Rubbers)	82	87	97	110	101
Synth. Detergent Intermed.	447	453	488	555	556
Performance Plastics	95	99	113	127	133
Total Major Petrochemicals	6554	7006	7349	7466	8217

(b) and (c) Petrochemical sector is de-licensed and de-regulated. Policy of the Government is to promote investments in the petrochemical sector.

During XI Plan Period the following petrochemical projects are in pipeline:

In Million Metric Tonnes				
Company	Feed Stock	2005-06 Existing Ethylene Capacity	Proposed Ethylene Capacity	Estimated Investment
GAIL, Pata (Expansion)	Gas	0.30	0.40	Rs.650 Crore
HPL, Haldia (Expansion)	Naphtha	0.52	0.67	Rs.650 Crore
IOC, Panipat (New)	Gas/ Naphtha	0	0.80	Rs. 16,000 Crore
GAIL, Assam (New)	Gas/ Naphtha	0	0.22	Rs.5460 Crore
RIL, Jamnagar (New)	Refinery off gases	0	2.00	Rs. 13,500 Crore
ONGC, Dahej (New)	LNG/ Naphtha	0	1.50	Rs. 14,000 Crore
Total		0.82	5.59	Rs. 50,260 Crore

Net addition to Ethylene Capacity is projected to be 4.77 Million Metric Tonnes in the XIth Plan.

Provision of Affordable Training to Pilots

2389. SHRIMATI PRIYA DUTT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of pilots training institutes in the Country run by the Government and the Private management;

(b) whether the Government is aware that the training course is very costly for the candidates who desire to get commercial pilot licence in India;

(c) if so, whether there is any policy formulated for

training at affordable cost through the Government and Private Training Institutes in India;

- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) if not the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to train the pilots at affordable cost in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) There are 42 flying training institutes in the country of which 26 are operational which provide training for various licences like Private Pilot Licence, Commercial Pilot Licence etc. 14 of these operational institutes are run by various State Governments, while the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) is an autonomous society under the Central Government. The remaining 11 institutes are run by private entrepreneurs.

(b) The cost of flying training is commensurate with cost of inputs for such training.

(c) and (d) In accordance with the Government policy, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has adopted a scheme for awarding scholarships to 40 SC/ST candidates for free flying training upto Private Pilot Licence (PPL) level. Ministry of Tribal Affairs also has a scheme for providing free flying training to 10 ST candidates upto Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) level.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) The training cost in the Government Flying Training Institutes has been fixed by DGCA at the rate of Rs. 3720- per hour. Also the flying training at Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi has been subsidised by way of Grants-in-Aid from the Government and the national carriers.

Pending Rail Lines in Tamil Nadu

2390. SHRI M. APPADURAI:

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the long delay in the execution of some of the doubling, gauge conversion, electrification and new line projects pertaining to Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any assistance for funds from external sources has been sought to expedite the pending projects;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the pending projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The gestation period of projects has prolonged primarily due to constraints of resources and contractor's failure. The progress of Bangalore-Satyamangalam & Karur-Salem new lines and Irugur-Coimbatore doubling project is affected due to litigation/delay in land acquisition, forestry clearances etc.

(c) and (d) A number of initiatives has been taken for generating additional resources through Public/Private partnership, cost sharing by State Government, Funding through Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Finance for National Projects. Funds have also been allocated through internal resource generation to expedite completion.

(e) 371 Kms of gauge conversion and 94 Kms of doubling are targeted for completion during 2007-08. Balance works would be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

Donation of Funds by ONGC

2391. SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) donates funds to various institutes for social cause;

(b) if so, the total amount of money ONGC donated during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the names and addresses of institutions where funds were donated during the last three years, particularly in the North-Eastern region; and

(d) the required criteria an institution must have to qualify for such donations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) provides financial assistance for following works under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy:-

- (i) Education
- (ii) Health Care
- (iii) Entrepreneurship
- (iv) Water Management
- (v) Disaster relief, and
- (vi) Social cause

(b) The amount of financial support released by ONGC under CSR policy during last three years is as under:

Year	Support (Rs. in crore)
2004-05	44.46*
2005-06	31.51
2006-07	34.50 (appx.)

* Includes more than Rs. 15 crores support to PM Relief Fund for Tsunami.

(c) in the last three years ONGC has extended support under CSR policy in fields of education, healthcare, entrepreneurship, water management and disaster relief in and around its operational areas and work centres, Besides facilitating IT enabled set up at various educational institutes; deep tube wells for drinking water; sanitary facilities under healthcare and development of self help groups for dairy co-operatives etc., ONGC has taken major state-wise initiatives in Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

(d) Following criteria are required to be fulfilled to qualify for financial support under CSR policy:

- (i) In case of an NGO/Institution, it should be registered, recognized by the government, and in existence for a minimum of 3 years.
- (ii) The agency/Institution should submit audited accounts for 3 years.
- (iii) The agency/Institution should submit utilization certificate duly certified by Chartered Accountant.
- (iv) Implementing agencies/Institutions should submit detailed information on the project e.g., objectives, beneficiaries, strategy, methodology, resources, work plan and evaluation plan.
- (v) All activities by agency/institution are to be undertaken at places situated in and around the areas of business of the Corporation.
- (vi) The implementing agency/ institution should submit a Work Completion Certificate.
- (vii) The Agency/Institution will not be extended financial support more than once a year.

Renovation of Ghuguha DOL, Assam

2392. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has taken a proposal for renovation and restoration of the historical Ghuguha Dol in the Dhemaji district of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ASI has abandoned the programme half done;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) if not, the details of the time bound programme finalized to restore and protect this historical monument?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Ghuguha Dol in the Dhemaji District of Assam is not a centrally protected monument and Archaeological Survey of India does not have a proposal for restoration of the same.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

Setting up of Steel Development Research Mission

2393. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up Steel Development Research Mission in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the salient features of said mission; and

(c) the role and contribution of various steel producers of the country in the said mission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) to (c) In a Brain Storming Session held in Ministry of Steel on 30.5.2007, it was decided, in consultations with the experts & major steel producers that a concerted effort is needed to take up R&D in iron & steel sector for the benefit of Indian steel industry. To pursue the objective, one of the decisions was that Steel Research Development Mission (SRDM), a virtual center which was conceived earlier, may be revived with one time direct contribution @ Rs.20-25 per tonne of installed capacity from the main/major steel producers having capacity of one million tonnes per annum and above. The contributing firms can become the members of the Governing Council of SRDM.

Stoppage of Rani Chennamma Express and Kuria Express at Chikjajur Railway Station

2394. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any representation from the people of Chikjajur and nearby areas in Karnataka State about the stoppage of Rani Chennamma Express and Kuria Express at Chikjajur railway station; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto?

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

(b) The request has been examined but not found feasible due to lack of commercial justification.

[Translation]

Fixation of Price of Gas

2395. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH:

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

(a) whether the Economic Advisory Council has fixed the price of gas to be extracted from Krishna-Godavari (KG) Basin by Reliance;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether certain norms/basis were followed while determining the said price;

(d) if so, the details of the said norms/basis; and

(e) the rate at which other gas providers/sellers are selling gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) to (d) The Government has constituted an Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) to consider issues related to gas pricing and commercial utilization under the NELP regime.

(e) Prevailing gas prices under NELP blocks/ Joint Ventures/ Private Producers are as under:

Field	Gas price
Panna-Mukta and Tapti	3.96, 4.75 and 5.58 US\$ per MMBTU
Ravva Field	3.50 US\$ per MMBTU
Ravva Satellite	4.30 US\$ per MMBTU
Hazira	3.24 US\$ per MMBTU
CB-OS/2	3.68 and 4.45 US\$ per MMBTU
Dholka	Rs.2 per SCM
CB-ONN-2000/2 (NSA, Bheema)	3.45 US\$/1000 cubic feet

[English]

Curtailment of Passengers' Facility in AC Coaches

2396. SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR DUBEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have issued an order for curtailment of some passengers' facilities such as in bedding who are travelling in AC coaches in trains;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) if not, whether the Railways are aware that the some contractors are supplying sub-standard quality of blanket, one bedding sheet and pillow without towels and second bedding sheet which are plying from Jammu to Jaipur, Delhi, Mumbai and other parts of the country especially in Train No. 2413 and 2414;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps being initiated by the Railways to ensure the better quality of travelling facilities for the passengers?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) Some complaints do occur at times. However, regular and surprise checks are conducted to ensure the quantity and quality of bedrolls. Contractors supplying deficient and unclean linen are fined and, if necessary, their contracts are terminated.

Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) in IOC, BPC and ONGC

2397. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officers/employees of the Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, who have taken voluntary retirement scheme and the number of officers/employees who have joined multinational companies leaving these companies; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to put check on it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) have reported that 114 officers and employees have taken Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) during the current year from 1.4.2007. IOC, BPCL and ONGC have further reported that they do not have any information about the employees, who have joined multinational companies after taking VRS from these companies. While employees can opt for retirement on a voluntary basis, the management has the discretion to reject any application under the VRS to ensure that highly skilled and qualified employees are not given the option.

[Translation]

**Irregularities by Authorised Railway's Agents
in the Sale of Tickets**

2398. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

SHRI S. K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the authorised agents of the Railways are found involved in irregularities in the sale of tickets;

(b) if so, the details of authorised agents found involved in such illegal practice during the last two years and the current year;

(c) the action taken by the Railways against such agents; and

(d) the remedial measures taken by the Railways to check such practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of Sabha.

[English]

Construction of New Museums

2399. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has provided assistance to the State Governments for construction of new museums under the centrally sponsored schemes;

(b) if so, the funds provided State-wise particularly to West Bengal during the last three years; and

(c) the detail of the projects for which these funds were provided alongwith the details of the progress of the projects?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, Ministry of Culture implements a scheme on "Promotion and Strengthening of Regional & Local Museums". This scheme does not include financial assistance for construction of new museums. Assistance under the scheme is provided to State Government Museums, amongst others, for Renovation/Repair/ Extension and Modernisation of Gallery, Storage/modernisation of reserve collections, Publication, Conservation Laboratory/Conservation project, Museum Library, Equipment and Documentation, and for the Development of infrastructure of the State Government Museums in the North-East States including Sikkim.

Details of projects sanctioned under the scheme, state-wise, during the last three years and status of funds released are given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

The details of Grants Sanctioned to the State Govt. Museums under the Scheme of 'Promotion and Strengthening of Regional & Local Museums' During the last three years

Sl. No.	Name & location of the organisation	State	Amount Sanctioned (Rs.)	Status of funds released
1	2	3	4	5
2004 - 2005				
1.	National Gandhi Museum, Rajghat	Delhi	36,00,000/-	Rs.27,00,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
2.	Kumaran Asan National Institute of Culture, Thiruvananthapuram	Kerala	5,00,000/-	Rs.3,75,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
3.	Ramvan Museum, Satna	Madhya Pradesh	10,00,000/-	Rs.7,50,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
4.	Govt. Dance College, Deptt. of Art & Culture	Manipur	5,50,000/-	Rs.4,12,500/- has been released as 1st instalment
5.	State Museum, Kohima	Nagaland	89,00,000/-	Rs. 50,00,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
6.	Govt. Museum, Pali	Rajasthan	5,00,000/-	Rs. 3, 75,000/- has been released as 1st instalment

1	2	3	4	5
7.	Govt. Museum, Mount Abu	Rajasthan	20,00,000/-	Rs. 15, 00,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
8.	Govt. Museum, Egmore	Tamil Nadu	50,00,000/-	Rs. 37, 50,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
9.	Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Kolkata	West Bengal	16,00,000/-	Rs. 12, 00, 000/- has been released as 1st instalment
10.	State Archaeological Museum, Kolkata	West Bengal	57,46,000/-	Rs.43, 09,500/- has been released as 1st instalment
2005-2006				
1.	Manipur State Kala Academi, Imphal	Manipur	4,50,000/-	Rs. 3, 37, 500/- has been released as 1st instalment
2.	D/o Art & Culture, Govt. of Mizoram	Mizoram	3,00,00,000/-	Rs.2, 25,00,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
3.	Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneshwar	Orissa	5,12,000/-	Rs.3,84,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
4.	Govt. Museum, Jhansi	Uttar Pradesh	32,00,000/-	Rs. 24, 00,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
2006 - 2007				
1.	Archaeology & Museum, A. P. State Museum	Andhra Pradesh	1,58,00,000/-	Rs.1,18,50,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
2.	A. P. Archaeological Museum, Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	1,66,54,064/-	Rs. 1,24,90,548/- has been released as 1st instalment
3.	AP. State Photo Museum, Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	1,50,74,000/-	Rs. 1,13,05,500/- has been released as 1st instalment
4.	District Archaeological Museum, Kurnool	Andhra Pradesh	48,00,000/-	Rs. 36, 00, 000/- has been released as 1st instalment
5.	Hankins Museum, A.P. Police Academy	Andhra Pradesh	50,00,000/-	Rs. 37,50,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
6.	Srikrishna Museum, Kurukshetra	Haryana	8,00,000/-	Rs. 6,00,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
7.	Manipur Film & Archival Museum, Imphal	Manipur	8,70,000/-	Rs.6,52,750/- has been released as 1st instalment
8.	INA Museum, Imphal	Manipur	13,81,606/-	Rs.10,36,205/- has been released as 1st instalment
9.	Manipur State Kala Akademi	Manipur	16,32,700/-	Rs. 12, 24,525/- has been released as 1st instalment
10.	Williamson Sangma Museum, Shillong	Meghalaya	2,17,80,000/-	Rs. 1,63,35,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
11.	State Museum	Nagaland	80,00,000/-	Rs. 60,00,000/- has been released as 1st instalment

1	2	3	4	5
12.	Khiching Museum, Mayurbhanj	Orissa	10,13,824/-	Rs. 7,60,368/- has been released as 1st instalment
13.	Orissa State Archaeology, Bhubaneswar	Orissa	5,28,000/-	Rs. 3,96,000/- has been released as 1st instalment
14.	Baripada Museum, Mayurbhang	Orissa	2,28,000/-	Rs. 171, 000/- has been released as 1st instalment
15.	Darwan Singh Sangrahalaya, Lansdowne	Uttaranchal	30,02,526/-	Rs. 22,51, 894/- has been released as 1st instalment
16.	Malda Museum, Malda	West Bengal	20,07,228/-	Rs. 15,05,421/- has been released as 1st instalment

[Translation]

Merger of Chiria Mines and IISCO with SAIL

2400. SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chiria mines and Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO) have been merged with Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) and the SAIL has given application for the renovation of Chiria mines to the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Department of Mines and Geology have recommended to give Chiria mines to any other private company instead of SAIL;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Bokaro, Durgapur and Bhilai steel plants will get closed in case the Chiria mines are not given to SAIL; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Indian Iron & Steel Company Ltd. (IISCO) including Chiria Mines had been merged with Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) with effect from 16th February, 2006. IISCO/SAIL had submitted the renewal application of all six mining leases of Chiria. The State Government of Jharkhand rejected three mining leases out of six leases and balance three leases are under deemed extension. SAIL has also submitted its expansion plan in Jharkhand which also included renovation/expansion of Chiria Mines to the State Government in March, 2006. Further, SAIL presented its brown field and green field expansion plan along with the iron ore requirement for 50 years to the Government of Jharkhand and Ministry of Mines, Government of India in April, 2007.

(c) and (d) The matter is subjudice.

(e) and (f) Chiria mines will be developed as a central mine to meet the iron ore requirement of its steel plants in eastern sector viz. Durgapur Steel Plant (Durgapur, West Bengal), Rourkela Steel Plant (Rourkela, Orissa), Bokaro Steel Plant (Bokaro, Jharkhand) and IISCO Steel Plant (Burnpur, West Bengal). For brown field and green field expansion plan along with iron ore requirement for 50 years by SAIL on overall basis, the existing iron ore reserves with SAIL will not be sufficient to meet the requirement for 50 years. Continual efforts are underway to procure Chiria mines for SAIL.

Selling of Rates of LPG

2401. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

SHRI SURAJ SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) in the country is being sold at various rates due to lack of control on its sale prices;

(b) if so, the details of the facts and the reasons for the lack of Government control on the selling rates of gas to consumers;

(c) the details of rates of the gas prevalent in the country; and

(d) the names of agencies selling gas at above rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) The retail selling price of 14.2 kg domestic LPG Cylinder varies from State to State on account of variations in inland freight, irrecoverable taxes, etc. The retail selling price of 14.2 kg domestic LPG cylinder at four metropolitan cities is given as under:

(Rs./Crore)	
Metropolitan Cities	Retail Selling Price (Rs./Cylinder)
Delhi	294.75
Mumbai	297.95
Chennai	288.10
Kolkata	300.50

(d) All the distributors appointed by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) namely Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. are selling domestic LPG at rates as above.

Extension of Passenger Train Service

2402. SHRI TEK LAL MAHTO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether local railway passengers have demanded to extend passenger train number 451 running between Bhajudih and Bhega in Jharkhand upto Khandi railway station;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Representation from the Hon'ble Member of Parliament has been received.

(c) The matter has been examined but not found feasible due to inadequate lie-over of the rake at Bhaga.

[English]

Rail Link between India and Bangladesh

2403. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:
SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been talks between India and Bangladesh on train services to Dhaka and other matters as published in Business Line dated August 2, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) An agreement for running of Passenger Train Service between Sealdah and

Jamuna Bridge was signed in 2001 and during the visit of Minister of External Affairs to Dhaka on February 19, 2007, Bangladesh agreed for early operationalisation of Sealdah (Kolkata)-Joydevpur (Dhaka) passenger train service. This was reiterated by both sides in the Inter-Governmental Railway Meeting held in Dhaka in March 2007.

On 8th July, 2007, the Indian side conducted a trial run of the passenger train. In the Inter-Governmental Meeting held on July 9-10, 2007 in Dhaka, both sides expressed their willingness to commence the commercial operation of the passenger train as early as possible subject to other relevant related concerns being addressed to mutual satisfaction. Bangladesh side also conducted their trial run service on July 29, 2007. However, regular traffic is yet to commence.

Upkeep of INA Memorial

2404. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the poor upkeep of Indian National Army (INA) memorial as reported in the Hindu dated July 12, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Prime Minister gave instructions during his visit to INA Memorial on 10.7.2007 for the improvement of its upkeep and to make it more accessible and meaningful for the visiting public.

(c) Immediate steps have been taken to improve the upkeep of existing display of the museum and also to upgrade the maintenance of the INA Memorial. Construction of the over bridge on the railway crossing has been completed to facilitate easy access of the visitors to the INA Memorial.

Construction of Science City at Bangalore

2405. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal for development of Science City near Banneraghatta, Bangalore District, a cost of Rs. 100 crores for the Central Reserve Police Force;

(b) whether 50% of the cost is borne by the Central Government;

- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir. However, in the year 2003, Ministry of Culture had received a proposal from State Govt. of Karnataka for development of Science City near Banneraghatta, Bangalore at an estimated cost of Rs. 70 crores. As per the existing guidelines of the scheme, concerned State Govt. should earmark 50 acres of land for the project. The State Govt. of Karnataka have not made available suitable land for the project as required under the guidelines.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. As per approved norms, the total cost of the project has to be shared in the ratio of 13:13:74 by the Central Govt., State Govt. and private entrepreneurs respectively.

(d) In view of (c) above, does not arise.

[Translation]

Prices of Drugs

2406. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to take action to fix the prices of drugs whose prices have not been approved by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA);
- (b) if so, the reasons thereof;
- (c) the state-wise number of the drug manufacturers who have not applied for approval of prices;
- (d) the provisions of taking action against said drug manufacturers; and
- (e) the number of drug manufacturers against whom action has been taken as per the provisions during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) The 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control and their prices are fixed / revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO, 95.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing/selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product

innovation, product quality etc. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

As per Para 13 of DPCO,95, notwithstanding anything contained in the order, the Government shall by notice, require the manufacturers, importers, as the case may be, to deposit the amount accrued due to charging of prices higher than those fixed or notified by the Government.

In case of non-Scheduled formulations NPPA only monitors the price movement and if there is any price increase by more than 10% in one year and the annual turnover of the formulation pack exceeds Rs.1 crore, further, the share of the formulator in the segment of the formulation is required to be at least 20% of the market or the medicine is first 3 top medicines of that group. The case is take up for further examination and if required prices are fixed in public interest under Para 10(b) of DPCO, 95. So far 30 companies have reduced the price of 51 packs as a result of the intervention of NPPA/Government. NPPA have fixed the price of 20 packs under Para 10(b) of DPCO, 95.

[English]

Ropeway to Chamundi Hills

2407. SHRI P.C. GADDIGOUDAR:

SHRI M. SHIVANNA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a ropeway to reach Chamundi hills is being constructed;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the cost of entire project;
- (d) the total amount spent so far on this project; and
- (e) the time by which it is likely to be ready for the use by the tourists?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Norms for Super Fast Trains

2408. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV:

SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all the super fast trains are adhering to the norms prescribed for them;
- (b) if not, the details of cases during last one year where the prescribed norms were not adhered to;
- (c) whether the Railways propose to make certain changes in the norms stipulated for the super fast trains;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the steps taken by the Railways to check the tendency of putting additional burden on passengers by conferring the status of super fast trains to mail and express trains without providing and additional amenities or the services; and

(f) the additional revenue generated by the trains due to their enhanced status of super fast trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Railways make all efforts to ensure that all trains, including superfast trains, run punctually and adhere to norms prescribed for them. However, details, as desired, are not separately maintained.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Certain trains whose average speed on the entire run in both directions is minimum 55 kmph on broad gauge and 45 kmph on metre gauge are designated as superfast and a nominal surcharge is levied for travel by such trains. The journey time by superfast trains is comparatively less as their average speed on entire run is minimum 55 kmph on Broad Gauge and 45 kmph on Metre Gauge.

(f) Separate data of additional earnings from the levy of superfast surcharge are not maintained by Ministry of Railways.

Encroachment on Railway Land in Delhi

2409. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA:

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway land in Delhi under encroachment, location-wise and year-wise;

(b) the details of steps taken by the Railways to get these lands cleared during the last five years;

(c) whether all the encroached lands have been got cleared;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the concrete steps now proposed to be taken to get cleared the entire encroached railway land in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There are 27000 number of encroachments covering an area of approximately 40 hectare of railway land. These encroachments have come up over various years. Information containing location-wise and year-

wise number of encroachments and area under encroachments pertaining to railway land in the entire State of Delhi is huge, and it is not possible to give such information in reply to a Parliament question.

(b) Various steps have been taken for removal of encroachments, which also include action under Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. In the National Capital Territory of Delhi, railways have agreed to bear part cost of relocation of Pre-1998 encroachers located on Railway land in 'Safety Zone' and on land required for execution of sanctioned projects, as per the Resettlement & Rehabilitation policy of Delhi Government, which has the approval of the Ministry of Urban Development. Northern Railway have deposited over Rs. 11 crores with the Government of Delhi on this account, for relocating 'Jhuggies/Jhopries', to get encroachments removed from railway land. Regular chasing and meetings are done by railway officials with Delhi Government officials. All efforts are made by railway towards proper co-ordination with the Government of Delhi including seeking assistance of local police and Magistrate as eviction of encroachers often lead to law and order problems.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) In the process of removal of encroachers Railways have to depend on the State Government for Police/Magistrate, and for survey and resettlement of encroachers. The co-operation of the State Government has been inadequate.

(f) Depending on the co-operation of the State Government Railways will continue to make all possible efforts to remove all the encroachers.

[Translation]

Development of Infrastructural Facilities

2410. SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:

SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY:

SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM:

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of air passengers is increasing due to increase in air-traffic at certain airports;

(b) if so, whether new aircraft in sizeable numbers are proposed to be added to different airlines in the country during the next five years;

(c) if so, the strategy chalked out to develop the infrastructural facilities at the airports in the country keeping

in view the increase in the number of flights as well as air passengers; and

(d) the success achieved by the Government as a result thereof so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Airports Authority of India has undertaken modernization of 35 non-metro airports and also development of international airports at Chennai and Kolkatta. The Government has also restructured the airports at Delhi and Mumbai through Joint venture route for their modernisation and upgradation. Two greenfield airports under public private participation (PPP) are being commissioned at Bangalore and Hyderabad which are likely to become operational by April 2008 and middle of 2008 respectively.

[English]

Bidding Process on Natural Gas Pricing

2411. SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is following the competitive bidding process in the matter of fixing the price of natural gas;

(b) if so, whether valuation of anticipated gas stocks are taken into account; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) At present, two gas price regimes prevail in the country – one for gas produced from nomination fields of ONGC and OIL, called the APM regime. The second regime provides for market related pricing, which is applicable to gas produced from Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) by Joint Venture/Private companies and for Regasified LNG.

As per the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) signed by the Government under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), the operators have the freedom to market the gas in the domestic market on arms length basis. Government does not fix price of gas. The role of the Government is to approve the valuation of gas for the purpose of determining Government take.

Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers

2412. SHRIMATI YASHODHARA RAJE SCINDIA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of families presently involved in manual scavenging in the country; State-wise;

(b) the measure adopted by the Union Government to ensure rehabilitation of these families by State Governments; and

(c) the target set for reduction in the number of families employed in manual scavenging?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The continuance and construction of dry latrines and employment of manual scavengers is prohibited under the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993. However, for rehabilitation of erstwhile manual scavengers and their dependents in alternative occupations, the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has launched a new Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers. As per reports received from State Governments/ UT Administrations, there were 3.42 lakh erstwhile manual scavengers and their dependents to be rehabilitated, at the time of formulation of the scheme.

Name of Amritsar International Airport

2413. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:

SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to name the Amritsar International Airport after the name of Sikh Guru Ram Das;

(b) if so, whether the Government has received any proposal in this regard;

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

(d) the time by which this airport is likely to be named?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) Though requests have been received in this regard but as a matter of general policy, airports usually retain the name of cities where they are located. The requests received in respect of Amritsar airport would require wider consultation.

Liquidation of Wages and Other Arrears of Employees in PSES

2414. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY:

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to sanction

Rs.77.25 crore to liquidate wage and other arrears of employees of 13 Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs);

(b) if so, the details of the package announced in this regard, PSE-wise;

(c) the number of times such grants have been provided by the Government to the sick PSEs during the last three years; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for the revival of these sick units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the Government has approved an amount of Rs.77.25 crore (subject to actuals) for providing

budgetary support for liquidating outstanding salary/wages and statutory dues as on 31.03.2007 for 13 sick/loss making Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) under the Department of Heavy Industry. A statement showing the details is enclosed.

(c) Prior to this, such budgetary support has been provided by the Government as loan to the sick/loss making PSEs under the Department of Heavy Industry on six occasions during the past three years.

(d) As per the mandate under National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP), revival plans are attempted in sick/loss making PSEs. Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) makes necessary recommendations on future of these companies. Future plans for all these PSEs are at various stages, except in one case i.e. Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd. where a decision for closure has been taken.

Statement

Budgetary support/loan approved for payment of outstanding salary/wages and other statutory dues to 13 sick/loss making PSEs under Department of Heavy Industry as on 31.03.2007.

(Rupees in crore)

S.No.	Name of PSE and location of the Registered Office	Salary/ Wages	Amount sanctioned Statutory dues	Grand total Col. 3+4
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andrew Yule & Co. Ltd., Kolkata, West Bengal	9.99	13.30	23.29
2.	Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd., Durgapur, West Bengal	0.98	0.14	1.12
3.	Bharat Wagon Engg. Co. Ltd., Patna, Bihar	2.20	0.04	2.24
4.	Hindustan Cables Ltd., Kolkata, West Bengal	16.47	0.30	16.77
5.	HMT Limited, Bangalore, Karnataka.	0.00	3.55	3.55
6.	HMT (Watches) Ltd., Bangalore, Karnataka.	10.23	0.00	10.23
7.	HMT (CW) Ltd., Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir	3.38	0.00	3.38
8.	Hindustan Photo Films Ltd., Ooty, Tamil Nadu	2.54	3.09	5.63
9.	Instrumentation Ltd., Kota Rajasthan	2.64	1.24	3.88
10.	National Instruments Ltd., West Bengal	0.14	0.15	0.29

1	2	3	4	5
11.	NEPA Ltd., Nepa Nagar, Madhya Pradesh	3.88	0.45	4.33
12.	Triveni Structural Ltd., Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh	0.86	0.63	1.49
13.	Tungbhadra Steel Products Ltd., Hospet, Karnataka	0.66	0.39	1.05
Total		53.97	23.28	77.25

**Replacement of Un-manned Railway
Crossing with Subways**

2415. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways had decided to replace unmanned railway crossings with subways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Southern Railways have undertaken a massive project to convert unmanned level crossings into subways; and

(d) if so, the details of such works undertaken by Southern Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Replacement of Unmanned Level Crossing by Limited Height Subways are considered based on criteria of safety, closure of nearby level crossing, local road user's requirement etc. Recently, General Managers of Zonal Railways have been given powers to sanction Limited Height Subways depending upon site conditions, costing up-to Rs. 45 lakhs each.

(c) and (d) All Zonal Railways including Southern Railway have been advised to identify the level crossings which could be replaced by Limited Height Subways and sanction them for their replacement.

As on 31.07.2007, Zonal Railways have identified 446 level crossings for replacement by Limited Height Subways. Out of this, 181 level crossings are located over Southern Railway.

New Airport near Thane

2416. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal is under consideration of the Government to develop a new airport near Thane in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, whether the Defence Airstrip is available at Thane and the Government is willing to develop the new airport on the said Defence Airstrip;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the present status of the proposal; and

(d) the time by which the proposal will be sanctioned and the estimated cost of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) A request to develop an abandoned Indian Air Force strip at Kalyan, District Thane into a new airport has been received.

(c) and (d) Pre-feasibility study is required to be done based on which further action would follow.

Petro-chemical Park in Bihar

2417. SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the Government of Bihar for the establishment of Petro-chemical Park in Bihar;

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal;

(c) whether the Union Government has any plan to provide financial assistance and special status for Petro-chemical Park in Bihar; and

(d) if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) A letter dated 19th August, 2006 was received from the Chief Minister of Bihar addressed to the Minister (P&NG) regarding increase in capacity of Barauni Refinery, setting up of a Petrochemical complex at Barauni and supply of natural gas to State of Bihar. While at present the availability of Naptha from Barauni Refinery, after meeting the requirement for production of Gasoline, is around 0.2 million metric tones per annum, which is inadequate to sustain

an economic size Petro-chemical complex at Barauni, a decision on setting up a chemical hub at Barauni would be taken after a feasibility study is done.

Project for Identification of Heritage Sites and Tourist Destinations

2418. SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to implement any project to identify heritage sites and tourists destinations in the country for revamping these centres to attract more tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government of Kerala has proposed any heritage centre or tourist destinations for its inclusion in the project; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. However, the Ministry of Tourism extends Central Financial Assistance to all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for development of destinations and circuits including heritage sites under the scheme of 'Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits.'

(c) and (d) During the 10th Five Year Plan, the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned Rs.138.10 crore for 61 projects including heritage sites and tourist destinations to the State Government of Kerala.

In the current Financial Year the following projects have been submitted by the State Government of Kerala:

1. Development of Farm Tourism in the Tea Estates of Plantation Corporation of Kerala Limited

2. Development of Pathiramanal Bio-Park
3. Development of Kadungalloor Heritage Tourism circuit.
4. Destination Development of Wayanad
5. Development of Kerala Kalamandalam as a Tourism Destination
6. Development of Bekal as a Major Tourist Destination

The proposals that are complete in all respects are examined as per the Scheme guidelines and funds released on the basis of inter-se priority and availability of funds under the respective heads.

Railway Projects In Andhra Pradesh

2419. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU:
SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:
SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of ongoing railway projects/new railway line projects in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the details of amount allocated, released and spent on these projects and the estimated cost of each project;

(c) the time schedule for completion of these projects; and

(d) the steps taken by the Railways to complete these projects in time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A statement is attached.

(d) These projects are being progressed as per the overall availability of resources. A number of initiatives have been taken for augmenting resources for expediting completion of the ongoing projects. These include cost sharing by State Governments, Public/Private Partnership, funding from Ministry of Defence and funds for National Rail Vikas Yojna and National Projects.

Statement

The details of ongoing railway projects of New Line, Gauge Conversion, Doubling & Railway Electrification falling fully/partly in the State of Andhra Pradesh along with targets wherever fixed, is given as under:-

(Rupees in Crore)

S.No.	Plan Head	Name of the Project	KMS	Sanctioned Cost	Expenditure upto March, 2007	Outlay 2007-08	Present status and targets wherever fixed
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	New Line	Gadwal-Raichur	60	108.91	41.59	18.01	Land acquired for 28.8 Kms from Revenue Department and for the balance length, land acquisition has been taken up.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		◊					Earthwork, major bridges, minor bridges, ROB/RUB and ballast collection taken up. Track linking work of Gadwal Yard completed.
2	New Line	Jaggayapet-Mallacheruvu	19.1	53.21	4.2	10.00	Land acquisition taken up. Joint survey with Forest officials completed and application for acquiring reserve forest land has been submitted. Target: 2007-08.
3	New Line	Kakinada-Pithapuram	21.5	66.14	0.01	5.01	Requisite clearances awaited.
4	New Line	Kotipalli-Narsapur	57.21	695.00	9.41	2.00	Part detailed estimate is under scrutiny and land acquisition taken up.
5	New Line	Macherla-Nalgonda	92	243.17	0.27	5.00	Final location survey completed. Part detailed estimate is under process of sanction.
6	New Line	Manoharabad-Kotapalli	148.9	378.56	0.16	0.01	Final location survey taken up.
7	New Line	Munirabad-Mehbubnagar	246	497.47	35.39	5.00	Yeramaras-Yadalapur (14.5 Kms) commissioned. On Munirabad-Yeramaras, land acquisition taken up. On Krishna-Mehboobnagar (Devarkadra) (64.15 Kms) section, earthwork, major and minor bridges taken up.
8	New Line	Nandyal-Yerraguntla	126	173.32	39.76	15.00	656 hectare out of 680 hectare land has been acquired and earthwork, bridge work, ballast collection has been taken up.
9	New Line	Obulavaripalle-Krishnapatnam	113	426.34	17.29	10.00	The work is under execution through SPY mode by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited. Target 2009-10
10	New Line	Peddapally-Karimnagar-Nizamabad	177.49	517.63	195.78	35.00	Peddapally-Karimnagar-Jagtiyal (83.53 km) completed and commissioned. On Jagtiyal-Nizamabad (94.35 Kms) section, land acquisition taken up.
11	New Line	Rayadurg-Tumkur	213	887.31	0	0.01	Preparation of plans and estimate taken up.
12	New Line	Vishnupuram-Janapahar	11	42.08	0	2.00	Detailed estimate sanctioned and work is being taken up.
13	Gauge Conversion	Dharmavaram-Pakala	227	294.99	18.59	85.00	On Pakala-Madanapalli (82 Kms) section, earth work, minor &

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							major bridges, ballast collection taken up. On Madanpalle-Kaderi (67.5 Kms), major bridges taken up. Target for Pakala Madanapalli section: 2007-08.
14	Gauge Conversion	Guntur-Guntakal & Guntakal - Kalluru New line from Pendakallu to Gooty	554	528.38	479.21	60.00	Guntur-Guntakal gauge conversion including Pendekallu-Gooty new line portion (401.28 Kms) completed and commissioned. On Guntakal- (40.26 km) section, earthwork, bridge works, Kalluru ballast collection, etc taken up. Target for Guntakal-Kulluru section: 2007-08.
15	Gauge Conversion	Naupada-Gunupur	90	91.30	61.54	25.00	Earthwork, bridges etc taken up. Target: 2008-09.
16	Gauge Conversion	Katpadi-Pakala-Tirupati	104	198.91	175.18	10.00	Electrification of the section together with gauge conversion work has been taken up. The gauge conversion work has been completed. Electrification work (98 rkm) is targeted for completion by 2007-08.
17	Doubling	Gooty-Renigunta-Patch doubling	151	305.96	129.90	99.00	Pullampet to Bakrapet (48 Kms) is targeted for completion during 2007-08. Target for entire project: 30.6.2009.
18	Doubling	Guntur-Krishna Canal	27.12	76.17	20.00	56.00	Earthwork, major & minor bridges and ballast collection taken up. Target: 2007-08.
19	Doubling	Kottavalasa-Simhachalam North 4th line	16.69	86.32	0	20.00	Detailed estimate sanctioned and work taken up.
20	Doubling	Raichur-Guntakal	81.1	145.81	2	50.00	Final location survey completed and land acquisition taken up. Target: 30.3.2009.
21	Doubling	Samalkot-Kakinada Port	15.6	65.12	0	10.00	Detailed estimate sanctioned and land acquisition taken up.
22	Doubling	Vizianagram-Kottavalasa 3rd line	34.7	167.67	0.5	10.00	Detailed estimate under process of sanction.
23	Railway Electrification	Karepalli-Bhadrachalam-Manuguru	88	57.54	11.61	10.00	Work is in progress. Target: March, 2008.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
24	Railway Electrification	Lingampalli-Wadi	161	96.24	5.00	5.00	Work is in progress. Target: March 2009.
25	Railway Electrification	Renigunta-Guntakal	308	182.55	56.10	3.00	Renigunta-Nandalur (86 RKM) section completed. The work on Nandalur-Guntakal is being executed by Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd. Target: Dec, 2009.

Old Manuscripts and Books

2420. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ADHAL RAO PATIL SHIVAJI RAO:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has sought World Bank assistance to meet the financial needs to preserve old manuscripts and books; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the World Bank thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Production of Crude Oil and Gas

2421. DR. CHINTA MOHAN:
SHRI SURAJ SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government at the time of awarding contracts keeps certain terms and conditions for its share in the production of crude oil and gas;

(b) if so, the conditions fixed by the Government for the said shares in the six phases of contracts given for the production of crude oil and gas in the country;

(c) whether the Government propose to change the above-mentioned terms of contracts to be given for the production of crude oil and gas in the seventh phase; and

(d) if so, the details and the reasons for making these changes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) The Government under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) has provided a level playing field wherein it invites bids from Private and Public sector companies and Indian as well as foreign companies under an Internationally Competitive Bidding (ICB) system. Blocks

are awarded on competitive terms on the basis of the Bid Evaluation Criteria. (BEC).

BEC in the 6 rounds of bids invited till date was a composite criteria and one of the basis was fiscal package offered to the Government. The bidders were required to offer Profit Petroleum Share to the Government at six tranches of Pre-tax Investment Multiple. The awards were made based on the maximum of aggregate score of the bidders obtained in composite criteria. The Profit Petroleum sharing to the Government is decided through competitive bidding and Government do not prefix its share. The Ministry is in the process of finalization of Bid Evaluation Criteria for 7th round of NELP in consultation with stakeholders.

[English]

Delay in Implementation of Dedicated Freight Corridor

2422. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the delay in implementing dedicated freight corridor by the Government has jeopardized the industrial corridor on either side of the tracks;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the reasons for delay; and

(c) the corrective measures taken/ being taken by the Union Government in this regard?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Permission to Freight Trains to run with Higher Axle Loads

2423. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:
SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have allowed freight trains to run with higher axle loads endangering the safety of the rolling stock, bridges and tracks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also true that allowing freight trains to run with higher axle loads had led to increase in the cases of spring failure, buffer coupler failures and wagon body damage; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard to avoid such cases in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Railways have not allowed to run any higher axle load freight trains endangering safety. However, higher axle load wagons of 25 tonne have been permitted in limited circuits observing all safety requirements.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

EMU Train between Dhanbad and Barkakana

2424. SHRI TEK LAL MAHTO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are contemplating to start an EMU train between Dhanbad and Barkakana via Katras, Chandrapura, Beramo, Bokaro Thermal, Gomia in Jharkhand keeping in view the problems being faced by the passengers of this area; and

(b) if so, the time by which the proposed train is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. At present, there is no such proposal.

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Verification of Licences of Expat Pilots

2425. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether under the current expat pilot licence recognition process, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) verifies the authenticity of expat pilot licences with the concerned embassies as reported in "The Economic Times" dated July 14, 2007;

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

(c) whether DGCA is contemplating to scan all the pilot licences issued in Philippines;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the other steps taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) In terms of Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) Section 7, Series 'G', Part II dated 8.10.1999 and the FCL circular no 1/2007 dated 28.03.2007 the operators/individuals submit the verification of the licenses and ratings from the appropriate authority of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) contracting State. Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) verifies the authenticity of documents of the aircrew from their issuing authority in case the operator or the individual cannot do so.

(c) and (d) As Philippines is an ICAO contracting state, the procedure stipulated in the above CAR is followed to verify all the pilot licences issued by their regulatory authority.

(e) In order to replace the expatriate pilots with Indian Pilots, the operator has to furnish his plans of training Indian flight crew and due justification for employing the foreign personnel. The operator shall also indicate clearly his plan of phasing out the foreign flight crew. The Government has taken various steps to reduce the gap between demand and supply of skilled pilots so that the need to employ expatriate pilots does not arise

Exploration of Oil and Gas in NE Region

2426. SHRI THOK CHOM MEINYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC is pursuing any new exploration of oil and gas in North Eastern (NE) region;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the exploration work in Nagaland has been abandoned;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether there is any plan to conduct exploration in the Barak valley in the Assam-Manipur border; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is implementing XI Plan (2007-12) exploration programme in its operational areas in the north eastern region which comprises of two basins viz., Assam Shelf and Assam Arakan Fold belt. ONGC has plans to acquire 1720 Ground Line Kilometre

(GLK) of 2D seismic, 3173 sq km of 3D seismic data and drill 126 exploratory wells in these two basins in the states of Assam, Nagaland, Tripura and Mizoram.

(c) and (d) Drilling production and seismic survey activities of ONGC came to a stand still in May 1994 due to law and order problems in Nagaland. ONGC is in discussion with the State Government to resume its exploration and production operations.

(e) and (f) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has exploration acreages in the Cachar area where ONGC has a plan to acquire 210 sq km 3D seismic data and drill two wells during 2007-09.

New Helicopters for Pawan Hans

2427. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to acquire new helicopters for Pawan Hans;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of funds allocated for the said purpose during the current financial year;

(d) the number of existing helicopters of Pawan Hans; and

(e) the details of the profit of Pawan Hans during 2005-06 and 2006-07 so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited (PHHL) has plans to acquire 20 helicopters during the Eleventh Five Year Plan period.

(c) An amount of Rs. 190.00 crores has been earmarked for the purpose by PHHL.

(d) At present PHHL has a fleet of 33 helicopters.

(e) The profit acquired by PHHL after tax during 2005-06 and 2006-07 is Rs. 47.39 crores and Rs. 50.75 crores (provisional) respectively.

[Translation]

Construction of Bhiwadi-Delhi-Ahmedabad Railway Line

2428. SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways is contemplating to approve the construction of Bhiwadi-Delhi-Ahmedabad Railway line;

(b) if so, the time by which the said project is likely to be approved; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A survey for construction of new broad gauge line between Rewari-Bhiwadi was completed in 2003-04. As per the survey report, the cost of construction of 24.87 kms long line had been assessed as Rs.105.04 crore with a Rate of Return as (-)8.56%. The State Government of Rajasthan expressed their willingness to take up this project under National Capital Region Plan and Assistance to the State for Infrastructure Development for Export and Allied Activities (ASIDE) Scheme. The matter was referred to the State Government for bearing the cost of the project but there was no response in this regard. In view of this, the proposed new line was not taken up due to its unremunerative nature and constraint of resources.

Piped Natural Gas Pipeline

2429. SHRI NAKUL DAS RAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work of laying gas pipeline for kitchen in all the Government colonies of Delhi, particularly in the flats of MPs and Aaram Bagh colony has been started;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the names of the other colonies of Delhi for which PNG lines are likely to be laid during the current year; and

(c) if not, the time by which the said work is likely to be started for the provision in flats of all MPs including Aaram Bagh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) has completed the work of laying PNG pipelines in the following Government colonies:-

Kaka Nagar, Bapa Nagar, Pandara Park, Pandara Road, Lodhi Road Complex, Lodhi Colony, Sarojini Nagar, Naoroji Nagar, Pragati Vihar, Mohammadpur, R.K. Puram (Sectors 1 to 5, 7-9, 12 & 13), Kidwai Nagar (East & West), Andrews Ganj, Andrews Ganj Extension, Laxmibal Nagar, Netaji Nagar, Chanakya Puri (Vinay Marg), HUDCO, Asiad Games Village, Kali Bari/ Baba Kharag Singh Marg (DIZ Area), Srinivasapuri, Sadiq Nagar, Moti Bagh (South) and Moti Bagh (North).

IGL has also provided PNG supply in 78 flats of Hon'ble MPs in Brahmaputra Apartment (CPWD Flats) on Dr.B.D.Marg in January 2006. IGL has submitted estimates of installation of PNG supply in Aaram Bagh Colony. A request letter, along

with 50% advance payment, from CPWD is awaited, subsequent to which, IGL would be able to start the work.

(c) IGL has submitted to Ministry of Urban Development, proposals for provision of PNG supply in residential quarters in Aaram Bagh and 552 flats of Hon'ble MPs located in Swarna Jayanti Complex, as also in Government colonies of Nivedita Kunj (R.K.Puram), Pushp Vihar, HUDCO Place Extn., MS Flats K.G.Marg, B.K.S. Marg, North Avenue, South Avenue, Meena Bagh, 426 quarters in Moti Bagh (NW), 80 quarters in Moti Bagh (S) and M.S.Flats Block A & B along B.K.S.Marg. The work shall be started on receipt of request letter and 50% advance payment from CPWD. Subject to technical feasibility and on receipt of request letter, along with 50% advance payment of cost of installation, other flats of Hon'ble MPs, can be taken up by IGL for provision of PNG supply.

Growth of Aviation Industries

2430. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the potential growth projection of aviation industry to meet growing requirements of both civil and military aircraft;

(b) the private sector companies presently engaged in the development of avionics, development and manufacture of aircraft, structures, systems/equipment, component and material;

(c) whether the Government proposes to formulate a policy to encourage public-private partnership for synergy to focus on long term partnerships, reduce lead time and costs of joint projects, enhance global market share and exports of civil and military aircraft while sharing the risks also involved in manufacturing and marketing of these high value products; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Aviation is integral to the economy of the country. The growth of civil aviation sector is, therefore, dependent upon GDP growth. However, based on the present trend, aviation sector is expected to have a robust growth in the coming years.

(b) In addition to government agencies viz. Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. and National Aerospace Laboratories, private sector companies viz. Taneja Aerospace Ltd., CADES Bangalore, Honeywell India and Nest Avionics are engaged in manufacture of aircraft, development of avionics, structures, systems/equipment, components etc.

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

[Translation]

Guards at Unmanned Level Crossing

2431. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways appoint/deploy guards at unmanned railway crossings with assistance from Central Road Fund;

(b) if so, the details of funds received from Central Road Fund in this regard during each of the last three years and the current year;

(c) the number of guards appointed/deployed at unmanned railway crossings from this fund in every State during the said period; and

(d) the proposal of appointing guards from this fund at unmanned railway crossings during 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. Central Road Fund is utilized only for Road Safety Works at (i) Level crossings such as provision of levelled surface Road, Lifting Barriers, Warning Board etc. at level crossings, and (ii) construction of Road Over/Under Bridges & Limited Height Subways in replacement of level crossings.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Agreement with Foreign Countries

2432. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:

SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has signed an agreement with any foreign countries under the Open Sky Policy;

(b) if so, the salient features of the agreement;

(c) the benefits likely to accrue to both the countries under the agreement;

(d) whether India has sought certain modifications to ensure that the benefits do not go to international carriers in the tie-up with other countries;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether India has rejected any foreign country's proposal to conduct a security audit of all the Indian airports;

(g) if so, the details in this regard; and

(h) the number of flights increased after implementation of the said agreement between the countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has signed an agreement based on 'Open Skies' principles with the Government of USA on 15th January, 2005.

(b) and (c) As per this agreement, the designated airlines of each country are entitled to operate any number of services to any point in each other's territory via any intermediate point and to any beyond point.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) and (g) India is a signatory to the International Civil Aviation Organization. Therefore, only ICAO AVSEC Auditors can conduct the security audit in India.

(h) After the signing of the India-US Agreement, two new US carriers have commenced direct operations to/from India and Air India has increased its services from 25 to 31 services per week to USA. However the designated airlines of both sides have increased operation of code share services. The increase in code share services by the US carriers is 70 services per week and by Air India 35 services per week.

[Translation]

Import of Crude Oil

2433. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the countries from where crude oil was imported and the revenue spent on its import;

(b) whether there is price rise/inflation in the country due to import of crude oil; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The countries from where crude oil was imported during 2006-07 are Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen, Algeria, Angola, Azarbaijan, Brazil, Brunei, Cote Divoire, Egypt, Equitorial Guiena, Equitorial Kenya, Gabon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, Sudan and Venezuela. The total revenue spent on its import was Rs. 2,19,029 crores.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. In view of the fact that 76% of our crude requirement is met through imports, the escalating international prices do have an impact on the domestic prices of petroleum products.

[English]

Setting up of Institutions on the Lines of NIPER

2434. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:
SHRI BHUPENDRA SINH SOLANKI:
SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA:
SHRI RAGHUVVEER SINGH KOSHAL:
SHRI KASHI RAM RANA:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some State Governments including Gujarat have sent a proposals to the Union Government for setting up of institutions like National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) in their States during the Eleventh Five Year Plan period;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Union Government has decided in principle to set up such institutes or its branches in different States;

(d) if so, whether any time-bound programme has been formulated in this regard; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Govt. of Gujrat has sent their willingness to support the proposal to set up NIPER at Ahmedabad. They have agreed to provide necessary land free of cost for this purpose.

(c) to (e) Presently, there is an institute named National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) is located at Mohali, Punjab. Realizing the need for more NIPER like institutes in India a committee consisting of experts from NIPER S.A.S. Nagar & pharmaceutical industry was constituted by Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals. The Committee has recommended for the setting up of NIPER like institutes at few other locations in India including one in Gujrat.

NIPER Act has been amended to empower Central Government to set up similar institutes or its centers at different locations in the country.

The proposal to set up NIPER at new locations is at advanced stage of approval in the Government.

[Translation]

Subsidy on Kerosene and LPG

2435. SHRI V. K. THUMMAR:
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:

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

(a) whether the Government is reconsidering the subsidy being provided on kerosene and LPG and is also formulating a new policy in this regard;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the difference between the proposed new policy and the policy in vogue; and

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) The issue of further continuation of the Subsidy Scheme for PDS Kerosene and domestic LPG is under consideration of the Government.

[English]

New Aircraft to Gulf Countries

2436. SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the increase in the number of passengers from Gulf countries to India particularly to Kerala during festival seasons;

(b) if so, whether the existing availability of seats in Air India/Indian Airlines in this sector are inadequate to carry the increased number of passengers during festival season;

(c) if so, whether the Government is considering introducing new aircraft during the festival season to overcome the crisis;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) Kerala and Gulf cities are connected with air services of Air India, Indian Airlines and Air India Express and the Gulf carriers namely Emirates, Etihad Airways, Air Arabia, Oman Air, Gulf Air, Qatar Airways, Kuwait Airways and Jazeera Airways. Over the last few years, the national carriers have been increasing capacity on India-Gulf route including Kerala-Gulf destinations and have plans to further augment frequencies on these routes. The airlines monitor the demand for capacity on the India-Gulf routes and endeavour to operate additional flights to cater to the peak season demand subject to availability of resources. As in earlier years, during peak and festival seasons, the national carrier plans to upgrade the aircraft type and/or operate extra section flights to meet the increase in demand. Further, Government of India has a policy to allow foreign carriers to upgrade aircraft type and/or operate extra section flights to meet the increase in seasonal demand.

[Translation]

Eye Testing of Drivers in Railways

2437. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to get the eye sights of the train drivers tested after the lapse of every six months as reported in "Dainik Jagran" dated July 30, 2007; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Commissioner of Railway Safety, Central Circle, has recommended to the Railways to consider eye testing, in case of train drivers aged above 55 years, affected with diabetes, every six months instead of every year.

Accordingly, Railway has constituted a Committee to examine the above.

[English]

Financial Losses in Tourism Sector

2438. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Asian Development Bank reported that India is estimated to lose over 230 million dollar per year in tourism revenue as appeared in "Hindustan Times" dated August 8, 2007;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the response of the Government thereto; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) Asian Development Bank have indicated that the quoted figure is an indicative one cited from the World Bank Water and Sanitation program report of November 2004 that appears to be based on a number of other researches and studies. ADB's sanitation discussion note distributed at the Stockholm World Water Week in August 2007 aimed to raise the attention of decision makers on the cost to economy (health/medical, tourism, environment/pollution) as a result of inadequate or poor quality sanitation facilities and services.

Accidents of Helicopters

2439. SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the increasing incidents of helicopter accidents in the country;

(b) if so, the details of number of accidents occurred during the last three years;

(c) the results of enquiries conducted by the Government and steps taken to prevent such mishaps;

(d) whether the Government has any proposal to set up a Panel for chopper development;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) There have been 7 accidents to the Indian Civil Registered helicopters since 01.01.2005 till date. While three accidents each occurred in 2005 and 2007 (till date) only one accident occurred in 2006.

(c) The accidents were investigated as per the provisions of Aircraft Rules, 1937. The reasons as brought out in the investigation reports are improper decision of the pilots, poor crew co-ordination, mechanical/technical problems, poor maintenance, lack of experience and weather disturbances. The safety recommendations emanating from the investigations were implemented in order to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

(d) to (f) A Helicopter cell headed by Joint Director General of Civil Aviation is functioning in the Directorate General of Civil Aviation to look after all issues relating to maintenance and operations of helicopters in the country.

Gail's Joint Venture with China

2440. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) has signed a joint venture agreement with China Gas Holdings Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total investment likely to be made by GAIL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. GAIL signed a Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) with China Gas Holdings Limited on June 26, 2007. Pursuant to the JVA, GAIL and China Gas shall form a 50:50 Joint Venture Company only after identification of technoeconomically viable project(s). The JV company would pursue

gas sector opportunities in China, particularly in the areas of city gas and CNG projects.

(c) Investment by GAIL shall be based on the specific projects selected for implementation by the JV.

[Translation]

Exploration of Oil Reserves by ONGC in Krishna Godavari

2441. SHRI SURAJ SINGH:

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

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

(a) whether oil reserves in Krishna Godavari basin had been allotted to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) for oil exploration and production during the last three years;

(b) if so, the date when this allocation was made;

(c) whether any time limit was also set for ONGC to discharge the duties entrusted to it;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether ONGC has completed the gas and crude oil exploration work;

(f) if so, the quantum of gas and crude oil reserves explored so far; and

(g) the time by which the exploration work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (g) No, oil reserves in KG Basin were allotted to ONGC. Under NELP, ONGC have been awarded 7 exploration blocks in KG Basin, i.e. Six in deepwater and one in shallow water during last 3 years. PSC for one deepwater block was signed on 6th February, 2004 and PSCs for other 6 blocks were signed on 2nd March, 2007. The exploration period under PSC is 8 years for deepwater block and 7 years for shallow water block.

In addition to these 7 blocks, ONGC has also farmed in one deepwater block in KG Basin, which was operated by Cairn Energy Pty Ltd.

Since these blocks are in the initial phase of exploration, no oil/gas discoveries have been made in 7 blocks. However, 8 gas discoveries have been made in the block, KG-DWN-98/2. These discoveries are under various stages of appraisal.

[English]

Working of ONGC

2442. SHRI PRASANTA PRADHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has asked Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to stop their work in respect of exploration of finding oil and natural gas in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government is considering the future strategy of working of ONGC; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):
(a) Government has not issued any instruction to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) for stoppage of their work.

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

Incidents of Theft at Airports

2443. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the frequent and recent incidents of the theft of valuables from the baggages of passengers after the security check-in of various airlines;

(b) if so, the details of such incidents reported during the last three years and the number of cases solved so far particularly at IGI Airport;

(c) whether the airlines have taken any steps to curb such incidents of theft and to compensate the victims;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) The information is being collected.

Directorate General of Hydrocarbons

2444. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

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

(a) whether the Union Government has strengthened the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) by giving it more powers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether DGH have been empowered to oversee private sector oil companies ever increasing exploration and production activities in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) to what extent the DGH have cross checked the activities of private sector oil companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) Government has strengthened Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) to exercise certain powers and functions of Central Government with a view to promoting sound management of the hydrocarbon resources in the country in respect of exploration & production companies including public, private and foreign companies having balanced regard for environmental safety, technological and economic aspects.

Following powers and functions have been delegated to DGH vide this Ministry's Notification dated 1st September, 2006:

- (i) to monitor the upstream petroleum operations in India including coalbed methane and gas hydrates operation in accordance with the Act and the Rules;
- (ii) review and monitor the exploration programme and development plans for commercial discoveries of hydrocarbons reserves proposed by licensee or lessee with a view to optimizing hydrocarbon recovery from a reservoir in accordance with generally accepted international petroleum industry practices;
- (iii) review the management of petroleum reservoirs by licensee or lessee and advise them on any action which may ensure proper management of the petroleum reservoirs including their conservation in accordance with generally accepted international petroleum industry practices;
- (iv) to ask for and maintain in a readily retrievable form all geo-scientific data, reports and information from licensee or lessee and store and preserve data and samples pertaining to petroleum exploration, drilling, production and connected operations;
- (v) review the reserves discovered by the licensee or lessee in accordance with generally accepted international petroleum industry practices;
- (vi) to lay down norms for declaration or announcement of discoveries by licensee or lessee;
- (vii) to exercise the powers of the Central Government as given in rules 24, 25, 26, 27 and 30 of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 1959;
- (viii) to monitor oil and gas production and royalty or any other charges or fee or levies, and where applicable, cost petroleum etc., due to the Central Government and obtain necessary reports from licensee or lessee to facilitate the Central Government in receiving accurate royalty and other statutory charges by the due date.

However, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has clarified to DGH that the main objective of delegation of power is to utilize the technical expertise of DGH for better management of petroleum reservoirs and to help them function as a repository of relevant technical data.

As regards DGH approving payment for contractors, such as payments towards unfinished committed work programme under the Production Sharing Contract (PSC) and accepting such payments on behalf of Government of India, DGH needs to make recommendations to the Government on all payment matters.

(e) DGH has been monitoring the activities of Private/Joint Venture companies as stipulated in PSC, and in terms of delegation of power specified in answers to para (a) to (d) above.

[Translation]

Stringent Criteria for Private Airlines

2445. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has made criteria more stringent for private airlines to start their operation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the affect of these measures likely to be caused on aviation industry; and
- (d) the details of the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The paid up equity capital for scheduled operators upto first five aircraft having take off mass exceeding 40,000 Kgs. and having take off mass not exceeding 40000 kgs. will be Rs. 50 Crore & Rs. 20 Crore respectively. For each addition upto five aircraft additional equity requirement would be Rs. 20 Crores and Rs. 10 Crores respectively.

All existing Private Operators will be required to comply with the above requirement and whenever necessary will have to raise their authorised and paid up capital to the prescribed minimum level within a period of one year. However, there will be no need for further enhancement of equity if the paid up equity/reserves of Rs. 100 Crores is available with the airlines.

The basic purpose of enhancing the entry capital norms in respect of scheduled airline operators was that the operators have sound financials and adequate financial commitment to provide sustained passenger airline services over a period of time.

(c) and (d) Only serious companies having sound financial background will be able to provide the Scheduled Air Transport Services in the country on a sustainable basis leading to stability in the sector.

[English]

World Heritage Sites

2446. SHRI ARJUN SETHI:

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken a decision for development of the world famous sites in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) the total amount budgeted in every year against each heritage site in various States, State-wise;
- (d) whether the ticket charges are likely to be increased to see the places; and
- (e) if so, to what extent and the facilities to be provided to the tourists?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Archaeological Survey of India maintains and protects 3667 monuments / sites of national importance including the 19 World Heritage Cultural sites of outstanding universal value.

(b) Detail of State-wise World Heritage Cultural Sites in India under the control of the Archaeological Survey of India is given in the enclosed statement-I.

(c) Details of expenditure incurred State-wise during the last three years and allotment for this year on World Heritage Sites under the control of the Archaeological Survey of India is given in the enclosed statement-II.

(d) and (e) At present, there is no proposal to increase the entry fee at ticketed monuments under the ASI.

Tourist facilities like toilets, drinking water, ramps and wheel chairs for physically challenged people, etc. are provided at the World Heritage sites and other ticketed centrally protected monuments.

Statement-I

Statwise List of World Heritage Sites in India under the Control of the Archaeological Survey of India

Sl. No.	State	Name of site
1	2	3
1.	Delhi	Humayun Tomb, Delhi (1993)
2.	Delhi	Qutb Minar complex, Delhi

1	2	3
3.	Delhi	Red Fort complex (2007)
4.	Goa	Churches & Convents of Goa (1986)
5.	Gujarat	Champaner-Pavagarh Archaeological Park (2004)
6.	Karnataka	Group of temples, Pattadakal (1987)
7.	Karnataka	Group of monuments at Hampi (1986)
8.	Madhya Pradesh	Group of temples, Khajuraho (1986)
9.	Madhya Pradesh	Buddhist monuments at Sanchi (1989)
10.	Madhya Pradesh	Prehistoric Rock shelters of Bhimbetka (2003)

1	2	3
11.	Maharashtra	Ajanta Caves
12.	Maharashtra	Ellora Caves (1983)
13.	Maharashtra	Elephanta Caves (1987)
14.	Orissa	Sun Temple, Konarak (1984)
15.	Tamil Nadu	Group of monuments at Mahabalipuram (1984)
16.	Tamil Nadu	Great Living Chola temples at Thanjavur, Gangaikondacholapuram and Darasuram (1987 & 2004)
17.	Uttar Pradesh	Agra Fort (1983)
18.	Uttar Pradesh	Taj Mahal (1983)
19.	Uttar Pradesh	Group of monuments, Fatehpur Sikri (1986)

Statement-II

*Expenditure incurred during the last three years and allotment for this year on
World Heritage Sites in India under the Control of the Archaeological Survey of India*

Sl.No.	Name of site	Expenditure			Allotment
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Humayun Tomb, Delhi	82,16,670	92,48,730	87,38,775	90,06,000
2.	Qutb Minar complex, Delhi	35,99,592	32,08,578	46,24,553	1,79,78,000
3.	Red Fort complex	1,45,88,137	1,41,68,668	2,75,91,623	90,37,000
4.	Churches & Convents of Goa	90,74,792	86,61,957	98,85,054	1,29,61,000
5.	Champaner-Pavagarh Archaeological Park	89,41,788	68,94,496	66,75,648	57,00,000
6.	Group of temples, Pattadakal	31,59,368	38,99,544	49,96,273	19,94,000
7.	Group of monuments at Hampi	1,33,29,150	1,78,90,150	1,66,37,728	1,93,72,000
8.	Group of temples, Khajuraho	28,80,754	45,05,111	62,06,331	66,79,000
9.	Buddhist monuments at Sanchi.	10,81,275	25,41,191	33,22,275	29,73,000
10.	Prehistoric Rock shelters of Bhimbetka	4,72,904	2,47,731	1,95,213	8,00,000
11.	Ajanta Caves	1,30,18,624	86,72,073	97,97,186	2,46,57,000
12.	Ellora Caves	86,05,432	67,81,459	63,42,726	1,09,04,000
13.	Elephanta Caves	26,93,891	24,57,252	28,65,182	18,50,000

1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	Sun Temple, Konarak	56,90,667	1,05,18,463	66,04,416	1,06,79,000
15.	Group of monuments at Mahabalipuram	29,49,334	26,60,691	66,29,755	63,54,000
16.	Great Living Chola temples at Thanjavur, Gangaikondacholapuram and Darasuram	70,16,086	1,70,68,176	82,27,913	1,36,17,000
17.	Agra Fort	2,35,16,617	2,11,86,171	1,61,10,962	89,65,000
18.	Taj Mahal	1,21,14,910	1,37,61,210	1,36,47,697	1,74,31,000
19.	Group of monuments, Fatehpur Sikri	1,44,07,807	1,00,93,568	1,71,58,637	97,45,000
Total		15,53,57,078	16,44,65,219	17,62,57,947	19,07,02,000

Services of Air India

2447. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of countries with whom Air India (AI) provides its service, country-wise;

(b) the details of the income earned therefrom by AI during the last two years, route-wise, year-wise; and

(c) the details of expenditure incurred by AI during the last two years, head-wise, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Air India operates flights to Bangladesh, China, Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Thailand, Tanzania, UK, UAE and USA. In addition, Air India has code-share flights to Russia, Netherlands, Turkey, Switzerland, Austria, Australia, Jordan and Mauritius.

(b) and (c) Details are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

(b) The details of revenue earned by Air India during the last two years route-wise and year-wise are as under:

Sector	Rs. In crores	
	2005-06	2004-05
1	2	3
India - USA	2865.08	2413.94
India - UK	453.04	246.59
India - Japan	436.47	384.65
India - Continental Europe	-	209.32
India - Malaysia	77.19	58.73
India - Indonesia	64.73	69.86

1	2	3
India - Singapore	147.87	165.69
India - Gulf	1591.04	2021.46
India - East Africa	70.09	-
India - Korea	121.49	-
India - Canada	192.05	-
India - Hong Kong	67.46	76.86
India - China	116.65	56.71
Domestic	93.77	64.60
Hub and Spoke	34.12	58.10
Schedule Services Revenue	633.05	5826.51
Other Revenue	1123.86	860.41
Handling, Servicing and Incidental Revenue	1378.80	901.25
Other Operative Revenue	8833.71	7588.17
Other (Net)	411.24	138.72
Total Revenue	9251.02	7773.29

(c) The details of expenditure incurred by Air India during the last two years head-wise and year-wise are as under:

Head of Expenditure	Rs. In crores	
	2005-06	2004-05
1	2	3
Pay, Allowance	894.80	843.85
Staff Costs including crew cost and welfare	741.53	665.75
Fuel and Oil	3140.77	2187.74
Navigation, Landing, Housing and Parking fees	577.80	513.28
Hire of Aircraft and Lease Rentals	968.46	743.26

1	2	3
Handling Charges	505.62	447.14
Material Consumption including Outside Repairs	610.76	514.13
Passenger amenities	378.25	373.19
Commission	437.71	376.81
Insurance	67.90	72.43
Publicity	24.41	26.61
Depreciation & Obsolescence	406.18	424.26
Other expenses	479.11	447.33
Total Operating Expenses	9233.30	7635.78
Non-operating expenses including extra-ordinary items	2.78	41.15

**Jobs to the Family Members of Victims
of Rail Accidents**

2448. SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any provision of providing jobs to a family member of a person who dies in a rail accident;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of said persons provided with jobs by the Railways during 2006-07, State-wise?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) However, Railways in exception to the rules, purely as a humanitarian gesture and as a special case, have taken a decision to provide employment to the wards/legal heirs of the victims of Mumbai bomb blasts in suburban trains on Western Railway, dependents of victims of train accident of Delta Fast Passenger near Valigonda Station on South Central Railway and dependents of victims of train accident of Howrah-Jamalpur Express near Bhagalpur on Eastern Railway and accordingly 158 (one hundred fifty eight) persons have been offered appointment in Group 'D' categories as Substitute on the Railways in the year 2006-07. State-wise data is not maintained.

[English]

Inquiry into Delhi-Attari Express Fire Incident

2449. SHRI UDAY SINGH:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether inquiry into the incident of blasts and fire in Delhi-Attari Express by Commissioner of Railway Safety has since been completed;

(b) if so, the findings thereof;

(c) the follow-up action taken thereon;

(d) If not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the inquiry into the incidents is likely to be completed;

(e) whether the role of Railway Protection Force is not found satisfactory in providing safety to commuters as well as to railway properties; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to tone up the working of the Railway Protection Force?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The enquiry has been completed by the Commissioner of Railway Safety, Northern Circle. The cause of the incident is attributed to sabotage.

(c) and (d) The recommendations/suggestions rendered by the Commissioner of Railway Safety, Northern Circle have been implemented. Recommendations/suggestions were conveyed to all Senior Security Commissioners / Deputy Security Commissioners which have been implemented in coordination with Government Railway Police and Railway authorities over Northern Railway.

(e) No, Sir. No such inference has been drawn in the enquiry report.

(f) Does not arise.

Thousand Pillar Temple in Andhra Pradesh

2450. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the restoration work of the famous thousand pillar temple in Warangal district in Andhra Pradesh has been delayed due to row over the type of foundation for Reconstruction of Kalyana Mandapam structure;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to resolve the dispute;

(c) whether the ASI has given its final say in this matter;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time frame fixed for completion of restoration of the temple?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No Sir. The design of foundation has already been finalised and approved.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The type of foundation was finalised in consultation with National Institute of Technology, Warangal keeping in view the requirement of the compatibility, longevity and traditional method. Accordingly granular pile foundation has been chosen over which stone masonry platform will be constructed in traditional manner and above that dismantled Kalyana Mandapam structure will be reconstructed.

(e) The work of reconstruction of the dismantled architectural members of the Kalyanamandapa is a slow process involving preparation of architectural members wherever they are missing. The work is expected to be completed within a period of 2 ½ years.

[Translation]

Gas Reserves in Cauvery Basin in AP

2451. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether abundant natural gas reserve has been found in the Cauvery basin in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the total quantity of gas estimated to be produced every year from the said reserve;

(c) whether the said gas is proposed to be supplied to the public and private sector fertiliser and power companies;

(d) if so, the pricing of the said gas is proposed to be fixed by the Government or the private sector producing companies; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure supply of the gas produced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) No gas reserves have been established in onland areas of Cauvery basin in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) to (e) In view of (a) above do not arise.

Commercial Production of Oil in Barmer-Sanchor Basin

2452. SHRI NIHAL CHAND:

SHRIMATI SUSHEELA BANGARU LAXMAN:

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

(a) the time by when commercial production of oil and natural gas from Banner-Sanchor basin is expected;

(b) whether the Government of India will get "Profit Petroleum" from these fields;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether State Government will also be given a share out of this profit;

(e) if so, the percentage thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The production from the Block RJ-ON-90/1 in the Barmer-Sanchore basin is likely to commence in 2008-2009.

(b) and (c) Government will get its share of Profit Petroleum in terms of the provisions of the relevant Production Sharing Contract. Profit Petroleum would depend on the development cost and value of the production, which will accrue from these fields. There will be no sharing of Profit Petroleum with the State Government concerned from pre-NELP blocks.

(d) to (f) The Central Government has accepted the recommendations of Twelfth Finance Commission to share Profit Petroleum (PP) and Production Level Payment (PLP) arising out of contracts under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) and Coal Bed Methane (CBM) policy with the concerned States in the ratio of 50:50. However, this profit sharing will not be applicable for RJ-ON-90/1 as it is a pre-NELP and Joint Ventures Block.

[English]

Mausoleums of Freedom Fighters

2453. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to build a mausoleum in memory of heroes of independence;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the documents and records on freedom struggle are likely to be housed in that mausoleum;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any Committee has been set up to recommend truthful details of the events of freedom struggle for display in that mausoleum; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (f) Does not arise.

Sale of Surplus Land by Public Sector Pharmaceutical Industries

2454. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some public sector pharmaceutical industries have surplus land with them;

(b) if so, whether any company has proposed to sell its surplus land; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As part of the sanctioned rehabilitation scheme for revival of Hindustan Antibiotics Limited (HAL), the company plans to sell its surplus land to repay interest free loan of Rs. 56.96 crores sanctioned by the Government of India.

Review of Performance of Steel Sector

2455. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made any review in the performance of steel sector during the Tenth Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof in terms of production and export of various grades of steel, plant-wise;

(c) whether the Government proposes to adopt a long term policy to increase steel production catering to the diversified steel demand; and

(d) If so, the steps taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) Yes, Sir. The steel sector's performance during 10th Plan (2002-07) was reviewed by the Working Group on Steel Industry for the 11th Five Year Plan (2007-12), constituted by the Planning Commission.

(b) The details of production and export of various grades of steel, organization-wise during 10th Plan (2002-07) are given in the enclosed statement-I and II.

(c) and (d) The Government has announced the National Steel Policy on 3rd November, 2005 with the objective of building a modern and efficient domestic steel industry of global standards with a capacity to cater to diversified product demand. As follow-up, some of the measures initiated to increase steel production include modernisation and capacity expansion of public sector units, removal of bottlenecks in raw materials availability and infrastructure facilities, promotion of Research & Development etc.

Statement-I

Steel Production (Grade-wise and Organisation-wise) during 10th Plan (2002-03 to 2006-07)

Year/Organisation	Non-alloy			Alloy			Grand Total		
	Non-flat	Flat	Total	Non-flat	Flat	Total	Non-flat	Flat	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2002-03									
SAIL	2616	5741	8357	82	66	148	2698	5807	8505
RINL	2652	0	2652	0	0	0	2652	0	2652
TSL	710	2667	3377	0	0	0	710	2667	3377
Secondary Producers	11739	9285	21024	893	715	1608	12632	10000	22632
Total	17717	17693	35410	975	781	1756	18692	18474	37166
2003-04									
SAIL	2717	6101	8818	109	87	196	2826	6188	9014
RINL	2834	0	2834	0	0	0	2834	0	2834
TSL	695	2840	3535	0	0	0	695	2840	3535
Secondary Producers	12983	10414	23397	1020	909	1929	14003	11323	25326
Total	19229	19355	909	1129	996	2125	20358	20351	40709

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2004-05									
SAIL	2841	6361	9202	128	85	213	2969	6446	9415
RINL	2904	0	2904	0	0	0	2904	0	2904
TSL	706	2799	3505	0	0	0	706	2799	3505
Secondary Producers	13911	11796	25707	1119	863	1982	15030	12659	27689
Total	20362	20956	41318	1247	948	2195	21609	21904	43513
2005-06									
SAIL	2855	6555	9410	158	44	202	3013	6599	9612
RINL	2980	0	2980	0	0	0	2980	0	2980
TSL	768	3053	3821	0	0	0	768	3053	3821
Secondary Producers	15530	12649	28179	1212	762	1974	16742	13411	30153
Total	22133	22257	44390	1370	806	2176	23503	23063	46566
2006-07									
SAIL	2911	7014	9925	160	64	224	3071	7078	10149
RINL	3042	0	3042	0	0	0	3042	0	3042
TSL	1230	3193	4423	0	0	0	1230	3193	4423
Secondary Producers	17605	14580	32185	1321	786	2107	18926	15366	34292
Total	24788	24787	49575	1481	850	2331	26269	25637	51906

Source: Joint Plant Committee

Statement-II*Export of Steel (Grade-wise and Organisation-wise) during 10th Plan (2002-03 to 2006-07)*

('000 tonnes)

Year/Organisation	Carbon			Alloy			Grand Total
	Flat	Non-flat	Total	Flat	Non-flat	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2002-03							
SAIL	569.8	42.3	612.1				612.1
RINL		322.7	322.7				322.7
TSL	442.4	39.9	482.3				482.3
Secondary Producers	2943.9	144.7	3088.6	11.0		11.0	3099.6
Total	3956.1	549.6	4505.7	11.0	0.0	11.0	4516.7
2003-04							
SAIL	606.5	55.1	661.6				661.6

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
RINL		320.4	320.4				320.4
TSL	444.0	55.0	499.0				499.0
Secondary Producers	3221.0	133.0	3354.0	261.0	111.0	372.0	3726.0
Total	4271.5	563.5	4835.0	261.0	111.0	372.0	5207.0
2004-05							
SAIL	192.0	28.6	220.6				220.6
RINL		55.2	55.2				55.2
TSL	388.5	46.7	435.2				435.2
Secondary Producers	3568.1	101.4	3669.5	191.0	133.0	324.0	3993.5
Total	4148.6	231.9	4380.5	191.0	133.0	324.0	4704.5
2005-06							
SAIL	202.4	23.4	225.8				225.8
RINL		201.6	201.6				201.6
TSL	397.1	43.4	440.5				440.5
Secondary Producers	3401.9	208.0	3609.9	188.0	135.0	323.0	3932.9
Total	4001.4	476.4	4477.8	188.0	135.0	323.0	4800.8
2006-07 (Prov.)							
SAIL	163.9	24.4	188.3				188.3
RINL		120.7	120.7				120.7
TSL	281.6	58.9	340.5				340.5
Secondary Producers	3900.0	200.0	4100.0	211.0	169.0	380.0	4480.0
Total	4345.5	404.0	4749.5	211.0	169.0	380.0	5129.5

Source: Joint Plant Committee

*[Translation]***Artificial Price-hike of Fertilizers**

2456. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the prices of the fertilizers are hiked by the traders artificially during the peak season;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure supply of fertilizers to the farmers at fair prices;

(d) whether the cases of black marketing of fertilizers have come to the notice of the Government;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (f) Under clause 21 of the Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), 1985, it is mandatory to print the maximum retail price on the container of all kinds of fertilizers, whether under statutory price control or out of the purview of the statutory price control. No person shall charge higher than the price

printed on the bag. Any person violating this mandatory provision of FCO is held liable to be proceeded against for administrative/punitive measures under the provisions of FCO and Essential Commodities Act. The State Governments are the enforcement agencies and are adequately empowered to take appropriate action against the offender who indulge in any kind of malpractices.

[English]

Punctuality of AI Flights

2457. SHRI MANI CHARENAMEI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of cancellation and delay of Air India (AI) flights, sector-wise with date and hours of delay from January 1, 2007 to July 31, 2007;

(b) the measures taken to maintain punctuality and stop cancellation of AI flights in future;

(c) whether passengers flying abroad on Frequent Flyer Scheme are not entitled to get more than one night hotel stay when their flights are cancelled;

(d) if so, the facts and the reaction thereto; and

(e) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The information is being collected.

(b) The measures taken by Air India to maintain punctuality and reduce cancellation of Air India flights are (i) a Delay Committee meets every day to discuss reasons for delays and provide corrective measures to all operational agencies; (ii) a team of senior level executives work round-the-clock to take care of last minute disruptions of AI flights; (iii) Air India is in the process of evaluating an IT system to enhance punctuality levels; (iv) Air India is in the process of acquiring new aircraft in order to improve the on-time performance; and (v) Airport Managers at all stations have been advised to ensure that all staff under their jurisdiction follow proper flight handling procedures and to adhere to the laid down norms.

(c) to (e) Passengers flying abroad on Frequent Flyer Scheme are normally not entitled to get more than one night hotel stay, when their flights are cancelled, as all efforts are made to re-book passenger to their destination on alternate flights either on Air India or other Carriers.

Buddhist Sites

2458. SHRI MOHAN JENA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Buddhist sites located at Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri in the Jaipur district of Orissa are not getting due attention;

(b) if so, the number of tourists visited these sites during the last three years;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to popularise the information on these sites, State-wise; and

(d) the details of the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to connect these Buddhist sites through air and rail separately and the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Centrally protected monuments/sites under the control of Archaeological Survey of India at Lalitgiri, Udayagiri and Ratnagiri in the Jaipur district of Orissa are receiving adequate attention by way of conservation, preservation and environment development.

(b) The details of number of tourist who visited these sites during the last three years is as under:

Year	Number of visitors
2004-05	15820
2005-06	18461
2006-07	20703

(c) and (d) Ministry of Tourism has launched Information and Promotion campaigns for promoting Tourism in respect of Buddhist Sites. The overseas offices of the Ministry of Tourism are actively involved in promoting the Buddhist sites of India including those in Orissa. In integrated promotion campaigns in the overseas markets particularly in South East Asian region, Buddhism has been adopted as one of the major themes. In the Domestic market, a campaign for celebration 2550 years of Mahaparinirvana of Lord Buddha has been launched. Ministry of Tourism through its Incredible India website provides specific information about Buddhist sites in Orissa including Udayagiri, Ratnagiri and Lalitgiri. Ministry of Tourism has brought out special brochures and leaflets for promoting excursion to Buddhist sites including Udaigiri, Ratnagiri and Lalitgiri.

Ministry of Tourism has been pursuing the matter of upgradation of road, rail and air connectivity to various tourist sites including Buddhist sites with concerned ministries of Surface Transport, Railways and Civil Aviation.

Railways Optical Fibre Cable Network

2459. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to switchover from the BSNL network to the Railways Optical Fibre Cable, as the network on hired BSNL channels face frequent and extensive failures disrupting the passenger reservation system services; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. RailTel proposes to switchover from Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) network to the Railways' Optical Fibre Cable for its Passenger Reservation System (PRS) in a phased manner as Railways have created their own Optical Fibre network spanning 31,000 Route Kilometers connecting 2896 towns/cities across India. Therefore, it will not only be economical to run the PRS on Railways' own network resulting in considerable saving on rental, but it will also enhance the reliability. However, BSNL's network will also be utilized wherever there is unavailability of Railways' own network or as a standby network for important PRS locations.

[Translation]

Losses to Drug Manufacturing Companies

2460. SHRI KIREN RIJU:

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the public sector drug manufacturing companies running in losses;

(b) the details of assistance provided by the Government for running these companies during the last three years, company-wise;

(c) the details of drugs manufactured by these companies;

(d) the details of annual income earned through the sale of raw drugs;

(e) whether some Ministries/Departments of the Government purchase costly drugs from Private Companies instead of public sector companies;

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

(g) whether the Government has made any efforts to persuade these Ministries/Department to purchase drugs from public sector companies only; and

(h) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K.

HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) The details of assistance provided by the Government to loss making public sector drug companies during the last three years are as under:

(Rs. in crores)

Sl. No.	Name of PSU	Year	Amount
1.	Hindustan Antibiotics Limited (HAL)	(i) 2004-05 (ii) 2005-06 (iii) 2006-07	(i) 7.27 (ii) 30.30 (iii) 131.69
2.	Bengal Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals Limited (BCPL)	(i) 2004-05 (ii) 2005-06 (iii) 2006-07	(i) 4.64 (ii) 9.73 (iii) 124.19
3.	Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Limited (IDPL)	(i) 2004-05 (ii) 2005-06 (iii) 2006-07	(i) Nil (ii) 7.00 (iii) 0.95

(c) The drugs manufactured by Pharma companies include bulk drug Benzathine Penicillin and formulations viz. antibiotics, anti-malarial, antsnake venom, anti inflammatory, oral powder, syrups, dry powder/liquid injectables, ointments, I.V. fluids etc.

(d) The details of annual income earned through sale of raw drugs during 2006-07 is as under:

- (i) HAL- Rs. 34.40 lakhs
- (ii) BCPL- Nil
- (iii) IDPL- Nil

(e) and (f) The information is not centrally maintained.

(g) and (h) Government has approved preferential purchase of 102 medicines manufactured by Pharma CPSEs and their subsidiaries by Departments/Ministries, PSUs, Autonomous Bodies, hospitals, etc. of the Central Government. State Governments are also required to purchase these 102 medicines under health programmes funded by Government of India (e.g. purchases under National Rural Health Mission etc.). As a result, orders for 102 medicines are placed on Pharma CPSEs & their subsidiaries. This would help in revival of sick Pharma CPSEs.

[English]

Operational Losses of I/AI

2461. PROF. M. RAMADASS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines (IA) and Air India (AI) have suffered operational losses during the year 2006-07;

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

(c) the concrete steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The final accounts of Air India and Indian Airlines for the year 2006-07 are under compilation and yet to be finalised.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Rural Tourism Projects

2462. DR. RAJESH MISHRA:

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the details of various projects for promotion of rural tourism;

(b) the success achieved so far and the targets set for the next three years in regard to various projects for promotion of tourism in rural areas;

(c) whether the success achieved commensurate with the targets fixed;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps being taken to achieve the target in future?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The list of projects sanctioned for promotion of rural tourism is enclosed as statement.

(b) to (e) No targets are set for promotion of Tourism. The implementation of the project sanctioned is the responsibility of the concerned State Government/UTs Administration. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India monitors the progress of the all projects including rural tourism projects from time to time.

Statement

Central Financial Assistance for Development of each such villages

1	2	3	4	Infrastructure Components			Capacity Building Components		
				Year of Sanction	(Rs. in Lakh)		Year of Sanction	(Rs. in Lakh)	
					Amount Sanctioned	Amount Released		Amount Sanctioned	Amount Released
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1	Pochampalli, Nalgonda Distt.	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		2	Konaseema Village, East Godavari Distt.	2003-04	50.00	50.00	-	-	-
		3	Puttaparthi, Ananthpur Distt.	2004-05	49.50	49.50	-	-	-
		4	Chinchinada, East Godavari Distt.	2004-05	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		5	Srikalahasti, Chittoor Distt.	2004-05	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
2	Arunachal Pradesh	6	Village Rengo, Distt. East Siang.	2005-06	49.62	39.69	-	-	-
		7	Ligu village, Distt. Upper Subansiri	2006-07	46.00	36.80	2006-07	20.00	16.00
		8	Village Ego-Nikte, Distt. West Siang	2006-07	46.50	37.20	2006-07	20.00	16.00
3.	Assam	9	Durgapur, Distt. Golaghat	2002-03	46.83	14.04	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		10	Dehing-Patakai Kshetra, Distt. Tinsukia	2004-05	44.33	35.46	-	-	-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		11	Sualkuchi in Kamrup Distt.	2004-05	50.00	40.00	2004-05	19.95	15.96
		12	Village Asharikandi, Distt. Dhubri	2005-06	48.97	39.17	-	-	-
4.	Bihar	13	Nepura Village, Distt. Nalanda	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
5.	Chhattisgarh	14	Village Chitrakote, Distt. Bastar	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		15	Village Chitrakote, Distt. Bastar	2003-04	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		16	Champanan, Distt. Raipur	2003-04	50.00	15.00	-	-	-
		17	Nagarnar, Distt. Bastar	2003-04	48.00	38.40	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		18	Kondagaon, Distt. Bastar	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		19	Mana-Tuta, Distt. Raipur	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2006-07	20.00	16.00
		20	Village Chilpi, Distt. Kabirdham	2006-07	48.75	39.00	2006-07	20.00	16.00
		21	Village Odh, Distt. Raipur	2007-08	42.05	33.64	2007-08	20.00	16.00
6.	Delhi	22	Kotla Mubarakpur	2003-04	09.78	09.78	-	-	-
		23	Nangli, Razapur, Delhi	2003-04	36.30	36.30			
7.	Gujarat	24	Heritage village at Tera	2003-04	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		25	Village Hodka, Distt. Kachchh	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		26	Navagaon and Malegaon villages, Distt. Dang	2003-04	92.70	27.81	-	-	-
		27	Nageswar, Distt. Jamnagar	2007-08	50.00	40.00	2007-08	19.84	15.87
		28	Dandi Village, Distt. Navsari	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2007-08	20.00	16.00
8.	Haryana	29	Jyotisar, Distt. Kurukshetra	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
9.	Himachal Pradesh	30	Nagar, Distt. Kullu	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		31	Paragpur, Distt. Kangra Valley	2003-04	50.00	40.00	-	-	-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		32	Village Baroh, Distt. Kangra	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	33	Village Drung, Distt. Baramula	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		34	Surinsar, Distt. Jammu	2005-06	50.00	40.00	2006-07	19.00	15.20
		35	Gagangir, Distt. Srinagar	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		36	Village Pahalgam, Distt. Anantnag	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		37	Village Jheri, Distt. Jammu	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		38	Village Akingaam, Distt. Anantnag	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2006-07	14.26	11.40
		39	Village Vasaknag	2006-07	47.20	37.76	-	-	-
		40	Village Dori Degair	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2007-08	20.00	16.00
11.	Jharkhand	41	Amadubi	2007-08	49.95	39.96	2007-08	17.44	13.95
		42	Deuridih, Distt. Saraikela Kharsawan	2007-08	49.94	39.95	2007-08	17.44	13.95
12.	Karnataka	43	Kokkare Bellur, Distt. Bellur	2002-03	50.00	15.00	-	-	-
		44	Attiveri Bird Sanctuary, Distt. Uttar Kannada	2003-04	60.00	18.00	-	-	-
		45	Banavasi Distt., Uttar Kannada	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		46	Anegundi, Distt. Koppal	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2005-06	20.00	16.00
		47	Coorg, Distt. Kodagu	2003-04	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
13.	Kerala	48	Kumbalangi, Distt. Ernakulam	2003-04	50.00	50.00	2004-05	20.00	20.00
		49	Amamula, Distt. Pathanamthitta	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		50	Balrampur in Thiruvananthapuram Distt.	2004-05	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		51	Village Kalady, Distt. Ernakulam for Spice Circuit	2006-07	47.20	37.76	2005-06	20.00	16.00
		52	Village Anakkara, Distt. Idukki for Spice Circuit	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2005-06	20.00	16.00

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14.	Madhya Pradesh	53	Hatwa village, Distt. Siddhi	2002-03	44.00	13.20	-	-	-
		54	Chaugan, Distt. Mandla	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		55	Pranpur, Distt. Ashoknagar	2003-04	48.00	38.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		56	Orchha, Distt. Tikamgarh	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		57	Amla, Distt. Ujjain	2006-07	48.69	39.95	2006-07	20.00	16.00
15.	Maharashtra	58	Sulibhanjan-Khultabad Distt. Aurangabad	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		59	Morachi Chincholi	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2006-07	20.00	16.00
16.	Manipur	60	Khongion, Distt. Thoubal	2006-07	49.75	39.80	-	-	-
		61	Village Noney, Distt. Tamenglong	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		62	Andro, Distt. East Imphal	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
17.	Meghalaya	63	Village Ialong, Distt. Jaintia Hills	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2006-07	14.80	11.84
		64	Village Sasatgre, Distt. West Garo Hills	2006-07	38.49	30.79	2006-07	20.00	16.00
18.	Nagaland	65	Mopunchupket, Distt. Mokokchung	2002-03	50.00	50.00	2007-08	20.00	16.00
		66	Avachekha, Distt. Zunheboto	2007-08	50.00	40.00	2007-08	20.00	16.00
		67	Changtongia, Distt. Mokokchung	2007-08	50.00	40.00	2007-08	20.00	16.00
19.	Orissa	68	Raghurajpur, Distt. Puri	2002-03	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	17.60
		69	Pipli in Puri Distt.	2004-05	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		70	Khiching, Distt. Mayurbhanj	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		71	Barpali, Distt. Bargarh	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		72	Hirapur, Distt. Khurda	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		73	Padmanavpur, Distt. Ganjam	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		74	Deuljhari, Distt. Angul	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		75	Gurukul of Konark Nitya Mandap	2007-08	50.00	40.00	2007-08	20.00	16.00
20.	Punjab	76	Boothgarh, Distt. Hoshiarpur	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		77	Rajasansi, Distt. Amritsar	-	-	-	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		78	Chamkaur, Sahib, Distt. Ropar	2006-07	46.00	36.80	-	-	-
		79	Jainti Majri, Distt. Mohali	2006-07	50.00	10.00	-	-	-
		80	Village Chhat	2006-07	45.46	36.44			
21.	Rajasthan	81	Neemrana, Distt. Alwar	2003-04	50.00	50.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		82	Samode Village, Distt. Jaipur	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		83	Haldighati, Distt. Rajsamand	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2004-05	19.32	15.45
22.	Sikkim	84	Lachen in North Distt.	2004-05	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
23.	Tamil Nadu	85	Kazhugumalai Under rural tourism, Distt Thoothukudi	2003-04	48.66	38.94	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		86	Theerthamalai, Distt. Dharmapuri	2003-04	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		87	Karaikudi, Chettinadu, Distt. Shivganga	2003-04	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		88	Devipattinam Navbhashnam in Ramnathpuram Distt.	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		89	Thirukurungudi, Distt. Tirunelveli	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		90	Thiruppudaimaurthur, Distt. Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu	2005-06	49.55	39.64	-	-	-
		91	Village Kombai, Distt. Theni, for Spice Circuit.	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2005-06	20.00	16.00
		92	Thadiyankudissai, Distt. Dindigul, for Spice Circuit	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2005-06	20.00	16.00
24.	Tripura	93	Kamlasagar, Distt. West Tripura	2002-03	42.92	13.48	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		94	Jampui Hills, Distt. North Tripura	2003-04	50.00	15.00	-	-	-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		95	Village Joychandrapur, Distt. South Tripura	2005-06	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
25.	Uttaranchal	96	Jageshwar, Distt. Almora	2002-03	50.00	50.00	2005-06	20.00	16.00
		97	Agora Village (Dodital) Uttar Kashi Distt.	2005-06	48.50	38.80	-	-	-
		98	Mottad and its satellite station	2005-06	48.05	38.44	-	-	-
		99	Chekhoni Bora, Distt. Champawat.	2005-06	44.20	35.28	-	-	-
		100	Koti, Indroli	2005-06	47.10	37.68	-	-	-
		101	Mana, Distt. Chamoli	2005-06	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		102	Village Sari, Distt. Rudraprayag	2005-06	45.14	36.00	-	-	-
		103	Village Adi Kailash, Distt. Nainital	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2006-07	20.00	16.00
		104	Padmapuri, Distt. Nainital	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2006-07	20.00	16.00
		105	Nanakmatta, Distt. U.S. Nagar	2006-07	48.82	39.00	2006-07	20.00	16.00
		106	Tryuginarayan	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2006-07	20.00	16.00
26.	Uttar Pradesh	107	Bhitar Gram, Distt. Rae Bareli.	2005-06	49.52	39.62	-	-	-
		108	Mukhrai, Distt. Mathura	2005-06	45.89	36.00	-	-	-
		109	Bhaguwal, Distt. Saharanpur	-	-	-	2004-05	20.00	16.00
27.	West Bengal	110	Ballabhpur Danga, Distt. Birbhum	2003-04	50.00	15.00	2004-05	20.00	20.00
		111	Sonada Village, Distt. Darjeeling	2004-05	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		112	Mukutmonipur, Distt. Bankura	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2004-05	20.00	16.00
		113	Village Antpur, Distt. Hoogly	2006-07	50.00	40.00	-	-	-
		114	Village Kamarpukur	2006-07	50.00	40.00	2007-08	18.30	14.64

[English]

Railway Tracks for Superfast Trains

2463. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the existing tracks are not suitable for super fast trains;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to make the tracks compatible with the superfast trains; and

(c) the details of the steps taken to ensure safety of passengers while maintaining the permissible speed limit of these trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The tracks are suitable for running of all trains including super fast trains at sanctioned sectional speed.

(c) Track are maintained regularly for permitted speeds to ensure safety of passengers, if required suitable speed restrictions are imposed.

Railways Projects in Tamil Nadu

2464. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the budgetary allocation made for various railway projects in Tamil Nadu during last three years;

(b) the project-wise and year-wise details thereof against the estimated cost of each project; and

(c) the progress of each project, as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A statement is attached.

Statement

Detail areas under :

S.No.	Project	Anticipated cost	Outlay during last three years (Rs. in crore)			Status
			2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
New Line						
1	Karur-Salem (85 Kms)	229.88	5	2	5	Earthwork and bridge works have been taken up.
2	Bangalore-Satyamangalam (260 Kms)	901.62	0.10	0.01	0.01	Final location survey in Kamataka area has been completed. Further survey is held up as Tamil Nadu Forest Department is not permitting the survey through Reserve Forest Area. Matter is sub-judice.
3	Tindivanam-Gingee-Tiruvannamalai (70 Kms)	125	-	-	0.01	Preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work.
4	Tindivanam-Nagari (179.2 Kms.)	456	-	-	0.01	Preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work.
Total		1712.5	5.10	2.01	5.03	
Gauge Conversion						
1	Madurai-Rameshwaram (161 kms)	246.45	25	25	20	Entire converted section has been commissioned
2	Tiruchchirappalli-Manamadurai (150 kms)	199.93	20	50	50.02	Work on Tiruchchirappalli-Karaikudi section has been completed and the converted section has been commissioned. Work on Karaikudi-Manamadurai section is targeted for completion during 2007-08.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Quilon-Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur & Tenkasi-Virudhunagar (357 kms)	697.13	21.06	31	50.69	Work on Virudhunagar- Tenkasi-Sengottai section has been completed and Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur section is targeted for completion during 2007-08.
4	Tiruchchirappalli-Nagore-Karaikal (156 kms) Nagappattinam-Velankanni and Tiruturaipundi (43 Kms)	205.79	11	4.79	9	Work on Tiruchchirappalli-Thanjavur-Tiruvarur section has been completed and Tiruvarur-Nagore section is targeted for completion during 2007-08.
5	Villupuram-Katpadi (161 Kms)	232.81	3	10	15	Earthwork, bridge works, ballast collection and construction of station building have been taken up. Work on Vellore-Tiruvannamalai section is targeted for completion during 2007-08.
6	Thanjavur-Villupuram (192 kms)	356.90	15	50.01	100	Work on Thanjavur-Mayiladuturai section has been completed and Mayiladuturai-Villupuram section is targeted for completion during 2007-08.
7	Cuddalore-Salem via Vridhachalam (191 km)	517.48	25	85	80	Work on the entire project has been completed.
8	Manamadurai-Virudhunagar (66.55 Kms)	97.24	-	-	1	Preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work.
9	Dindigul-Pollachi-Palghat & Pollachi-Coimbatore (224.88 Kms)	343.17	-	-	1	Preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work
10	Katpadi-Pakala-Tirupati (104 Kms)	198.9	11.89	10	25	Gauge conversion work of this project has been completed.
11	Mayiladuturai-Tiruvarur-Karaikudi & Tiruturaipundi-Agastiyampalli (224 Kms)	404.19	-	-	-	Preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work.
Total		33208.99	131.95	265.8	351.71	

Doubling

1	Irugur-Coimbatore (17.70 Kms)	38.66	2	1	5	Work on Up line between Coimbatore-Coimbatore North has been completed. Earthwork, bridge works and ballast collection have been taken up on balance portion.
2	Madurai-Dindigul (82.05 Kms.)	128.56	5.28	17.21	30	This work is targeted for completion during 2007-08

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Chennai Beach-Korukkupet 3rd line (4.1 Kms)	55.23	5	10	0.50	This project is taken back from Rail Vikas Nigam Limited and preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work.
4	Chennai Beach-Attipattu 4th line (22.1 Kms)	50.23	5	10	0.50	This project is taken back from Rail Vikas Nigam Limited and preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work.
5	Chengalpattu- Villupuram (103 Kms)	247	-	-	0.01	Preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work.
6	Pattabiram-Tiruvallur 4th line (15.06 Kms) & Tiruvallur - Arakkonam 3rd line (26.83 Kms)	74.78	6	15.80	28.50	Work on Pattabiram- Tiruvallur 4th line has been completed and work on Tiruvallur Arakkonam 3rd line is targeted for completion during 2007-08.
Total		594.46	23.28	54.01	64.51	

Metropolitan Transport Project

1	Chennai Beach-Thirumalai MRTS (Phase-I)	268.87	1.00	1.00	1.00	Main line work has been completed.
2	Thirumalai-Vellacherry MRTS (Phase-II)	733.38	10.00	3.39	5.56	Main line work has been completed.
3	Chennai Beach-Tambaram-Chengalpattu Gauge Conversion.	455.24	25.00	3.03	12.00	Main line work has been completed.
4	Chennai (MRTS)-Extension from Vellacherry to St. Thomas Mount	415.59	-	-	1.00	Preliminary arrangements are being made to take up the work
Total		1873.08	36.00	7.42	19.56	

Railway Electrification

1	Erode-Palghat-Ernakulam	219.09	-	-	1	This project is already completed in March, 2000. Funds are allotted for financial adjustments.
2	Villupuram-Tiruchchirappalli	96.66	-	-	5	This project is included in the Budget 2006-07 and the work has been taken up.
3	Tiruchchirappalli-Madurai	86.33	-	-	-	This project is included in the Budget 2007-08 with an outlay of Rs. 0.25 crore.
4	Tambaram-Villupuram and Chengalpattu-Arakkonam	41.36	2.71	1.00	1.00	Work completed except Takkolam-Arakkonam which is being done by Southern Railway with diversion work.
Total		443.44	2.71	1.00	7.00	

Agreement between FACT and Syrian Firm

2465. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kerala based Public Sector Unit, Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Limited (FACT) is

negotiating with Syria based Adi Group to set up an Ammonia-Urea project in Egypt;

(b) if so, whether any memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been signed by the FACT with the Syrian Firm;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether this new venture would help in the revitalization of FACT itself; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) FACT had invited expression of interest from potential investors for Joint Venture projects as part of its expansion / diversification plans. In response to the advertisement, M/s Adi, Establishment, Syria, evinced interest in setting up a new Ammonia / Urea Complex in Egypt as a Joint Venture of FACT and Adi Establishment. A Memorandum of Intent stating the basic intentions and split of responsibilities between FACT and Adi Establishment has been signed on 09.08.2006. M/s Adi Establishment has been assuring FACT of assured supply of gas and price. However, since no commitment of gas supply and pricing has been provided by the company so far, the proposal has not progressed further.

Setting up of Steel Plants by Foreign Companies

2466. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:

SHRI JUAL ORAM:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether some foreign steel companies are either setting up or expressing their keenness to set up steel plants in Orissa and other States;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals came to the notice of the Government; and

(c) the norms prescribed by the Government for foreign companies to set up steel plants in States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per available information M/s. Mittal Steel Company N.V. Netherlands and M/s. Pohang Steel Company (POSCO) of South Korea have signed Memoranda of Understanding with State Governments of Jharkhand and Orissa respectively showing interest to set up Integrated Steel Plants. The details of the proposals is as under: -

S. No.	Name of the company	MoU signed with the State	Capacity	Proposed investment (In crores)
1	M/s. Pohang Steel Company (POSCO), South Korea	Orissa	12 MTPA	Rs. 51,000.00
2	M/s. Mittal Steel Company N.V. Netherlands	Orissa	12 MTPA	Rs. 40,000.00
3	M/s. Mittal Steel Company N.V. Netherlands	Jharkhand	12 MTPA	Rs. 40,000.00

(c) As per the extant policy Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) upto 100% under the automatic route is allowed for setting up steel unit in India.

Preservation of Palm Leaf Manuscripts

2467. SHRI B. MAHTAB:

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether rare palm leaf manuscripts are being preserved and protected scientifically by the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount of funds allocated for the purpose, during last three years, State-wise;

(d) whether Micro-Filming of those manuscripts are being done;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the time by which it is likely to be completed;

(g) the details of manuscripts and catalogues unearthed to preserve India's heritage; and

(h) the manner in which the National Mission for Manuscripts helps in spreading awareness and encourage use of manuscripts and catalogues for use of educational purposes?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Rare palm leaf manuscripts are preserved and protected scientifically under the National Mission for Manuscripts, through the network of 33 Manuscript Conservation Centres and their partner centres, spread all over the country.

(c) Under the Mission no state-wise allocation of funds are made. However, the details of the amount spent under the Mission during the last three years are as under:

Year	Allocation (In Rs. Crore)
2004-05	3.47
2005-06	7.90
2006-07	9.43

(d) to (f) Under the National Mission for Manuscripts, digitization of important manuscripts in the country are taken up to prepare a national database of important manuscripts. This is an ongoing process and, therefore, no deadline can be fixed. However, since the launch of the Mission in 2003, more than 15,000 manuscripts containing 2.2 million manuscript pages have already been digitized.

(g) A large number of new manuscripts, running into thousands, have been unearthed under the Mission.

(h) The National Mission for Manuscripts helps in spreading awareness about the manuscript heritage of India through awareness campaigns, workshops, National surveys, exhibitions, public lectures and publication of books on manuscripts.

Subsidy Norms for Crude Oil

2468. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of subsidy norms with regard to crude oil in the country;

(b) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) sought to review the subsidy norms;

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

(d) the details of companies which are sharing subsidy discount?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) Notwithstanding the steep rise in international prices of sensitive petroleum products, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have been modulating the price increase in petrol & diesel, besides maintaining the prices of subsidized products like domestic LPG & PDS Kerosene, in consultation with the Government. In consequence, they have suffered heavy under-recoveries on sale of these products. Therefore, Government, in June 2004, elucidated the principles which would govern its policy of containing the burden of increase in international prices on consumers of these sensitive petroleum products. It was decided that the burden should be equitably shared by consumers, the Government and the oil companies. Accordingly, from 2003-04 onwards, Government introduced the upstream subsidy sharing mechanism which has been continued during 2004-07 and first quarter of 2007-08.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has sought review of the subsidy norms due to adverse impact of rupee appreciation on ONGC revenue & concerns of various stakeholders for working out a suitable mechanism by which ONGC is able to retain a reasonable

portion of the increase in crude price for funding its rising costs.

(d) The details of amounts contributed by upstream companies through discounts on crude oil and their distribution amongst oil marketing companies during the first quarter of 2007-08 are as under:

(Rs. Crore)	
April-June' 07	
Upstream oil companies	
ONGC	3649
GAIL	272
OIL	383
Total	4304
Oil marketing companies	
IOC (including IBP)	2440
HPCL	901
BPCL	963
Total	4304

PM'S Reconstruction Plan for J&K

2469. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the haphazard planning and mis-handling of tourism oriented projects by the State Government have adversely affected the PM's reconstruction plan for Jammu and Kashmir, as appeared in the 'Hindustan Times' dated July 25, 2007;

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

(c) whether the Advisor, Ministry of Tourism after visiting the State has submitted any report to the Government in this regard;

(d) if so, the findings of report; and

(e) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) The promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/UT Administrations for tourism related projects under the following Schemes:

- (i) Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations & Circuits
- (ii) Large Revenue Generating Projects

(iii) Fairs/Festivals/Events

(iv) Information Technology

There is also a special package for tourism development in J&K.

The Government of Jammu & Kashmir has informed that the following projects of 8th & 9th Five Year Plan are incomplete:

Sl.No.	Year of sanction	Name of the Project	Amount released (Rs. in Lakh)
1.	1993-94	Tourist Complex at Achimthang, Leh	14.00
2.	1994-95	Tourist Complex at Lamayuru	13.70
3	2000-01	Tourist Reception Centre at Chandanbari, Pahalgam	36.00

During 10th Five year Plan Rs. 14020.86 lakh has been sanctioned as Central Financial Assistance (CFA) for J&K by Ministry of Tourism. The implementation of the projects sanctioned is the responsibility of the State Government concerned. However, Ministry of Tourism monitors the progress of the projects from time to time.

[Translation]

Basic Amenities in Local and EMU Trains

2470. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware that the passengers experience great difficulties in the absence of toilet and other facilities in running local and EMU trains;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to make arrangements for toilets and provide other facilities in these trains; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Considering short duration journeys by local/EMU trains and high frequency of these services, toilet facility is not provided in these trains to ensure their fast turn around without the need for filling water and cleaning etc. at terminals. The passengers can however, utilize the public conveniences available at platforms/stations.

(c) and (d) In view of the position explained above, Railways permit running trains without toilets for 160 Kms or 4 hours. No change is proposed in this policy. However other passenger amenities such as seats, lights, fans, grab rails/handle, light luggage rack etc. are provided in these trains.

Manhandling of VIPs in Punjab Mail

2471. SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1270 on December 1, 2005 regarding 'Manhandling of VIPs in Punjab Mail' and state:

(a) the extent of damage to property suffered by the Railways in the said incident;

(b) the number of persons injured in the said incident;

(c) whether any arrests have been made in this case till date; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which arrests are likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) One case has been reported in the year 2005 at Jhansi Division of North Central Railway in which the extent of damage to property suffered by the Railway was Rs.74,200/-.

(b) 7 persons were injured in the said incident.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Government Railway Police / Jhansi registered a case vide Crime No. 93 / 05 under section 147 / 148 / 149 / 307 / 336 / 427 Indian Penal Code (IPC) and 07 Criminal Law amendment 157 & 152 of the Railways Act on 16.09.2005 against unknown person. After investigation, Final Report vide No. 16 has been submitted by Government Railway Police / Jhansi in Railway Court on 11.03.2006.

[English]

Allocation of Funds to ASI

2472. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) sent a proposal to Planning Commission asking for an additional fund apart from its annual allocation for development of protected monuments in connection with Commonwealth Games;

(b) if so, the Planning Commission has agreed to grant the additional fund;

(c) the details of funds utilized;

(d) whether the ASI is short - staffed; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) In addition to the regular budget provided to the Archaeological Survey of

India, an additional budget provision of Rs. 25.73 crores has been sought to undertake specific development activities at 46 centrally protected monuments in Delhi for completion prior to holding of Commonwealth Games. These activities include structural repair, chemical preservation, providing tourist amenities, environmental development and illumination of monuments. Planning Commission has advised to take up works for 2007-08 from the budget already provided and to place its demand before the Planning Commission for 2008-09 and 2009-10.

(d) and (e) Archaeological Survey of India maintains 3667 centrally protected monuments with the existing strength of 502 conservation staff under different cadres. Appropriate measures are taken to manage the sites by augmenting existing strength on the basis of actual requirement at each site / monuments and to ensure that work identified under Annual Programme does not suffer.

Upgradation and Modernization of Plastic Technology Institute

2473. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to upgrade and modernise the existing plastic technology institutes in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET), an autonomous organisation under the administrative control of the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, is implementing a project for upgrading the skills and technology in services offered by the Institute in order to meet the demand for qualified personnel and technical services in the plastics industry and for strengthening of capacities in thrust areas at different Centres of CIPET, with the financial assistance of US \$ 12.30 million from Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) as soft Loan, through the Government of India.

[Translation]

Development of Historical Sites in Jharkhand

2474. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal seeking development of world famous sites in Jharkhand has been received;

(b) if so, the details of the centrally protected monuments, name-wise and location-wise in the State;

(c) the location-wise total funds spent in this regard during the last three years; and

(d) the details of the work done site-wise, till date?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The details of centrally protected monuments name-wise and location-wise in the state of Jharkhand are given in the enclosed statement-I.

On a request from the State Government of Jharkhand, Archaeological Survey of India has agreed to take up development of 6 State protected monuments as deposit works and the State Government has deposited Rs. 155.00 lakhs. Conservation works at two monuments viz., Palamu fort at Barwadih and Maluti Temples at Dumka are in progress.

(c) and (d) The details of funds spent during the last three years on the conservation of centrally protected monuments site-wise in the State of Jharkhand and work done are given in the enclosed statement-II.

Statement-I

The details of centrally protected monuments name-wise and location-wise.

Sl. No.	Name of Monument / Site	Location	District
1	Asura Sites	Hansa	Ranchi
2	Asura Sites	Khunti Tola	Ranchi
3	Ancient Stone Temple with a small Sivalinga Inside	Khokpetta	Ranchi
4	Asura Sites	Khunti Tola	Ranchi
5	Asura Sites	Kunjla	Ranchi
6	Asura Sites	Saridkel	Ranchi
7	Ashoka inscription on the Chandan Shahid - hill	Ashikpur	Ranchi
8	Ruins of Baradari buildings with probable underground cells and passage	Arazi Mukimpur	Santhal Parganas
9	Jami Masjid	Hadaif	Santhal Parganas
10	1. Benisagar tank 2. Old remains of temple and sculptures on the south east bank of the above tank	Benisagar	Singhbhum
11	Site of an old fort	Ruam	Singhbhum
12	Ancient Mound	Itagarh	Singhbhum

Statement-II

The details of funds spent on the conservation of centrally protected monuments and work done site-wise during the last three years in Jharkhand

Sl.No.	Name of the monuments	Expenditure			Details of work done
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
1	Ancient Shiva Temple Khakparta	5,87,565	15,86,552	1,90,000	Providing compound wall, pathways, platform around the temple, providing shed and toilet block.
2.	Ancient Tank and Structures at Banisagar	28,33,825	31,25,453	31,53,232	Providing compound wall, scientific clearance of tank, construction of store, culvert and C.A's quarter.
3.	Jami Mosque and Baradwari at Hadaf	35,98,578	38,34,525	22,25,798	Repairs to the ancient structure, providing retaining wall around the site at baradari, pathways within site and constructions of toilet block.

Transportation of Goods

2475. PROF. PREM KUMAR DHUMAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a demand for unloading of new Himachal Pradesh bound goods like coal and manure etc. to be unloaded at Rai Mahatpur or Una Railway stations in Himachal Pradesh instead of Nangal and Kiratpur railway stations in Punjab; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A representation was received in 2003 (4 years back) for Rai Mahatpur station. Rai Mahatpur station is located on Nangaldam-Una Himachal section and close vicinity of Kiratpur Sahib station. Kiratpur Sahib station has adequate infrastructure to handle freight traffic of coal and fertilizer. Rai Mahatpur station is purely a halt station for passengers and is not capable to handle any freight traffic. Since Kiratpur Sahib is capable to handle existing level of traffic, it may not be desirable to make huge investment for creating facilities to handle coal and fertilizer traffic at Rai Mahatpur for the present.

[English]

Gas Cracker Project at Lepekkata (Assam)

2476. SHRI M. K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has since cleared the Rs. 5460 crore gas cracker project at Lepekkata (Assam) as joint venture between the Gas Authority of India Ltd., Numaligarh Refinery Ltd. and the Assam Industrial Development Corporation;

(b) if so, the details of the project, its cost and how the cost and produce thereof shall be shared; and

(c) the steps since taken and being taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Government has approved implementation of Assam Gas Cracker Project at a project cost of Rs.5460.61 crores. For implementation of the project, a Joint Venture Company, with Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) as the main promoter with equity participation of 70% and Oil India Ltd. (OIL), Numaligarh Refinery Ltd. (NRL) and Assam Industrial Development Corporation (Government of Assam) holding 10% equity each, has been incorporated on 8.01.2007 as 'Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited' (BCPL).

Government will provide capital subsidy of Rs.2138 crores for the project, the remaining project cost will be borne by BCPL. The project is envisaged to produce 2,20,000 tonnes per annum (TPA) of High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) Linear Low Density Polyethylene (LLDPE) and 60,000 TPA of Polypropylene (PP). Essentially, polymers produced from the plant would be consumed by downstream plastic processing Industries in the North Eastern states. After meeting the demand of north eastern states, the balance products would be sent to other parts of India or would be exported to the neighboring countries, if any surplus is available. Project is scheduled to be completed within 60 months from zero date (Financial closure).

(c) Various pre-project activities have been initiated. Project Offices have been opened at Guwahati and Dibrugarh. Government of Assam has transferred 890 acres of land to BPCL. OIDB has offered term loan of Rs.327 crores with

certain conditions. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is being inducted.

**Compensation to Land Losers of
Hazarwadi (Sangli)**

2477. SHRI PRATIK P. PATIL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all the land losers of Hazarwadi (Sangli) have been provided jobs as promised by the Hindustan Petroleum when their lands were acquired for their projects;
- (b) the number of land losers given jobs so far;
- (c) the number of land losers still not given jobs; and
- (d) the period by which all of them will be given job?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has reported that the Corporation had acquired land at Hazarwadi in 1989 at the compensation rates determined by the Special Land Acquisition Officer, Sangli. As there was no additional manpower requirement for LPG plant at Hazarwadi and on the basis of an understanding between the parties at a meeting with the District Collector in 1997, the Corporation, as a goodwill gesture, had agreed to provide jobs to 6 project affected persons (PAPs) meeting the recruitment criteria and they have been provided jobs.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

**Tourism Schemes for Jammu
and Kashmir**

2478. SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK:
SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of schemes for promotion of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) the details of funds allocated for development of tourism in the State during the last three years;

(c) whether the State Government has failed to make complete utilization of the said funds; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to promote tourism in Jammu and Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, GOI, extends financial assistance to the State Government/UT Administration for tourism related projects under the following Schemes:

- (i) Product/Infrastructure Development for destination and circuit
- (ii) Large Revenue Generating projects
- (iii) Fairs/Festivals/Events
- (iv) Information Technology

There is also a special package for tourism development in J&K.

(b) and (c) The details of the funds allocated for development of tourism in the state during the last three years are given in the enclosed statement.

The implementation of the projects sanctioned is the responsibility of the State Government concerned. However, Ministry of Tourism monitors the progress of projects from time to time. Funds are released in installments. Only after completion of projects and submission of Utilisation Certificate (UC)/Completion Certificate (CC) /Management Agreement (MA), is the final installment of Central Financial Assistance (CFA) released to the State Government.

(d) The promotion of tourism to Jammu and Kashmir is carried out in overseas and domestic markets by distribution of brochures, CDs, films and other publicity material and through the India tourism offices in the country and abroad.

Statement

Central Financial Assistance to J&K for Development of Tourism in Last Three Years

S.No.	Name of the Project	Amount (Rs. in Lakh)	
		Sanctioned	Released
1	2	3	4
Year 2004-05			
1.	Tourist Circuit at Lavdora Qazigund-Assar-I-Sharief Hazratbal-Hassan Villa	800.00	640.00
	Total	800.00	640.00
Year 2005-06			
1.	Development of Kongdoor as International Ski Destination	435.00	348.00

1	2	3	4
2.	Development of Lakhanpur-Basholi-Bani-Sarthal as Tourist Circuit	799.69	639.00
3.	Establishment of Temporary Camps/other facilities at Shri Amarnath Ji	700.00	700.00
4.	Integrated Development of Jammu-Rajouri-Poonch as Tourist Circuit	688.00	560.00
5.	Development Schemes of Shiv Khori, Udhampur	411.51	329.00
6.	Upgradation of Golf Course at Gulmarg	200.00	160.00
7.	Infrastructure Facilities Ancilliary to the proposed Passenger Ropeway at Patnitop	461.00	369.00
8.	Integrated Circuit Development of Bhaderwah-Kishtwar-Sinthan-Srinagar.	691.13	552.90
9.	Development of Infrastructure-Tourist Reception Centre, Construction of Sonamarg Club, Construction of Yatri Niwas and Restoration of Eco Tourism at Sonamarg.	379.46	304.00
10.	Tourist Complex at Bachhan depot	491.00	393.00
11.	Development Plan on Chenab River Front at Akhnoor	142.00	113.60
12.	Remodelling of Golf Course at Pahalgam	432.00	345.00
13.	Development of Ladakh as a Destination	497.00	397.60
14.	Rural Tourism at Village Drung, Distt. Baramula	50.00	40.00
15.	Rural Tourism at Village Surinsar, Distt Jammu	50.00	40.00
16.	Rural Tourism at Village Gagangir, Distt. Srinagar	50.00	40.00
17.	Rural Tourism at Village Pahalgam, Distt. Anantnag	50.00	40.00
18.	Rural Tourism at village Jheri, Distt. Jammu	50.00	40.00
	Total	6577.79	5411.10
Year 2006-07			
1.	CFA for infrastruture Development of Adventure Sports at Sonamarg	190.91	152.73
2.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for Infrastructure Development in Kishtwar.	271.86	200.00
3.	Central Financial Assistance to State Govt. of J&K for creation of wayside amenity along Srinagar-Leh highway at Sonamarg by way of construction of family/children's park.	100	80
4.	Central Financial Assistance to state govt. of J&K for development of Mubarak Mandi as a tourism destination and socio-culture-cum heritage centre, Jammu as a destination	437.00	300.00
5.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for "Improvement to Existing Sanitation System" Pahalgam	495.75	200.00
6.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for Development of 'Betab Wadi Area at Pahalgam'	238.00	100.00
7.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for "Development of Botapathri Area, Gulmarg as Camping site' proposed for Gulmarg	202.61	160.00
8.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for Infrastructure Development in Bhaderwah	303.72	200.00
9.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for Infrastructure Development in Poonch	243.52	200.00
10.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for Infrastructure Development in Kokernag	287.82	200.00

1	2	3	4
11.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for procurement of Snow Clearance and Snow Grooming Machine for Gulmarg.	447.41	300.00
12.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for Infrastructure Development in Lakhanpur.	264.10	200.00
13.	CFA to the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir for Infrastructure Development in Rajouri	249.55	200.00
14.	Rural Tourism at village Akingaam, Distt. Anantnag	50.00	40.00
15.	Rural Tourism at village Vasaknag, Kund Valley	48.53	30.00
16.	Village Akingaam, Distt. Anantnag (CBSP)	14.26	11.40
17.	Development of Rural Tourism at Village Surinsar, Distt. Jammu (CBSP)	19.00	15.20
18.	Rural Tourism at village Dori Degair, Distt. Jammu	50.00	30.00
19.	Development of Rural Tourism at village Jhiri, Distt. Jammu under CBSP Scheme	19.00	15.20
Total		4032.13	2634.53

*[English]***Safety of Protected Monuments**

2479. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) norms prohibit any construction with 100 metres from any Protected Heritage Monuments;

(b) if so, whether any violation of this rule has been noticed by the Government;

(c) whether the Government is aware of the proposed construction of a bridge across Yamuna near Tuglakabad in Delhi;

(d) if so, the construction is in full adherence to the rules;

(e) whether opinion of the ASI has been sought in this regard;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the details of the measures taken for safety of the protected monuments?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has issued a notification declaring areas upto 100 metres from the protected limits of centrally protected monuments as a 'Prohibited' areas where all construction are prohibited. Further 200 metres beyond this limit has been declared as 'Regulated' area, where construction activities are not

permitted except in accordance with prescribed terms and conditions. Any person desirous of undertaking a construction project in prohibited/regulated area is required to approach ASI to obtain its 'no objection'. However, some instances of unauthorized constructions have been noticed.

(c) ASI has not been approached for issuance of 'no objection' for any such project/proposal.

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

(g) The Archaeological Survey of India undertakes regular conservation measures as per archaeological norms subject to the availability of resources. In addition to the regular watch and ward staff, private security guards, State Police guards and CISF have also been provided for safety and security of the selected monuments. Efforts have also been made to fence the protected areas of the monuments in a phased manner.

*[Translation]***Manufacture of Passenger Coaches**

2480. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country is self-reliant in manufacturing of passenger coaches;

(b) if so, the factory-wise/year-wise details of manufacturing of various types of passenger coaches in the last three years including the current year;

(c) whether there is any gap between demand and supply of passenger bogeys at present; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) The factory-wise/year-wise details of manufacturing of various types of passenger coaches in the last three years including the current year are as under:

Type	Year	ICF	RCF	BEML	Jessops
Electrical Multiple Unit (EMU)	2004-05	112			33
	2005-06	155			21
	2006-07	170		36	45
	2007-08*	30			
Mainline Electrical Multiple Unit (MEMU)	2004-05		88		
	2005-06		88		
	2006-07		64		
	2007-08*		7		
Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU)	2004-05	36			
	2005-06	27			
	2006-07	57			
	2007-08*				
Broad Gauge (General Service)	2004-05	971	1057	240	
	2005-06	993	1155	225	
	2006-07	1024	1255	230	
	2007-08*	296	398	115	
Metre Gauge (General Service)	2004-05**		56		
	2005-06**		20		

* Till July 2007.

** Metre Gauge coaching stock is not being manufactured further, after 2005-06, due to reduced requirements on account of gauge conversion.

(c) No, Sir. The present availability of coaches is sufficient to meet the scheduled requirement.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Jaisalmer Fort

2481. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Monument Fund has contributed Rs.599 lakh for work on the Jaisalmer Fort;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether foreign funds have also been made available for restoration and maintenance of other prominent Indian historical sites; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Under a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding entered into among National Culture Fund (NCF), Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and World Monument Fund (WMF) on 13 August 2003, for conservation works at Jaisalmer Fort, the following contributions have been made:-

ASI : Rs. 400 lakhs

WMF : US \$ 4,39,000

(c) and (d) Foreign funds have also been made available for restoration and maintenance of monuments. The details are as at under:-

(i) Contribution of US \$ 650,000 for Humayun's Tomb Project under NCF. The contributors include Indo-British

Fiftieth Anniversary Trust, Oberoi Group of Hotels and Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

- (ii) A soft loan for 85% of cost (estimated cost Yen 4401 million) for Ajanta and Ellora Conservation and Tourism Development Project, (Phase I) from Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC).
- (iii) A soft loan of Yen 901 million from JBIC for Ajanta and Ellora Conservation and Tourism Development Project (Phase II).

Flight Operations to Salem Airport

2482. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Tamil Nadu has requested the Union Government for resumption of flight operations to Salem Airport with connectivity to Bangalore, Mumbai and other major destinations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the air services are likely to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Request has been received from Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in this regard.

(c) In Indian Airlines estimate, the traffic potential to/ from Salem and Chennai/Bangalore/Mumbai/other major destinations in the country is not sufficient to support commercially viable operations with jet type of aircraft available in Indian Airlines' fleet. The smaller aircraft available with Indian Airlines/Alliance Air are deployed to capacity on other scheduled routes and no spare capacity is available. As such at present Indian Airlines/ Alliance Air is not in a position to consider any service to/ from Salem.

Surcharge on Steel and Cement

2483. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have waived the surcharge on carriage of steel and cement;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Railways to improve its revenue through carriage of goods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Sir, The surcharges such as Busy Season Surcharge, Supplementary surcharge for Mini Rake and Two point rakes are not applicable in Lean Season which extends from July to September in the current

year. Ministry of Railways has withdrawn 10 percent Supplementary surcharge on commodities having classification above Class 130 when transported in Mini- rakes and Two Point Rakes w.e.f 20.5.2007 till further advice.

(c) Sir, Ministry of Railways have launched various schemes like Incentive Scheme for Incremental Traffic, Long Term Special Incentive Scheme, Incentive Scheme for Traditional Empty Flow Direction, Incentive Scheme for freight Forwarders, Incentive Scheme for Two Leg Traffic, Incentive Scheme for Loading Bagged Consignments in BOXN, to improve its revenue through carriage of goods.

Steam Conversion Project

2484. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agreement has been signed by Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) with Apollo Tyres for steam conversion project based on the 'waste heat recovery system' from GAIL's gas turbines;

(b) if so, the salient features of the agreement alongwith the total cost of the project; and

(c) the time by which this project will become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Steam Conversion Agreement between GAIL (India) Limited and Apollo Tyres has been signed on 10th July, 2007. The steam will be generated by utilization of waste heat from Gas turbine exhaust from GAIL's Vaghodia Compressor Station (near Vadadora, Gujarat) and will be supplied through pipeline to Apollo Tyres which is located near GAIL's plant.

Salient features of the Steam Conversion Agreement are as follows:-

- Duration of Agreement : 15 years
- Annual Contracted Quantity : 4,36,800 MT (1248 MT/day)
- Target date (Commercial Supply) : 27-06-2009
- GAIL's conversion of steam is contingent upon Apollo's delivering requisite quantity of raw water (without charges) to GAIL through pipeline.
- Project cost : Rs. 36.32 crores

(c) The project will become operational by 27-6-09 subject to the following conditions:-

- (i) Approval of the Agreement by Management of GAIL and Apollo Tyres Limited; and

- (ii) Approvals, award of EPC contracts, statutory clearances, if any, to perform the obligations under the Agreement.

[Translation]

Gauge Conversion in Maharashtra

2485. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the gauge conversion in Maharashtra region is likely to substantially reduce the distance between the northern and southern areas;

(b) if so, the works being undertaken under gauge conversion in the Maharashtra region;

(c) whether the pace of gauge conversion is very slow in Maharashtra region; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Gauge conversion projects falling fully/partly in Maharashtra are Akola-Purna, Chhindwara-Nagpur, Jabalpur-Gondia including Balaghat-Katangi, Miraj-Latur and Sholapur (Hotgi)-Gadag. Gondia-Balaghat (42 km.), Latur-Osmanabad (113 km.) & Kurduwadi-Pandharpur (52 km.), Sholapur-Bagalkot (208 km.) sections have been completed and Akola-Purna (210 km.), Osmanabad-Kurduwadi (74 km.) and Bagalkot-Gadag (93 km.) are targeted for completion during 2007-08. The works are being progressed as per availability of resources.

Intercity between Chhapra and Gorakhpur

2486. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have not started intercity train service between Chhapra and Gorakhpur despite heavy demand in this regard;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Railways to start this intercity train service at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. At present, there are 20 pairs of train services connecting Chhapra and Gorakhpur which are meeting the present passenger demand on this sector.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Joint Venture in MRO Facilities

2487. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines has entered into a Joint Venture (JV) with Jupiter Aviation and Logistics to set up an air frame maintenance repair and overhaul (MRO) facility in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the development made so far in this regard; and

(c) the terms and conditions made by them under the JV programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) No agreement has been entered into between Indian Airlines and Jupiter Aviation for Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul Joint Venture (MRO-JV). However, Term Sheet has been executed on 10.5.2007 between Indian Airlines and Jupiter Aviation and Logistics Pvt. Ltd., which has been endorsed by Airbus Industries with a commitment to provide full support to the proposed joint venture with a view to meeting the Airbus MRO obligation arising out of the purchase of 43 aircraft by Indian Airlines. The Term Sheet is intended to serve only as a basis for discussion on major business terms that would apply to the prospective JV. As per the term sheet, execution of the JV is subject to the approvals of the Board of Directors of Indian Airlines Ltd. and of the Government.

COCO Petrol Pumps by Bharat Petroleum

2488. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Company Owned Company Operated (COCO) petrol pumps being run by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited without having any lease right in favour of the Corporation;

(b) the details of the circumstances responsible for the development of such COCOs in the country;

(c) whether there COCOs are still being operated as adhoc dealership by the land owners who are the owners of another dealership in the area;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government would conducted detailed enquiry regarding misuse and wastage of PSUs funds; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) has reported that only one Company-Owned-Company-Operated (COCO) Retail Outlet (RO) at Nanakpur, District Kapurthala, Punjab is being operated without having any lease right in favour of the Corporation.

(b) In response to an advertisement for land, an offer was received by BPCL from the landlord for the above site. The site was found suitable by the nominated committee. Draft Lease Agreement was signed by the landlord and the RO was developed after obtaining necessary approvals. The RO was commissioned with one of the co-owners of the land as COCO operator. The lease was to be registered subsequently after completion of certain formalities. Subsequently, the landlord refused to register the lease and the matter is being pursued with the landlords by the Corporation.

(c) and (d) The COCO operator is the landlady who is one of the landlords of the above location and she is not a signatory to any dealership. However, her husband is an IBP dealer.

(e) and (f) BPCL has further reported that the RO was commissioned during the year 2003-2004 and the average sales have been around 43 KLs MS and 121 KLs HSD per month. Considering the high sales being achieved, there has been on wastage of funds.

Service of Cabin Crew Members

2489. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines has offer an option of retirement or a ground duty for its cabin crew members;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the response so far received for such offer and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the manner in which such move will affect the merger of IA and AI after the formation of new National Aviation Company of India Ltd.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A Scheme called 'Indian Airlines Cabin Crew Rehabilitation/ Rejuvenation Scheme - 2007' (The Scheme) has been introduced with the objective to provide for voluntary separation of Cabin Crew with ex-gratia and retirement benefits and also to provide for rehabilitation of Cabin Crew who are below the age of 50 years with alternate jobs and reduced ex-gratia. The Scheme is available to Cabin Crew, including executive Cabin Crew, who are medically fit and have completed 20 years of service or have attained the age of 41 years as on date of closure of the Scheme. The amount of ex-gratia payment depends on factors such as age of the employee, monthly emoluments, months of service left, etc.

(c) A few applications have so far been received at the Regional Level.

(d) This will have no direct bearing on the merger of Indian Airlines and Air India with the National Aviation Company of India Limited.

[Translation]

IAF Pilots in Civil Aviation

2490. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether assistance is being taken from the Indian Air Force (IAF) to meet the shortage of pilots in the field of Civil Aviation;

(b) if so, whether any agreement is being arrived at between the Civil Aviation Ministry and the IAF;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) The Indian Air Force (IAF) has agreed to allow officers in the age group of 54 years and above to join the national carrier. A memorandum of understanding has been signed between IAF and Air India on 05.04.2007. This is to facilitate a second career option to the retiring IAF officers and also reduce the requirement of expatriate pilots for the national career. The first batch of 13 IAF sponsored pilots has been sent for the required testing.

[English]

New Railway Line between Chitradurga-Tumkur

2491. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal for introduction of new railway line between Chitradurga and Tumkur with connectivity to Davangere alongwith National Highway No. 4;

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

(c) the time by which the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Based on the demands an updating survey for Tumkur-Davangere new line has been included in the budget 2007-08.

(c) No time frame is feasible to be given.

Data on Population of Other Backward Classes

2492 SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only 13 States had some data on the population of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the country;

(b) if so, the names of the States which have admitted that there is no OBC data with them; and

(c) the steps the Union Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The Ministry had initiated an exercise for preparing comprehensive data base relating to OBCs so as to improve quality of decision making. Only 13 State Governments/UT administrations have furnished available information.

State Governments of Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and UT administration of Lakshadweep & Minicoy Islands have indicated that they have no OBC population.

State Governments of Haryana, Rajasthan and Union Territory administrations of Chandigarh, Daman & Diu have informed that they have no such data.

[Translation]

Report of Task Force on Civic Amenities

2493. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to reply given to Unstarred Question No.4128 on May 03, 2007 regarding Task Force on civic needs of Minority Community and state:

(a) whether the Task Force constituted in this regard has submitted its report;

(b) If so, the details of recommendations made by the Task Force along with names of cities/towns identified in this regard;

(e)

(c) the follow-up action taken by the Government on the implementation of recommendations; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the Task Force is expected to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) Information is being collected and compiled. The report is expected to be finalized soon.

Contract Workers in ONGC

2494. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

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

(a) whether the contract workers face discrimination in Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC);

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the contract workers at Mehsana, Ahmedabad, Ankleshwar and Vadodara in Gujarat are paid less wages as compared to the workers in Assam and Mumbai;

(d) if so, the reasons therefore;

(e) the wages paid/being paid to the contract workers in Assam, Mumbai and Gujarat respectively; and

(f) the reasons why ONGC has not framed rules for paying equal wages to the contract workers working in different States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) ONGC does not engage contract workers for its activities. However, it awards certain categories of works/jobs to Contractor through job/service contracts with complete responsibilities.

(c) and (d) The workers are paid minimum wages as per rates notified by respective authorities/State Governments in accordance with Minimum Wages Act, 1948 which may vary from State to State.

Work-centre	Notified Minimum Wages			
	Unskilled	Semiskilled	Skilled	Highly skilled
1	2	3	4	5
Ahmedabad	Rs. 102.80*	Rs. 104.30*	Rs.131.38*	Rs.155.20*
Baroda, Surat Municipal Corporation area	Rs.102.80*	Rs. 104.30*	Rs. 124.02*	Rs.152.84*

1	2	3	4	5
Rest of Gujarat, including Mehsana	Rs.102.50*	Rs.103.80*	Rs.106.40*	Rs.124.02*
Assam	Rs.68.75	Rs.72.91	Rs.97.46	Rs. 114.37
Mumbai	Rs.159.60	Rs.161.60	Rs.163.60	Rs.165.60

*In addition, an amount of Rs.50/- per day per person is paid to all contract workers engaged by Contractors who are performing various jobs in the activities of ONGC, in the state of Gujarat, in terms of the order of the Dy. Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), Mumbai dated 15.2.2001.

(f) As ONGC is not the employer, the question of framing rules for paying equal wages to the contract workers working in different states is not in the ambit of ONGC.

Irregularities in ONGC

2495. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

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

(a) whether any vigilance action has been taken in the cases of irregularities in ONGC wherein the individual employees caused improper loss to the company;

(b) if so, the details of action taken during the last three years;

(c) the number of persons found guilty after the said action; and

(d) the number of persons against whom action has been taken so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Disciplinary action has been initiated against 217 officials.

(c) 136 officials have been found guilty after the disciplinary proceedings.

(d) Penalty has been imposed on 136 officials.

[English]

Coach Repairing Factory at Bareilly

2496. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the strength of employees has been steadily following at cranes manufacturing and coach repairing factory in Bareilly (North-Eastern Railway);

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard?

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

(b) Like in other railway units, due to change in product mix handled by the Railways, rationalization of activities and reduction in workload related to Metre Gauge rolling stock some reduction of staff (about 7.6 per cent during the last 5 years) has taken place in Izatnagar workshop in Bareilly District.

(c) Work costing Rs. 58 crore has been sanctioned for creation of Broad Gauge coach periodic overhauling facility at Izatnagar workshop to keep pace with changing rolling stock Periodic Overhauling requirement of the railway.

Ramgarh Gas Thermal Power Project

2497. SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that Rajasthan under State-II of Ramgarh Gas Thermal Power Project has installed Steam Turbine on the assurance for providing additional 0.2 MMSCMD gas for operating entire plant under combined cycle mode; and

(b) if so, the reasons that the additional gas required for operation both Turbines at full capacity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) and (b) The current allocation to M/s Ramgarh Thermal Power Project is 0.75 MMSCMD. The supply to Ramgarh Thermal Power Project (RGTPP) is made from Gamnewala fields of ONGC and Dandewala fields of OIL in Rajasthan. The entire gas presently available from these fields has been committed for supply to the Ramgarh Power Plant. The average supply to Ramgarh Thermal Power Project during 2006-07 was around 0.66 MMSCMD.

Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited (RRVUNL) has informed that overall gas requirement for running the two steam turbines is around 1.12 MMSCMD.

Oil India Limited (OIL) has informed an additional gas availability of 0.2 MMSCMD in Rajasthan from its Dandewala

gas fields. Negotiations on the commercial arrangements are going on between the parties RRVUNL, OIL and GAIL. Additional facility needs to be created for this additional 0.2 MMSCMD.

Reserve of Methane

2498. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large reserve of methane and other allied gases have been found underground alongwith river Damodar in Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any experimental plant is also running at Talgoria on the bank of Damodar; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) and (b) Yes Sir, the coal seams of major coalfields like Jharia, Bokaro and Karanpura, which lies along the Damodar river in Jharkhand, are expected to have good coalbed methane (CBM) potential. So far, Government has awarded 6 CBM blocks in the state of Jharkhand. The expected CBM reserves is about 424 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM) in these blocks. No commercial production has begun from these CBM blocks.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

[Translation]

Promotion of Food Processing Industries

2499. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has drawn up a policy to promote food processing industries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) and (b) A Vision Document 2015 on Food Processing Industries has been finalized by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI), which envisages trebling the size of the processed food sector by increasing the level of processing of perishables from 6% to 20%, value addition from 20% to 35% and share in global food trade from 1.5% to 3% by 2015. To realize the vision, an estimated investment of Rs.2.00 lakh crore will be required, out of which ten percent would be from Government and the remaining would come equally from financial institutions and private investors/FDI.

The Cabinet has approved the integrated strategy for promotion of agribusiness-Vision, Strategy and Action Plan for the Food Processing Sector, based on the recommendations made by the Group of Ministers (GOM) for growth of Food Processing Sector. The thrust areas identified for strategic intervention are as under:-

- (i) Establishment of Mega Food Parks in identified clusters with appropriate backward and forward linkages.
- (ii) Creation of integrated cold chains/value addition and preservation infrastructure.
- (iii) Modernization of abattoirs.
- (iv) Upgradation of hygienic and quality street food and food streets.
- (v) Establishment and Upgradation of quality control laboratories.
- (vi) Restructuring and strengthening of MFPI.
- (vii) Rationalizing tax structure.
- (viii) Incentivising FDI and private investment in infrastructure.
- (ix) Undertaking capacity building of small and unorganized sector.
- (x) Liberalized wine and beer policy.
- (xi) Launching a major promotional campaign for the food processing sector.
- (xii) Need for larger public investment for creation of critical rural infrastructure in food processing sector.

The strategic interventions required for the growth of the food processing sector have been included in the 11th Plan proposals.

[English]

High Profits on Drugs

2500. CH. MUNAWAR HASSAN:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pharmaceutical companies provide high profits to the retail traders for their drugs which result in the price escalation for the consumers;

(b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any survey in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the names of drugs and manufacturers;

(d) the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(e) whether the Pharma Association has also agreed not to charge any additional tax on Maximum Retail Price (MRP) and make it mandatory to print MRP inclusive of all taxes on the medicines in future;

(f) if so, whether the Government has received the report of task force constituted for this purpose;

(g) if so, the details of the recommendations made therein alongwith the action taken thereon; and

(h) the further steps the Government has taken so far to make available other essential drugs at cheaper rates to the consumers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) The 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control and their prices are fixed/revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO, 95. Under Para 19 of the DPCO, 95, 16% margin to retailer is allowed in respect of Scheduled formulations.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing/selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

It has been noticed by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) that some companies provide high trade margin to the retail traders in respect of branded-generics of some non-Scheduled formulations.

(e) Yes, Sir. Govt. vide notification SO No.946(E) dated 26.6.2006 has made it mandatory to print MRP inclusive of all taxes on the medicines manufactured after 2.10.2006 in respect of indigenous medicines and 1.3.2007 for imported medicines.

(f) No Task Force was constituted for this purpose. Printing of MRP has been made mandatory by amending the DPCO, 95.

(g) Does not arise in view of reply to (f), as above.

(h) Several steps have been contemplated in the Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 which is under consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

Cultural Agreements

2501. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ:

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has entered into cultural agreements with certain countries like China during the last one year and current year;

(b) if so, the details of the number of countries with which the Government has developed cultural exchange programmes;

(c) whether there is also proposal to host performance, exhibitions and cultural festivals to improve the cultural ties between the countries;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the funds provided/proposed to be provided to the Indian High Commissioner in those countries for making the said programme a success during the above period;

(f) whether the Government has assessed the success of these programmes;

(g) if so, the results thereof;

(h) whether irregularities have been noticed in usage of such funds; and

(i) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken against those found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) One Cultural Agreement has been signed with Ecuador in July, 2007 during the last one year.

(b) Cultural Exchange Programmes have been signed with eighteen (18) countries during April, 2006 to July, 2007.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Cultural Exchange Programmes between India and other countries include proposals for dance and music performances, exhibitions related to display of artifacts, art objects, antiques, paintings etc.; and cultural festivals including organization of festival of India in other countries and festival of other countries in India.

(e) Responsibility for funding various activities under the Cultural Exchange Programme are determined by the General & Financial Provisions of the Cultural Exchange Programme. Normally it is the sending party which meets the cost of the exhibitions and the host country meets the expenditure towards local hospitality including providing space etc. No funds are provided to the Indian High Commissions by Ministry of Culture for the purpose.

(f) and (g) Cultural Exchange Programmes play an important role in strengthening bilateral relations with different countries. In some cases these are periodically reviewed through the mechanism of Joint Working Group.

(h) and (i) in view of (e) above, do not arise.

[English]

Phaphamau Bridge

2502. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge sedimentation has developed upstream of Phaphamau bridge on the Allahabad side of river Ganga thus blocking the channel parallel to Teliarganj stretch;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the river channel has gone dangerously beyond the last edge of the Railway Guide Bund and in the event of heavy monsoons could cut all rail and road approaches from other parts of U.P. to Allahabad; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to avert any such mishapening?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The subject matter has been studied in depth by a high level expert Committee of Ganga Flood Control Commission (GFCC), Ministry of Water Resources. The Committee visited the site on 18.5.07. The expert Committee has submitted a report in May 2007. As per observations of the Committee:

1. River Ganga has been shifting towards Phaphamau side during last 3-4 years and formed meandering loop. Some erosion has taken place 1.5-2.0 Km. upstream of the bridge.
2. Guide Bund of Railway Bridge extends 700 m and boulders are stacked in a curve of 2900 feet length for dampening the flow of water at high stage.
3. The approach to Road Bridge and Railway Bridge is quite protected and stacked with boulders to dampen the flow.
4. The river is still 600-700m away from road beyond which Phaphamau town exists and it is unlikely that river erode the whole land in one flood season.
5. The team is of the opinion that there appears no immediate danger to guide bund, road and Railway Bridges and Phaphamau from the floods.
6. It is also observed that near Teliarganj area of town there is heavy deposition of silt. Dredging a wide

channel through silted reach is very expensive option and its success cannot be ascertained and hence it is not feasible option.

Construction of Dr. Ambedkar Bhawan at Ahmedabad

2503. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has rejected the proposal sent by the Government of Gujarat for construction of Dr. Ambedkar Bhawan at Ahmedabad at the cost of Rs. 10 crores;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government of Gujarat has sent the revised proposal for consideration in this regard; and

(d) if so, the present status of the revised proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The proposal was not covered under the scheme of Dr. Ambedkar Foundation.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However a request for reconsideration of the proposal was received which was not found feasible for approval.

[Translation]

Flight for Haj Pilgrimage

2504. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has started to undertake any survey to estimate the number of the Haj pilgrims going on the Haj pilgrimage every year from each State of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of the Haj pilgrims traveling by the Indian Airlines, Air India and other private Indian aircraft during the last three years and the current year along with the number of the pilgrims who propose to travel by them with State-wise details thereof;

(d) the details of the assistance and facilities being provided by the Government to the Haj pilgrims in the said period;

(e) whether the Government proposes to increase the services of the Indian Airlines and other airlines for the proposed Haj pilgrimage in November-December, 2007; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Like previous year, the Haj Committee of India has invited applications in respect of pilgrims desirous of going for Haj-2007 from each state. This year, the Haj Committee has received 1,90,000 applications through the State Haj Committees against the Government quota of 1,10,000. Apart from this, 47,000 pilgrims would be going for Haj 2007 through Private Tour Operators.

(c) The number of pilgrims Airlifted by Air India, Indian Airlines and Saudi Airline during the last three years are as under:

Year	Air India	Indian Airlines	Saudi Arabia	Total
2005	25479	6768	48775	81022
2006-I	36441	6368	57203	100012
2006-II	36631	12798	59443	108872

A statement showing the State-wise number of pilgrims who propose to travel in the current Haj-2007 is Statement.

(d) The Government provides subsidy in airfare, makes arrangements for the transportation of the Haj pilgrims going through the Haj Committee of India and facilitates provision of accommodation and other logistic support for them. In addition of this, the Haj Committee of India provides to the pilgrims information regarding confirmation of their seats, travel documents, transportation, accommodation, medical assistance, release of foreign exchange, information on embarkation points and departure dates etc. Air India allows baggage allowance of 45 kgs per pilgrim, 10 liter of Zam Zam water free of cost and excess baggage at a subsidized rate.

(e) and (f) Besides making arrangements for transportation of 1,10,000 pilgrims under the Government quota Air India operates additional scheduled service in case of need to facilitate the transportation of the balance pilgrims going for Haj through the Private Tour Operators.

Statement

The State-wise break-up of Pilgrims who propose to travel in the current Haj-2007

Name of the State/ Union Territory	No. of Applications received
1	2
Andaman and Nicobar	75
Andhra Pradesh	6820

1	2
Assam	2847
Bihar	2375
Jharkhand	1664
Chandigarh	45
Chhattisgarh	704
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	27
Daman and Diu	32
Delhi	1578
Goa	113
Gujarat	4480
Himachal Pradesh	108
Haryana	1188
Jammu & Kashmir	6630
Karnataka	6307
Kerala	7670
Lakshadweep	295
Madhya Pradesh	3751
Maharashtra	10016
Manipur	260
Orissa	593
Pondicherry	206
Punjab	584
Rajasthan	4676
Tamil Nadu	3384
Tripura	54
Uttar Pradesh	29989
Uttaranchal	965
West Bengal	5819

[English]

Emoluments to Workers of KRIBKHO Shyam Unit

2505. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Shahjahanpur plant of Oswal Chemicals & Fertilizers Limited along with the management

control of the plant has been taken over by the Krishak Bharati Cooperative Limited (KRIBHCO) and M/s Shyam Basic Infrastructure Limited;

(b) If so, whether the workers are deprived of pay and benefits prevalent in other KRIBHCO units;

(c) If so, the reasons therefore and the steps taken to bring parity in the wage pattern;

(d) whether the profitability of the said plant has been substantially reduced;

(e) if so, the reasons therefore; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government in this regard.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B. K. HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) KRIBHCO Shyam Fertilizers Limited (KSFL) has its own pay structure and benefits for the employees.

(c) KSFL has revised the pay structure of its employees w.e.f. 01.12.2006 for a period of five years. The settlement with workers for the pay revision has also been registered under U.P. Industrial Dispute Act.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Does not arise.

Endangered Historical Sites

2506. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some historical Indian sites are among the world's 100 most endangered sites threatened either by climatic change or unregulated development according to international panel;

(b) If so, the details of the historic sites so identified by the international panel;

(c) whether the Government has gone through the report of the international panel in this regard; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The World Monument Fund (WMF), a private organization with / headquarters in New York, USA, has published a list of 100 most endangered sites (2008) located across the world. Out of these, only one site, namely the ancient buildings of 19th century in Chettinad (Karaikudi District of Tamil Nadu) is located in India and this site is not a centrally protected monument.

WMF is not a UNESCO agency.

(c) and (d) The question does not arise.

[Translation]

Projects Undertaken Abroad by RITES

2507. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether RITES is working on various projects abroad at present; and

(b) if so, the nature of the said projects alongwith estimated cost and schedule thereof?

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

(b) The country wise details of ongoing projects of consultancy, feasibility studies, supply of equipment, preparation of detailed project report and rehabilitation work in Railways, Highways, and other transport sectors along with the cost and time schedule are as under:

S.No.	Countries where projects executed	Estimated cost	Expected Completion Schedule
1.	Afghanistan	Rs. 70.12 cr.	Sept' 07
2.	Angola	Rs. 164.75 cr.	August' 09
3.	Botswana	Rs. 6.4 cr.	Dec.' 09
4.	Ethiopia	Rs. 6.47 cr.	March'08
5.	Indonesia	Rs. 18.09 cr.	Jun' 08
6.	Malaysia	Rs. 6.16 cr.	Mar' 09
7.	Mali	Rs. 88.83 cr.	Feb '08
8.	Mozambique	Rs. 73.02 cr.	Sept' 12
9.	Myanmar	Rs. 149.42 cr.	May' 08
10.	Nepal	Rs. 7.40 cr	Sept' 08
11.	Senegal	Rs. 67.00 cr.	Nov' 07
12.	Sri Lanka	Rs. 1.32cr.	May' 08
13.	Sudan	Rs. 54.50 cr.	May' 08
14.	Tanzania	Rs. 13.11 cr.	Dec' 07

[English]

Exploration of Deep Water Oil and Gas

2508. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC has entered into a strategic tie up with Norway to develop deepwater oil and gas blocks off the Indian coast;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which ONGC will be benefited by such agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) Yes, Sir. A "Development and Co-operation Agreement" has been signed between Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Norsk Hydro, a Norwegian Company, on 02.07.2007

(b) Norsk Hydro is one of the World leaders in development and production of oil and gas from off shore fields. ONGC signed the agreement with Norsk Hydro to further develop its significant portfolio of off-shore exploration blocks around the coast of India. The agreement sets out the terms and conditions by which Norsk Hydro and ONGC shall co-operate in the development of, and identify mutually beneficial opportunities in certain off shore blocks in the Indian continental shelf and beyond. The intention of this agreement is to create a strategic alliance between the parties in this field.

(c) The benefits likely to accrue to ONGC shall include:

- (i) Building up of knowledge base and confidence to produce from deep sea areas with application of sophisticated technologies.
- (ii) To develop the knowledge of personnel in offshore Exploration, Development and Operations.
- (iii) Exploration of future New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) blocks & their development.

Grounding of Spice Jet Jammu - Delhi Flight

2509. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Spice Jet Jammu - Delhi flight was grounded on the wrong runway at the IGI Airport;

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

(c) whether such incidents are happening frequently in the country and action had not been taken by the concerned department on earlier incidents;

(d) if so, the details thereto and the reasons therefor; and

(e) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard to avoid recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) On 12.06.2007 M/s Spice Jet B737-800 aircraft VT-SPH while operating flight SEJ852 (Jammu-Delhi Sector) landed on the wrong runway at IGI Airport. Pilot carried out visual approach and landing clearance to the aircraft was issued after aircraft reported having identified and sighted the runway 10. Since the two runways have same direction of approach, the Pilot made the approach on the runway 09 instead of runway 10 by error of judgement and finally landed on runway 09. At that time there was no aircraft movement on runway 09, and the aircraft landed safely and vacated the runway. There was no damage to the aircraft or injury to any person.

(c) No, Sir. Such incidents are very rare.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Training and refresher courses for Pilots are being conducted at regular intervals to handle such situations where the two runways have approaches on same direction.

Standard instrument and operating procedure have been laid down separately for both the runways to avoid recurrence of such incidents.

Use of radar (SDD) in control tower, specially at major aerodromes has been made mandatory to monitor movement of the landing aircraft.

[Translation]

Share of PSUs in Gross Domestic Production

2510. SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the share of Public Enterprises in gross domestic production of the country;

(b) the reasons for their lesser share in proportion to the capital invested therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the remedial measures taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The share of non-departmental public enterprises in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during 2005-06 stood at 10.8 percent, as per Central Statistical Organisation (CSO).

(b) to (d) The values of GDP and Gross Domestic Capital Formation (GDCF) in non-departmental public enterprises and GDP and GDCF in the economy for the year 2004-05 (at current prices) as per CSO are given below:

Particulars	Amount (Rs. in crore)
1.1 GDP of Non Departmental Enterprises	338352
1.2 GDCF of Non Departmental Enterprises	91660
1.1 as Multiple of 1.2	3.7
2.1 GDP at factor cost (1999-2000 Series)	2855933
2.2 GDCF	986365
2.1 as Multiple of 2.2	2.9

The GDP share for non-departmental public enterprises as multiple of GDFC in these enterprises is higher as compared to GDP of the economy as multiple of GDFC in the economy.

Difference in Prices of Similar Drugs

2511. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of similar drugs are different even after the price has been fixed by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA);

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any action has been taken against the pharmaceutical companies which are charging higher prices on the similar drugs; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Prices fixed / revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995(DPCO, 95) are the same for the manufacturers of similar drugs and are applicable to all such manufacturers.

(c) and (d) Action against the pharmaceutical companies which are found charging higher prices on the similar drugs than notified/fixed by the NPPA, action is taken under provisions of para 13 of the DPCO, 95.

[English]

Preservation of Historical Sites in various Countries

2512. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Archaeological Survey of India are visiting many sites in different countries to preserve

the monuments of Indian importance there during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof mentioning the expenditure incurred on it in the last three years; and

(c) the response received by it from those countries?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Under bilateral exchange programme and requests received from the concerned to countries, team of experts from Archaeological Survey of India visited the following (c) monuments/sites:

1. Katasraj Group of Temple in Pakistan
2. Thiru Kutiswaram Temple and MulKirigala Rajya Vihar in Sri Lanka
3. 'Stoor Palace' in Afghanistan
4. Ta Prohm Temple Complex in Cambodia
5. Prambanan Temple Complex in Indonesia

The project reports and inspection reports have already been submitted to the Ministry of External Affairs for further action.

In pursuance of the bilateral agreement signed between the Government of India and the Royal Government of Cambodia, the conservation and restoration of Ta Prohm Temple, in Cambodia has been entrusted by the MEA to ASI under ITEC programme with an estimated cost of Rs. 19.57 crores to be completed in ten years.

The work on the project was commenced in January, 2004 and expenditure incurred is as under:

Year	Amount
2003-04	Rs. 65.09 lakhs
2004-05	Rs. 57.66 lakhs
2005-06	Rs. 89.51 lakhs
2006-07	Rs. 120.08 lakhs
2007-08	Rs 330.00 lakh (provision)

[Translation]

Allotment of Stalls and Telephone Booths at Railway Stations

2513. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some applications for allotment of stalls and telephone booths at railway stations in Maharashtra and other States are under consideration of the Railways;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the present status of the applications, State-wise; and
- (d) the time by which disposal of such applications is likely to take place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Railways make allotment of various catering/vending stalls and telephone booths whenever there is a requirement/vacancies at stations. Allotment of stalls/booths is a continuous process and Railways do not maintain State-wise data, in this regard.

Provision for Air Ambulances

2514. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that several private airlines are using their planes as air ambulances;
- (b) if so, whether hefty amount is being charged as fare for the said purpose by these airlines;
- (c) whether the Government has formulated any fare structure for the said purpose;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government is contemplating to reserve few comfortable seats in all the passenger planes for seriously ill persons;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the steps proposed to make provisions for air ambulances in the airlines/airports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. Non-Scheduled operators undertake ambulance flights apart from other flights.

(b) to (d) The fare structure is not regulated by the Government.

(e) and (f) All scheduled airline operators are expected to take care of requests for provision of comfortable seats and facilitate seriously ill persons in accordance with their policy.

(g) As per the guidelines contained in the Civil Aviation Requirements Section 3 series C Part III, a Non Scheduled Operator Permit holder is permitted to operate the flight for hire and reward purposes including the air ambulance flight with the aircraft endorsed on its permit. No DGCA approval is required for operation of such flights if they are operated within India. However for operation outside the country, flight clearance from DGCA is required.

[English]

New Plan under Special Central Assistance Scheme

2515. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is planning to introduce a new plan under its existing scheme Special Central Assistance to facilitate training of students in private institutes for equipping them to work in popular sectors;
- (b) if so, the details of the plan prepared therefor;
- (c) the kind of assistance to be provided to the students under the new plan; and
- (d) the time by which the new plan is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) In the Guidelines issued in March 2007, the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has impressed upon the State Governments/ UT Administrations to include capacity building in the new sunrise sectors under the scheme of Special Central Assistance. The illustrative list of identified sun-rise sectors, given in the Guidelines, includes Commercial Pilot Course, Aviation and Hospitality Course, course in Fashion Technology, General Nursing and Hotel Management. These guidelines are effective from 2007-08.

Captive Power Plants for Railways

2516. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Railways are planning to establish its own captive power plants;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any new corporation will be set up for the said purpose;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Railways have identified the sites for setting up of power plants; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, sir. Railways are establishing a captive power plant of 1000 Mega Watt (MW) capacity at Nabinagar, district Aurangabad, Bihar in collaboration with National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Limited. This has been included in Railway Budget for the year 2007-08.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. A new Company namely "Bhartiya Rail Bijlee Company Limited" will be set up for the said purpose. Total estimated cost of the project is Rs. 5352.50 crore with mega status. The debt equity ratio of this project will be 70:30. The equity participation of NTPC will be 74% (Rs. 1188.26 crore) & 26% (Rs. 417.5 crore) by Railways.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. Nabinagar, district Aurangabad in Bihar has been identified as suitable site for setting up of this power plant.

Relief and Rehabilitation Measures for Mumbai Bomb Blasts Victims

2517. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether only 174 claims of Mumbai train bomb blasts have been finalized at Railway Claims Tribunal, Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details of pending cases in this regard;

(c) whether it is true that in spite of Special Bench the work is very slow;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the details about the grievances, representations received in this regard and the action taken by the Railways thereon;

(f) the measures taken by the Railways to speed up the process of settlement of claims compensation cases;

(g) the time by which all the claims compensation cases are likely to be settled;

(h) the details of Medical relief arrangements made for the blast victims for successive medical surgeries, providing hearing aids/artificial limbs etc.;

(i) whether the Railways do not make arrangement for victims beyond 'Immediate Relief'; and

(j) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) As on 22.08.2007, 272 cases have been finalized.

(b) 463 cases (7 death cases & 456 cases of injury) are pending.

(c) There is some delay in disposal of injury cases in Railway Claims Tribunal.

(d) As per judicial order of Special Bench, Medical Board has been constituted to ascertain the nature and extent of injury to decide the cases by Special Bench, which is time consuming.

(e) and (f) There are some complaints related to delay in settlement of claims cases in Railway Claims Tribunal. The following action has been taken by the Railways:-

(i) As against sittings for one week in a month by the Railway Claims Tribunal, sittings have been doubled to two weeks per month.

(ii) 2nd Medical Board has also been formed in addition to the one functioning earlier to speed up the medical reports for submission to Railway Claims Tribunal.

(g) The proceedings followed by the Special Bench consist of examination, cross examination of evidence etc. as Railway Claims Tribunal is a judicial body. As such no definite time frame can be indicated for finalization of pending cases. However, all concerned departments including the Railway Claims Tribunal are putting in their best efforts to finalize the cases in the least possible time.

(h) to (j) Emergency and Essential Medical Treatment aimed towards saving the life/limbs or other parts of the body of the injured persons of Mumbai Train Bomb Blast victims were provided by the Railways. There is no arrangement for successive surgeries and Hearing Aids for the victims to be provided by the Railways. However, all the victims requiring artificial limbs have been provided the same by various Non-Governmental Organizations.

There is no provision for giving post-hospitalization outdoor follow up treatment by the Railways.

[Translation]

Foreign Tourists

2518. SHRI RAKESH SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the trend of foreign tourists visiting different tourist locations/States of the country during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government has noticed declining trend of foreign tourists in respect of some tourist locations during the last three years;

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

(d) whether the decline in the number of tourists at some tourist locations has also been due to change in environment; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The number of foreign tourist visits to different States/UTs, and the percentage change over the previous years, during the years 2004, 2005 and 2006 is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) No consistently declining trend in foreign tourist visits has been observed in respect of any State/UT during the last three years.

(c) to (e) Does not arise.

Statement***Foreign tourist visits to different States/UTs during 2004, 2005 and 2006***

S.No.	State/UTs	Number of Foreign Tourist Visits to States/ UTs			Percentage Change over the previous year		
		2004	2005	2006*	2004	2005	2006*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Andhra Pradesh	501019	560024	669617	4.5	11.8	19.6
2	Arunachal Pradesh	269	289	607	118.7	7.4	110.0
3	Assam	7285	10782	10374	10.2	48.0	-3.8
4	Bihar	38118	63321	84942	-37.3	66.1	34.1
5	Goa	363230	336803	380414	15.5	-7.3	12.9
6	Gujarat	21179	47107	87739	-43.6	122.4	86.3
7	Haryana	66153	59353	67854	-22.2	-10.3	14.3
8	Himachal Pradesh	204344	207790	281569	21.7	1.7	35.5
9	Jammu and Kashmir	40242	44345	46087	65.4	10.2	3.9
10	Karnataka	530225	545225	505524	112.2	2.8	-7.3
11	Kerala	345546	346499	428534	17.3	0.3	23.7
12	Madhya Pradesh	145335	160832	186587	57.5	10.7	16.0
13	Maharashtra	1218382	1448656	1654367	23.5	18.9	14.2
14	Manipur	249	316	295	-3.1	26.9	-6.6
15	Meghalaya	12407	5099	4287	96.8	-58.9	-15.9
16	Mizoram	326	273	436	16.8	-16.3	59.7
17	Nagaland	1084	883	1002	45.9	-18.5	13.5
18	Orissa	28817	33310	39141	15.2	15.6	17.5
19	Punjab	7312	4353	193933	59.3	-40.5	4355.2
20	Rajasthan	971772	1131164	1220164	54.6	16.4	7.9
21	Sikkim	14646	16523	18026	22.4	12.8	9.1
22	Tamil Nadu	1058012	1179316	1036732	17.4	11.5	-12.1
23	Tripura	3171	2677	3245	-0.8	-15.6	21.2
24	Uttarakhand	62885	75995	85284	13.9	20.8	12.2
25	Uttar Pradesh	1037243	1174597	1328974	27.0	13.2	13.1
26	Chhattisgarh	3000	912	1094	160.9	-69.6	20.0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
27	Jharkhand	4375	6035	4368	35.7	37.9	-27.6
28	West Bengal	775694	895639	998029	10.0	15.5	11.4
29	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	4578	2147	9051	10.5	-53.1	321.6
30	Chandigarh	16137	23284	25217	-5.4	44.3	8.3
31	Daman and Diu	4111	6164	5517	25.6	49.9	-10.5
32	Delhi	839574	1511893	1974836	21.0	80.1	30.6
33	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	168	1226	1400	23.5	629.8	14.2
34	Lakshadweep	1285	941	2142	88.4	-26.8	127.6
35	Pondichery	32053	38009	46273	25.4	12.3	28.5
Total		8360226	9939782	11403661	24.6	18.9	14.7

* Provisional

*[English]***Doubling of Gooty-Renigunta Section**

2519. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the doubling of Gooty-Renigunta balance section has already been taken up and is pending for completion;

(b) if so, the specific reasons for incompleteness of the Gooty-Renigunta balance section; and

(c) the time by which the above work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Patch doubling of Gooty-Renigunta has been taken up in the following phases:-

- (i) Pullampet-Balapalle (41 kms) (completed).
- (ii) Pullampet-Bhakrapet (44 kms.)
- (iii) Cuddappa-Muddanuru (55.26 kms.)
- (iv) Kondapuram-Rayalacheruvu (52.13 kms.)
- (c) 2008-09.

Joint Venture to run High Speed Trains

2520. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:

SHRI UDAY SINGH:

DR. M. JAGANNATH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways is looking for joint partners with various State Governments to run high speed trains on selected routes;

(b) if so, the details of the proposed scheme;

(c) whether the routes on which such high speed trains would operate has since been selected;

(d) if so, the details, thereof;

(e) whether the Railways has requested the State Governments in this regard; and

(f) if so, the response of the States thereon?

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

(b) During the Budget Speech 2007-08, it was inter-alia announced "we have decided to conduct pre-feasibility studies for construction of high speed passenger corridors, equipped with state of the art signaling and train control systems, for running high speed trains at speeds of 300 to 350 kms per hour; one each in the Northern, Western, Southern and Eastern regions of the country."

For this purpose, various State Governments were approached by Railways to find out their willingness for participating in pre-feasibility studies. Government of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have agreed 'in principle' to participate in any pre-feasibility studies. Action will be taken to conduct pre-feasibility studies after consultation with State Governments.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Routes would be decided after consultations with the concerned State Governments.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have agreed 'in principle' to participate in any pre-feasibility studies.

[Translation]

**Assessment of Production Cost of
Crude Oil and Oil Reserves**

2521. DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

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

(a) whether any assessment of production cost is made with regard to development of various oil reserves and crude oil production in the country;

(b) if so, the said production cost in respect of each oil reserve assessed so far in various phases;

(c) whether the production cost of crude and gas has been assessed separately under the said phases; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) to (d) The cost of crude oil production during 2006-07 of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) from nominated field was in the range of Rs. 8485 per tonne to Rs. 10458 per tonne depending upon size of reservoir, location and availability of infrastructure. The cost of natural gas production during 2006-07 was in the range of Rs. 3353 per thousand cubic metres to Rs. 3896 per thousand cubic metres.

Development of oil/gas reserves is based on techno-economic feasibility of the field including price realization of crude oil & natural gas.

Assessment of cost of natural gas is made independently in case of non-associated gas. Otherwise, cost of natural gas is assessed based on thermal equivalence principal for associated gas.

Profit Margins in Medicines

2522. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether profit margin of drug manufactures, wholesalers and retailers are included in the maximum retail price of medicines being sold on an average in the country;

(b) if so, the percentage of all such profit margins vis-a-vis the manufacturing price of the medicine;

(c) whether this maximum retail price also includes the taxes levied by the Government;

(d) if so, the percentage of this tax levied;

(e) whether the Government proposes to reduce the said profit margins; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) Profit margin of drug manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers is included in the maximum retail price of medicines being sold in the country. Govt. vide notification SO No.946(E) dated 26.6.2006 has made it mandatory to print MRP inclusive of all taxes on the medicines manufactured after 2.10.2006 in respect of indigenous medicines and 1.3.2007 for imported medicines. As a result no Pharma company can charge any additional tax after MRP.

(b) As per Para 7 of Drugs (Prices Control), Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95), maximum 100% of manufacturing price of medicines is allowed on the Scheduled formulations to take care of post manufacturing expenses and profit margins of manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers. No percentage of profit is fixed for Non-Scheduled formulations under DPCO, 95.

(c) The maximum Retail Price also includes the taxes levied by the Central as well as State Governments.

(d) The Central Government has levied 16% Excise duty on medicines. Almost, all State Governments have levied 4% VAT on medicines except Assam & Meghalaya who have levied 6% VAT on medicines. VAT has not been introduced in U.P. Govt. of Maharashtra has abolished MRP based levy on medicines. In States like Kerala and Tamilnadu, some of the life saving drugs are exempted from VAT.

(e) and (f) It is proposed to streamline the system of trade margins through the Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 - 35% to retailers and 15% to wholesalers in respect of Generic Medicines. 20% for retailers and 10% for wholesalers for branded Generic medicines. For Scheduled drugs, it is proposed that the trade margins would be 16% to retailers and 8% to wholesalers. Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 11.1.2007. The Cabinet has referred the Policy to Group of Ministers (GOM). The First meeting of the GOM was held on 10.4.2007. No time frame has been set for finalizing the National Pharmaceuticals Policy.

[English]

**Setting up of Institute for
Petroleum Technology**

2523. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government propose to set up Petro-Tech Institute;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has identified the site therefor;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether there is any proposal to set more institutes in near future;
- (f) if so, the details thereof;
- (g) whether the proposed Institute will help India to explore the coverage upto 100 per cent by 2015; and
- (h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) The Government has proposed to set up a petroleum technology institute to be known as Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Petroleum Technology (RGIPT) at Jais, District Rae Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh.

(e) and (f) The Government does not have any proposal to set more institute in near future.

(g) and (h) The first batch of engineers would graduate only by 2012. The Institute would become fully operational in 2015-16. The Institute is envisaged to serve as the fountainhead for the nurturing of world class technical human resources capable of serving as the leaders and innovators of tomorrow in the field of Petroleum Technology.

[Translation]

**New Railway Line from Kodarma
to Ranchi**

2524. SHRI TEK LAL MAHTO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a new rail line project from Kodarma to Ranchi via Hazaribagh in Jharkhand, is being implemented;
- (b) if so, the details of the funds allocated for construction of the route alongwith the funds released and spent so far;
- (c) the date when the said project is likely to be

started and the reasons for slow progress of the construction work so far; and

- (d) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

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

(b) The sanctioned cost of the project is Rs. 1033 crore. Rs.50 crore have been allotted for this project for the year 2007-08. An expenditure of Rs.335.63 crore has been incurred on the project, up to March, 2007.

(c) The project is already in progress. The work on this project has been affected due to obstruction by villagers, miscreants activities and failure of contractors, delays in forestry clearance, land acquisition etc.

(d) No target date has been set for completion of the project yet.

[English]

Strength of Railway Protection Force

2525. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ:

SHRI RASHEED MASOOD:

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are planning to create additional posts in Railway Protection Force (RPF) to cope with mounting security concern over passenger safety and railway property;

(b) if so, the number of additional security personnel targeted to be recruited in RPF alongwith the steps being taken in this regard;

(c) whether there are some posts in various categories lying vacant in RPF;

(d) if so, the measures taken by the Railways to fill the vacant posts;

(e) the total number of such stations in the country where not a single RPF personnel is posted;

(f) whether the Railways propose to grant more powers to the RPF to tackle organised criminals as well as gangs;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) whether the Railways have constructed RPF stations; and

(i) if not, the reasons there for and the time by when these police stations are likely to be constructed?

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

(b) Proposal for creation of 2661 additional posts in the non gazetted cadre of Railway Protection Force (RPF) has been approved by the Ministry of Railways as an interim measure. The proposal is, however, pending with Ministry of Finance for ratification.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The vacancies of Constables in RPF have been notified and the process of recruitment is underway. The vacancies of Sub-Inspectors in RPF will also be notified very soon and the recruitment will begin thereafter.

(e) 6613 stations where RPF personnel are not posted on permanent basis. However, they are deputed from jurisdictional RPF Posts/ out Posts as and when situation demands.

(f) and (g) RPF personnel have legal responsibilities of enquiry and prosecution under the Railway Protection (Unlawful Possession) Act and the Railways Act. Situation is reviewed by the Government periodically and requisite action is taken.

(h) and (i) Yes, Sir. There are 783 RPF posts and 606 RPF out posts having territorial jurisdiction over the length and breadth of the Indian Railways.

Aviation Facilities at Guwahati and Imphal Airports

2526. DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the International Flight between Guwahati and Bangkok has been discontinued from operation;

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

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to continue the said flight;

(d) whether there was a proposal to upgrade the Imphal Airport to an International standard;

(e) if so, the present position pertaining to that proposal; and

(f) the time by which the said airport is proposed to be upgraded as an international airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) (a) to (c) Air India which commenced twice weekly operations between Guwahati and Bangkok in April, 2002, discontinued the same in Winter, 2003 due to poor load and cash costs. However, Indian Airlines is presently operating a weekly flight between Guwahati and Bangkok.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

Production of Electrical Steel by Rourkela Steel Plant

2527. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Rourkela Steel Plant has started producing electrical steel with new insulation coating C5 as reported in the Financial Express, dated June 14, 2006;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the salient features of said product; and

(d) the details of modifications made for manufacturing the said product and the expenditure incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Rourkela Steel Plant has started producing electrical steel with new insulation coating C-5. The plant produced 712 tonnes of electrical steel with C-5 insulation coating for the first time in 1st week of June, 2007. This was a trial production.

(c) This new product is environment friendly having good punchability, weldability and suitable for high temperature application and it has very good surface insulation resistivity and is suitable for medium & large size electrical machines.

(d) The product was manufactured with minor modification in the process, carried out using in-house resources and no extra expenditure was incurred.

[Translation]

Cultural Centres

2528. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal to set up regional cultural centres in Uttarakhand and Maharashtra is lying pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which these proposals are likely to be cleared; and

(d) the criteria to be followed to set up these regional cultural centres?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir. The Government of India has already set up seven Zonal Cultural Centres in different parts of the country to extend support to folk and traditional artistes and artisans of the country. Uttarakhand is the member State of North Central Zone

Cultural Centre (NCZCC), Allahabad and North Zone Cultural Centre (NZCC), Patiala. A Zonal Cultural Centre namely South Central Zone Cultural Centre has already been set up in Maharashtra with its headquarters at Nagpur.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Outsourcing of Conservation of Monuments

2529. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to outsource the conservation of monuments by giving these monuments to private agencies for restoration and maintenance work;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure that restoration and maintenance work of these monuments is done departmentally?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) undertakes major conservation works in the centrally protected monuments as per the archaeological norms, departmentally through its own manpower resources. In addition to implementing its annual programme, ASI has to honour the requests from State Governments to carry out conservation works in the State protected monuments as deposit works and has to handle projects abroad as part of the bilateral agreements. Coping with an increasing workload, and accomplishing the tasks in a timely manner, is an ongoing challenge.

With a view to completing the conservation projects within the time limits earmarked, a decision was taken in 2006 to outsource conservation works to qualifying private agencies on an experimental basis and the following projects are outsourced:-

- i. Safdarjung Tomb, New Delhi
- ii. Two Colonial Buildings at Red Fort complex, Delhi

The works outsourced have to be executed strictly as per archaeological norms and under the overall supervision of the ASI.

Based on the result obtained from the above experiment, a final decision will be considered in due course.

[Translation]

Promotion of Art and Culture in Maharashtra

2530. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI:
SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme to promote arts and culture related literature has been under implementation in the State of Maharashtra;

(b) the salient features of these schemes;

(c) the projects started / implemented under these schemes during the last three years; and

(d) the details of the year-wise financial assistance provided to the State during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Pipavav Power Project

2531. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:
SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI:

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

(a) whether the Union Government had given commitment to the State of Gujarat for supply of adequate quantity of gas for the Pipavav Power Project from Tapti gas fields;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether State Government of Gujarat has expressed its concern for not being able to implement the Pipavav Power Project because of non-supply of gas despite Centre's commitment in the past; and

(d) if so, the reasons for going back on its commitment which is leading to grave injustice to the Saurashtra region for whose development this power project is very crucial?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) On the request of the State Government of Gujarat, an 'in principle' allocation of natural gas to the extent of 2.25 MMSCMD was made in June 2000 for the 650 MW gas based power project at Pipavav in Gujarat. This allocation was effective from 2003, subject to the condition that the Management Committee of the Tapti field takes investment decision for additional development of the field. The development plan for production of additional gas from the mid and South Tapti fields has been approved by the Management Committee of the field. The State Government has requested to supply natural gas to Pipavav Power Project. The developers of the Pipavav Project have been advised to tie up with the Panna Mukta and Tapti (PMT) Joint Venture (JV) for supply of gas from the projected additional production of PMT JV.

Sanchi Stupa

2532. SHRI RANEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Sanchi Stupa has developed cracks and water is seeping from many places;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that existence of Stupa is in danger as a result of continuous water seepage; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to save the 'Sanchi Stupa'?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (d) No cracks have developed in Sanchi Stupa. During the extensive conservation carried out during the years 1912 to 1919, about 200 weep holes were provided to drain out percolated rainwater. Seepage through the weep holes is a normal process and part of conservation measure to relieve water pressure inside the structure.

Further, water tightening of the stupa was carried out during 2005-06 and 2006-07 which included grouting, recess pointing. There is no danger to the structural stability of the stupa.

[Translation]

Upgradation of Airports to International Standards

2533. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:
SHRI V. K. THUMMAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to upgrade many of the country's airports to international standards during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the progress made so far in the upgradation of the Indian airports to international standards; and

(d) the extent to which this plan has been implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has planned to modernize and upgrade 35 Non-Metro airports by 2010-11. Out of these, 24 airports are being upgraded to international standards. These are: Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Aurangabad, Coimbatore, Goa, Guwahati, Khajuraho, Jaipur, Lucknow, Mangalore, Udaipur, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Indore, Nagpur, Madurai, Port Blair, Pune, Ranchi, Raipur, Trichy, Trivandrum, Varanasi and Vizag. Details and status of work are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Sl. No.	Airport	Terminal Work	Airside work
1.	Ahmedabad	In progress	In progress
2.	Amritsar	In progress	In progress
3.	Guwahati	In progress	In progress
4.	Jaipur	In progress	In progress
5.	Udaipur	In progress	In progress
6.	Trivandrum	In progress	In progress
7.	Lucknow	Planning stage	In progress
8.	Madurai	In progress	In progress
9.	Mangalore	In progress	New runway completed/ remaining in progress
10.	Goa	Under approval	In progress
11.	Aurangabad	In progress	In progress
12.	Khajuraho	In progress	In progress
13.	Bhopal	Scope of work under issue	Planning stage
14.	Indore	Planning stage	Tendering stage
15.	Nagpur	In progress	Planning stage
16.	Vishakhapatnam	In progress	Work completed
17.	Trichy	In progress	In progress/ planning stage
18.	Bhubaneswar	Planning stage	In progress
19.	Varanasi	In progress	Planning stage
20.	Coimbatore	Planning stage	In progress
21.	Port Blair	Planning stage	Tendering stage
22.	Ranchi	Planning stage	In progress
23.	Raipur	Planning stage	In progress
24.	Pune	Completed with existing scope	In progress

Rajkot Airport

2534. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question No.3435 dated April 26, 2007 regarding 'Rajkot Airport' and state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has pursued the Railway Authorities for acquisition of land for extension and upgradation of Rajkot Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the progress made so far by AAI in this regard;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which the said work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Railway Authorities were requested to handover the land measuring 21 hectares for extension of runway and diversion of Rajkot-Jamnagar Highway. The Railway authorities are yet to accede to the request.

(d) Initiation of upgradation works is subject to acquisition and transfer of required land on lease to AAI from Railways and diversion of Rajkot-Jamnagar Highway by the State Government of Gujarat.

[English]

LNG Terminal at Kochi

2535. SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the project of LNG terminal at Kochi has been pending for implementation;

(b) if so, whether the necessary formalities have been completed;

(c) the details thereof;

(d) the present status of the project; and

(e) the time by which the project would be completed and commence functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (e) Petronet LNG Ltd. (PLL) is setting up a 2.5 Million Metric tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA) capacity LNG terminal at Kochi, with provision for expansion upto 5 MMTPA. Various statutory clearances/exemptions/NOC's have been obtained. Revised Techno-Commercial and Price Bid has been received on August 17, 2007. Co-developer agreement for Puthuvyppeen SEZ has been executed between PLL and Cochin Port Trust (CPT), and it has been approved by the Department of Commerce.

Process for selection of Project Management Consultant (PMC) and LNG carrier has been initiated. The draft of concession agreement and land lease agreement have been agreed between PLL and CPT.

For meeting LNG requirement of Kochi Terminal, PLL is in discussion with an Australian supplier for supply of 2.5 MMTPA LNG on long term basis from Gorgon project. The project is planned for completion in the first quarter of 2011.

Conditions at IGI Airport

2536. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indira Gandhi International Airport is in a complete mess right, broken ceiling, leaking rainwater, broken walls, stained and smelly toilets, barricades all over the place and the constant sound of drilling and hammering as reported in the Hindustan Times dated August 06, 2007;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the corrective steps taken or likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Presently renovation and expansion of the existing terminal buildings at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport is underway to increase its capacity. Some amount of inconvenience to public is unavoidable during this phase. However, all efforts are being made to minimise the inconvenience.

Gas Pricing Policy

2537. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:

DR. M. JAGANNATH:

SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

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

(a) whether the Government has asked Secretary's panel to frame formula for gas pricing so that the Energy Co-ordination Committee will take final decision on fixing of the gas pricing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether at present, natural gas has three pricing regimes;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government has asked the oil industry to examine options for gas pricing policy which are equitable and conducive to the development of this sector; and

(f) if so, by what time final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) and (b) Government had asked Cabinet Secretary to go into issues related to gas pricing. The report has since been submitted to the Government. The report of the Cabinet Secretary and a report of Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister have been submitted to an Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) constituted by the Government to consider issues related to gas pricing under the NELP regime.

(c) and (d) At present, two gas price regimes prevail in the country – one for gas produced from nomination fields of ONGC and OIL, called the Administrative Pricing Mechanism (APM) regime. The second regime provides for market related pricing, which is applicable to gas produced from Production Sharing Contracts (PSC) by Joint Venture/Private companies and for Regasified-LNG.

(e) and (f) In terms of the provisions of Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) signed under NELP regime, the operator has the freedom to market gas to be produced from contract area in the domestic market. However, the pricing formula or the basis requires approval of the Government. Further, the contractor is required to discover the market price of gas on competitive arms length basis.

Medical Inspection Units

2538. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Medical Inspection Units are working only in Chennai, Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai and Trivandrum airports and there are only medical rooms run by States or private doctors in other airports of the country;

(b) if so, the reasons for not having Medical Inspection Units in other major airports of the country, particularly at Hyderabad, Vijayawada Airports;

(c) whether Airport Authority of India is planning to ensure that Medical Inspection Units are set up in all major airports of the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Medical Inspection (M.I.) Rooms are already functioning at Chennai, Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai and Trivandrum airports and are manned by dedicated medical officials. At Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Calicut and Goa airports, M.I. rooms are being maintained by reputed nursing homes/ hospitals. At other AAI airports, only the facility of first aid is available.

(b) to (e) At Hyderabad airport, a full fledged facility of

M.I. room is available. AAI has recently circulated a uniform policy, which would enable establishment of said facility at all major airports.

New Train between Bangalore (Yeshwantpur) and Chennai

2539. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to introduce a new train between Bangalore (Yeshwantpur) and Chennai; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In the Rail Budget 2007-08, it has been announced to introduce a weekly train between Yesvantpur and Chennai during the year 2007-08.

Agreement on Seat Adjustment between Airlines

2540. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any agreement exists between Air India, Indian and other Airlines in respect of seat adjustment;

(b) if so, the details and reasons for such agreements made so far;

(c) the extent to which it has benefitted to the Air India/Indian;

(d) the loss suffered by these two Airlines during the last three years;

(e) whether any review has been done; and

(f) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) In order to overcome capacity constraint and expand its international footprint, Air India has entered into code share/block space agreements with 13 airlines. These agreements provide passengers the added benefit of seamless travel by booking through Air India to these destinations. Air India has earned more than Rs.500 crores on account of pool receipts/BSA. Indian Airlines has code share arrangements with 6 foreign airlines. Indian Airlines earned around Rs. 9 crores in 2006-07 from the various code shares-with the foreign airlines.

(d) Both the airlines viz. Air India and Indian Airlines have earned profits during the last three financial years viz. 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

Comprehensive Passenger Services

2541. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian has decided to improve its services by setting up an comprehensive passenger service system;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the passengers are still facing problems of loss of baggage, air tickets at counters and reservations at various airports;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the extent to which the comprehensive passenger services have been found effective in dealing with various problems of passengers; and

(f) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a), (b), (e) and (f) A team of officials from Indian Airlines and Air India now merged into National Aviation Company of India Limited (NACIL) is jointly studying the present and future requirements for setting up of an advanced passenger services system which will facilitate revenue maximization through better inventory management and improve customer services by virtue of its advanced features.

The new system would have features enabling inventory and revenue management, on-line booking through web, on-line servicing of frequent flyers etc. It would also serve as a customer relationship module that would track customers, their preferences and experiences thereby offering improved services to passengers.

(c) and (d) Indian Airlines carried roughly 1 million passengers per month on its domestic and international flights. The details of loss of Baggage/tickets and complaints with regard to reservation during the last four months are as under:

Loss of Baggage	-	711
Loss of Air Tickets	-	19
Complaints pertaining to Reservation	-	04

[Translation]

Guidelines on NRA to Spouse of Employees

2542. SHRI GIRIDHARI LAL BHARGAVA:

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees of all Public Sector Undertaking (PSUs) are being paid House Rent Allowance (HRA) even if spouse of the employee is occupying the Government quarter allotted by the concerned Department/Directorate of Estates;

(b) if so, the details and the guidelines laid down in service rules on grant of HRA to the employees of the said PSUs;

(c) whether the above said guidelines are not being adhered properly by some PSUs Particularly in the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, Hindustan Machine Tools, Bharat Sanchal Nigam Limited, and Airports Authority of India;

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

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to make the equal provisions for grant of HRA to the spouses of the employees of the above said PSUs as provided in other PSUs?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) This Department has prescribed only the rates of House Rent Allowance (HRA), payable to the entitled employees of CPSEs. The management of the concerned CPSE is competent to decide the eligibility conditions of drawal of HRA. Information regarding such eligibility conditions in various CPSEs is not being centrally maintained.

(c) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Vocational Training Centres for the Disabled

2543. SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Vocational Training Centres provide training to the disabled beneficiaries to develop their skills for employment/self-employment under the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995;

(b) if so, the total number of Vocational Training Centres established in the different States/UTs in the country alongwith their locations, State/UT-wise;

(c) whether any financial help is provided to the students to undergo such training;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the duration of the vocational training courses;

(f) whether non-governmental organisations are being provided grants for running these courses; and

(g) if so, the details of the Grants provided to NGOs during each of the last three years and the names of the NGOs received the grants over the years, State/UT-wise and NGO-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) Financial assistance is being provided to about 280 NGOs for running Vocational Training Centres for the Persons with Disability.

(c) and (d) Under the Scheme there is a provision of Rs. 150 p.m. stipend to these trainees.

(e) The duration of Vocational Training Courses varies from one month to two years.

(f) Yes Sir.

(g) Under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme Grant of Rs. 11.88 crores, 14.27 crores and 12.59 crores respectively have been provided to NGOs in each of the last three years. The name of NGOs received the grant during last three years in each State/UTs available at the website of the Ministry.

Prevention of Wastage of Water in Railways

2544. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways has undertaken plans to recycle and prevent wastage of water used for washing the trains, about 2400 litres of which is used in washing the trains at New Delhi Railway Station alone;

(b) if so, the number, capacity and locations of the treatment and recycling plants to be installed at different locations; and

(c) the expenditure likely to be incurred in the said scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Railways have undertaken plans to recycle and prevent wastage of water at major locations where there is water scarcity and heavy demand of water for domestic & non-domestic purposes. Water Recycling Plants (WRP) have been planned to be installed at important locations. At New Delhi Railway Station Water Recycling Plant is planned to be installed for which consultancy contract has been awarded to Tata Energy Research Institute.

(b) One Water Recycling Plant each is proposed to

be installed, of capacity as indicated in brackets, at Jabalpur (20 lakh litre/day), Katni (15 lakh litre/day), Satna (10 lakh litre/day), Bhopal (10 lakh litre/day), Itarsi (08 lakh litre/day), Udaipur (2.4 lakh litre/day), Jodhpur (1.5 lakh litre/day), Puri (5 lakh litre/day), Waltair (10 lakh litre/day), New Delhi (under finalization), Secunderabad (5 lakh litre/day), Hubli (1.8 lakh litre/day), Bangalore (10 lakh litre/day), Yashwantpur (4 lakh litre/day) and Mysore (3 lakh litre/day).

(c) The expenditure likely to be incurred on installation of Water Recycling Plants at above mentioned locations is Rs 10.81 crore except the cost of WRP proposed to be installed at New Delhi which is under finalization.

[Translation]

Disinvestment in Public Undertakings of Rail Sectors

2545. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to disinvest their stake in public undertakings of rail sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these companies are likely to be disinvested?

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

(b) Ministry of Railways is proposing partial disinvestment of RITES Limited, a Public Sector Undertaking under the administrative control of Ministry of Railways, by issue of fresh shares through Initial Public Offering (IPO).

Disinvestment of any other company is not being proposed at present.

(c) Since the final decision has not been taken, time by which the disinvestment will take place, is not predictable.

[English]

Special Railway Fund

2546. SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount available with the non-lapsable 'Special Railway Fund' at present;

(b) the amount spent during the last three years, year-wise and zone-wise; and

(c) the works identified in each State/Zone to be undertaken/completed in 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Total amount available in

(b) The amount spent during the last three years, zone-wise is as under:-

Railways	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4
Central	186.26	119.91	145.16
Eastern	216.24	243.63	296.19
East Central	317.31	197.52	129.41
East Coast	244.93	176.02	130.88
Northern	392.99	270.73	320.73
North Central	132.82	138.61	51.52
North Eastern	112.58	92.30	55.04

1	2	3	4
Northeast Frontier	110.01	99.36	47.41
North Western	257.82	270.69	-2.96
Southern	250.36	97.97	62.87
South Central	234.60	138.04	171.20
South Eastern	149.70	121.04	233.86
South East Central	284.16	121.10	53.71
South Western	190.00	105.33	39.09
Western	279.51	293.07	191.53
West Central	317.43	295.21	23.38
Metro	0.36	2.01	6.02
Production Units	0.70	0.60	0.56
Total (Railways)	3677.78	2783.14	1955.60

(c) A statement is enclosed.

Special Railway Safety Fund

SRSF data is maintained zonewise. The data of major items for which completion targets have been laid for year 2007-08 is as under.

[illegible]

High Speed Passenger Corridor

2547. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Railway propose to take up pre-feasibility studies for construction of one high speed passenger corridor each in the Northern, Western, Southern and Eastern regions for trains running 300 and 500 kmph;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard; and
- (c) the time by which the said pre-feasibility studies for construction of High Speed passenger corridor will be conducted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Speeds of 300 to 350 kilometers per hour are under consideration.

(b) During the Budget speech 2007-08, it was announced that Ministry of Railways will conduct pre-feasibility studies for construction of high speed passenger corridors, equipped with state of the art signaling and train control systems, for running high speed trains at speeds of 300 to 350 kms per hour; one each in the Northern, Western, Southern and Eastern regions of the country.

In this regard, various State Governments were approached by Railways to find out their willingness for participating in pre-feasibility studies. Government of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have agreed 'in principle' to participate in any pre-feasibility studies.

(c) This proposal is in its initial stages. Pre-feasibility studies require involvement of more than one agency. Each one of the activities i.e. finalization of corridors, selection of consultants and actual study takes considerable time. The approximate time schedule for such studies is expected to be about 2 years.

Foreign Direct Investment in Food Processing Industries

2548. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in food processing sector;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the permission of FDI has an adverse impact on indigenous and small food processing industries in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to encourage small and medium food processing industries in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY):

(a) and (b) Government has put in place a liberal and transparent policy on FDI according to which FDI upto 100% is permitted, under the automatic route in most sectors including food processing sector except food retail and items reserved for small scale industrial sector. FDI upto 100% under the automatic route is allowed for the infrastructure development in the food processing/ storage activities like cold storage, transportation, etc.

(c) and (d) There is no evidence of any adverse impact of FDI on indigenous small scale food processing industries in the country as could be seen from the data of growth rates of production of small scale sector. The small scale sector has maintained a higher rate of growth vis-a-vis the overall industrial sector during the years 2002-03 to 2005-06. The growth rate of SSI sector during 2002-03 was 8.68% as compared to 5.70% in respect of overall industrial sector. In 2005-06, it was 12.32% as against 8.10% in respect of overall industrial sector.

(e) The Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) under its Plan Scheme for Technology Upgradation/ Modernization/ Establishment of Food Processing Industries extends financial assistance to implementing agencies/ entrepreneurs for setting up/ modernization/ technology upgradation of food processing industries in the country in the form of grant-in-aid @ 25% of the cost of Plant & Machinery and Technical Civil Works subject to a maximum of Rs.50 lakhs in general areas or 33.33% subject to a maximum of Rs.75 lakhs in difficult areas including North-Eastern States and Sikkim. Under the Mini Mission IV of Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture, in North Eastern States including Sikkim, J&K, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh assistance at still higher rates @50% upto Rs. 4 crore for promotion of new units and upto Rs.1 crore for upgradation/modernization of units is available for processing of horticultural produce. The Government has been implementing various other Plan schemes for promotion and development of food processing industries in the country including small and medium scale food processing industries. Under these schemes financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid is provided for Development of Infrastructure, Human Resource Development, Promotion of Quality Assurance, Codex Standards and R & D and other promotional measures to encourage development of the food processing industries. In the 11th Plan, it has been proposed to continue assistance to the above schemes with higher levels of assistance.

In addition the Ministry of Small Scale Industries has also been implementing various schemes/programmes

through the organizations under that Ministry which aims at providing adequate credit from financial institutions/banks, funds for technology upgradation and modernization; integrated infrastructural facilities, modern testing facilities and quality certification laboratories, access to modern management practices, entrepreneurship development and skill upgradation through appropriate training facilities, assistance for better access to domestic and export markets and cluster-wide measures to promote capacity-building and empowerment of the units and their collectives.

Supply of Gas by GAIL

2549. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether fifty percent of the existing natural gas based power industries/projects with capacity to generate 1276 MW power in Andhra Pradesh are lying idle due to non-supply of gas by Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL), besides 1500 MW capacity new gas based power projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether State Government of Andhra Pradesh has made repeated requests to the Union Government for release/supply of gas by GAIL to these and other industries; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Union Government for supply of assured amount of gas to Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) and (b) Against a total allocation of around 16.42 Million Standard Cubic Metre per Day (MMSCMD) in KG basin, the total availability during 2006-07 was only around 6.04 MMSCMD. Due to the low overall availability of natural gas, only 3.88 MMSCMD could be supplied in 2006-07 to gas-based power projects in Andhra Pradesh, against a firm allotment of 5.19 MMSCMD.

Due to lesser availability of gas from ONGC fields in KG basin and based on request from Government of Andhra Pradesh, gas is currently being supplied only to existing power plants. Allocations to gas-based power plants have been made subject to them necessarily building dual fuel capabilities. So these power plants are not dependent on natural gas alone.

(c) and (d) The state Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested to augment the gas supply for power projects.

The low supply of gas is because of limited production of natural gas in the area and lack of connectivity of this grid to any other production centre/R-LNG terminal.

The gas production from existing fields of ONGC in the

State of Andhra Pradesh, viz., Rajahmundry asset, has increased by 0.57 MMSCMD. However, due to natural decline of production from wells of other existing fields, there has been no incremental addition. The gas from G-1/GS-15 project of ONGC is likely to be available from mid 2008.

With recent discoveries of gas made in the KG basin offshore fields, it is expected that the overall gas availability in East Coast would increase.

[Translation]

Construction of Road Over Bridges (ROBs)

2550. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Road Over Bridges (ROBs) under construction for the last three years or more, Zone-wise;

(b) the reasons for delay in the construction;

(c) the amount allocated and spent so far for this purpose, project-wise and Zone-wise;

(d) the time by which these Bridges are likely to be completed; and

(e) the details of the approvals given by the Railways during the last three years for construction of road over bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a), (c) and (e) A Statement is enclosed.

(b) and (d) Construction works of Road over/under bridges is a joint effort between Railways and State Governments. Railways construct bridge proper across the tracks, whereas approaches are constructed by State Government, Public Works Department (PWD). Delay in construction is caused mainly due to:

1. State Government not making available adequate funds through their Annual Budget Plan.
2. Delay in approval of General Arrangement Drawing and Estimates & Plans etc.
3. Delays in Acquisition of land for approaches and removal of encroachments.
4. Delays in relocation of utilities/service roads etc. falling in the alignment.
5. Problems arising due to issues of diversion road location, and local opposition by public, etc.

Hence target for completion of these works depends upon the initiative taken by the State Government in fulfillment of above requisites and also completion of approaches.

Railways make all out efforts to complete their portion of work before or simultaneously with the work of approaches to be

completed by State Government and arrange to provide requisite funds commensurate with progress.

(a) and (c)

Statement

Railway /Zone	No. of road over/under bridges sanctioned on cost sharing basis and are at different stages of planning and construction for the last three years or more zone-wise.	Amount allocated and spent so far for the purpose, zone-wise consolidated of each project for all sanctioned works.							
		2004-05 (in cr)		2005-06 (in cr)		2006-07 (in cr)		2007-08 (in cr.)	
		Allocated	Spent	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	Spent	Allocated	
CR	10	5.68	2.45	6.56	3.39	12.04	5.83	11.8453	
ER	24	15.7	24.1	17.45	19.5	29.84	0.74	25.4221	
ECR	40	50.2	16.2	194.2	37.43	147.5	75.00	122.9494	
E.Co.R	13	12.8	3.29	13.25	4.51	23.00	2.00	33.5464	
NR	32	24.1	22.7	21.17	16.96	47.18	40.00	37.6000	
NCR	3	5.12	0.75	9.56	3.84	17.85	11.80	15.3000	
NER	9	3.6	1.4	7.46	2.58	13.07	7.15	11.5000	
NFR	3	4.3	0.77	8.58	0.17	5.94	6.40	8.4792	
NWR	5	14.5	2.41	11.47	3.42	13.04	2.00	17.3207	
SR	61	42.2	10.4	37.75	21.29	23.8	18.80	60.3100	
SCR	25	12.8	22.4	11.19	13.27	14.06	16.00	66.3344	
SER	16	14.2	7.2	13.78	10.78	9.67	4.80	15.2000	
SECR	4	4.49	0.02	110.04	2.72	16.29	14.50	37.3665	
SWR	28	26.3	5.0	26.71	2.27	29.2	6.67	49.0960	
WR	6	5.69	3.31	13.86	2.08	26.23	2.53	28.2100	
WCR	0	5.3	2.06	4.75	1.41	8.12	2.00	10.2900	
Total	279	251.00	124.0	410.8	145.62	436	216.22	550.74	

(e) During last four years the number of works of road over/under bridges approved/ sanctioned in various works programmes is given below:

Railway	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4	5
CR	0	4	2	-
ER	1	0	2	3
ECR	5	0	0	5
E.CoR	0	1	3	-

	1	2	3	4	5
NR		2	11	9	14
NCR		1	4	2	4
NER		0	0	7	-
NFR		0	2	0	1
NWR		0	0	1	7
SR		8	14	40	41
SCR		1	4	22	13

1	2	3	4	5
SER	0	0	0	1
SECR	0	1	3	2
SWR	1	0	5	1
WR	3	6	6	1
WCR	1	0	2	5
Total	23	47	104	98

*[English]***Nalanda University Mentor Group**

2551. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Singapore have decided to set up a Nalanda University Mentor Group to work out modalities to restore the ancient seat of learning in Bihar;

(b) whether the Mentor Group will consist of members from both the countries;

(c) if so, the names of these members and their technical knowledge and expertise in restoring heritage sites;

(d) whether services of Archeological Survey of India (ASI) will also be utilized; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The Ministry of Culture has no proposal to set up a Nalanda University Mentor Group.

(b) to (e) In view of 'a' above, question does not arise.

Restructuring of Fertilizers Subsidy Regime

2552. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government plans to restructure the existing fertilizers subsidy regime as the soil chemistry in several regions has been affected by overuse of certain fertilizers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether as part of this restructuring the existing product based subsidy regime will be replaced by a nutrient based subsidy regime to promote balanced use of fertilizers across the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) A Group of Ministers (GOM) has been constituted to look into the issues related to sustainable use of fertilizers, and pertinent subsidy and pricing issues. The issues relating to deteriorating soil health, existing subsidy regime and nutrient based subsidy have also been placed before the GOM.

*[Translation]***Gondia Airport**

2553. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the expansion of Gondia Airport in Maharashtra is being carried out;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the expenditure so far incurred on the said work;

(c) the details of the total expenditure likely to be incurred on the said work; and

(d) the time by which the expansion plan is proposed to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRÁFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The existing infrastructure at Birsí airport, Gondia is being upgraded to meet Flying Training requirements. An expenditure of Rs. 45.55 crores has been incurred so far, mainly on runway, apron, taxi links etc. The total expenditure anticipated for upgradation of airport infrastructure and CMS/ ATM facilities is Rs. 114.47 crores on constant cost basis. In addition, an expenditure of Rs. 113.48 crores for establishing National Flying Training Institute will be borne by a Joint Venture Company who would also be operating it. Airport infrastructure upgradation works are likely to be completed by middle of year 2008.

*[English]***Exclusion of Dewar Caste from List of Scheduled Castes**

2554. SHRI MOHAN JENA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any proposal repeatedly from Government of Orissa for exclusion of 'Dewar' caste from the Scheduled Castes list of Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Being a new case, the proposal of the NGO was considered by the Screening Committee and Committee recommended the case. However, no financial assistance under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) has been released to the organization due to non availability of relevant documents.

[Translation]

National Tourism Development Board

2555. DR. RAJESH MISHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up a National Tourism Development Board for integrated development of tourism in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The issue of setting up of a National Tourism Promotion Board was examined in detail by the Ministry in consultation with the trade and industry associations. Taking all factors into consideration, it was felt that there did not appear to be any added advantage in setting up a "Board" for almost the same task which the Ministry is doing at present. As such, the proposal of setting up of a National Tourism Development Board was dropped.

[English]

Allocation of Funds to States

2556. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has granted higher allocations to keep the tourism industry on the priority of State Governments;

(b) if so, the details of such allocations made to Karnataka during the current year;

(c) whether the Government has instructed all the States to initiate policies encouraging private sector to build new hotels;

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

(e) the action taken thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Tourism has been allocated Rs.953.00 crore for the year 2007-08 against the allocation of Rs.800.00 crore for the year 2006-07.

(b) The Ministry of Tourism does not make State-wise allocations of funds. However, the Ministry of Tourism extends Central Financial Assistance to all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for promotion and development of tourism. The proposals that are complete in all respects are examined as per the Scheme guidelines and funds released on the basis of inter-se priority and availability of funds under the following schemes:

1. Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits
2. Assistance to Large Revenue Generating Projects
3. Computerization and Information Technology
4. Events/Fairs and Festivals

The Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned Rs.90.52 crore for 47 projects to Government of Karnataka during the 10th Five Year Plan.

(c) to (e) Several State Governments have created land banks for allotment of hotel sites.

Rourkela Steel Plant

2557. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the details of production made and profit earned by Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) during the last three years and current year;

(b) whether the said plant has incurred any loss during the recent years; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) The details of production and profit before tax for the last three years and current year earned by Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) is given as under:

Year	Saleable steel production (000 Tonnes)	Profit before tax (PBT) (Rs./crore)
2004-05	1556	1045
2005-06	1616	497
2006-07	1942	1336
1st Quarter 2007-08 (April - June 2007)	436	223

(b) No, Sir. RSP has been earning profits since 2004-05.

(c) Does not arise, in view of (b) above.

**Mismanagement and Robbery
at IGI Airport**

2558. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the mismanagement and robbery cases are increasing at IGI Airport;

(b) if so, the number of such cases reported during the last six months; and

(c) the action taken by the Government on each case and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Oil and Gas Exploration

2559. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of oil and gas explored by various public and private sector oil companies during 2007 so far, company-wise;

(b) the extent to which the domestic demand of the country has been met from such explorations; and

(c) the expenditure incurred by the Government on such explorations, company-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) During financial year 2006-07, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Oil India Limited (OIL) and Private/Joint Venture companies have accreted 169.52 Million Metric Tonnes of oil equivalent (MMTOE), 24.52 MMTOE and 193.49 MMTOE inplace reserves respectively.

(b) In 2006-07, total imports of crude oil and petroleum products was about 128 Million Metric Tonne (MMT) and export of petroleum products from the country was about 32.7 MMT. Thus, net import of crude oil and petroleum products was about 96 MMT. In 2006-07, crude oil and natural gas production was about 33.98 MMT and 31.52 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM) respectively. The reserves accreted in the year do not translate into production immediately.

(c) In 2006-07 the exploration expenditure incurred by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Oil India Limited (OIL) and private/ Joint Venture companies was about Rs.

4316.05 crore, Rs. 1044.16 crore and Rs. 3105 crore respectively.

**Public Private Partnership (PPP) for
Gas Distribution Projects**

2560. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:

SHRI GANESH SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government has taken up the distribution of gas in the cities under Public Private Partnership (PPP) model under Cities Gas Distribution Projects;

(b) whether similar project will be started in other parts of the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof, city-wise;

(d) whether State of Rajasthan will be covered under the said programme;

(e) if so, the steps taken in this regard; and

(f) the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred on this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) With the objective of promoting investment from public as well as private sector for laying natural gas trunk pipelines and city/local natural gas networks throughout the country, the Government of India has enacted 'The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006' and notified the 'Policy for Development of Natural Gas Pipelines and City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks'. To implement city gas distribution systems, GAIL and Oil Marketing Companies have formed the following Joint Venture (JV) Companies, which are presently supplying Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Piped Natural Gas (PNG) to the mentioned cities:-

- M/s Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL) in Mumbai and suburbs.
- M/s Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) in Delhi and Noida.
- M/s Bhagyanagar Gas Limited (BGL) in Hyderabad and Vijaywada.
- M/s Central UP Gas Limited (CUGL) in Kanpur.
- Green Gas Limited (GGL) in Lucknow and Agra.

The JV Companies of Maharashtra Natural Gas Limited (MNGL) and Aavantika Gas Limited (AGL) would soon be supplying CNG and PNG to Pune and Indore respectively.

Apart from the above, CNG and/or PNG is being

presently supplied in cities of Agartala, Ahmedabad, Ankleshwar, Bharuch, Surat, Vadodara, Gandhinagar, Hazira, Junagam, Vasva, Mora, Damka, Bhatlai, Kawas, Rajgiri, Suwali, Icchapore, Vidyanagar, Anand, Morbi, Duliajan, Digboi, Dibrugarh, Moran, Naharkatiya, Sivasagar, Nazira, Simaluguri and Tinsukia.

GAIL as also other entities have expressed interest for City Gas Distribution Projects in other cities.

The implementation of city gas distribution projects is linked with availability of gas, commissioning of necessary infrastructure and economic viability.

(d) to (f) An MOU has been signed by GAIL with HPCL to form a Joint Venture Company to implement City Gas distribution projects in the cities of Rajasthan. The projects would be implemented considering the availability of natural gas, setting up of necessary infrastructure and economic viability.

Setting up of Airport Regulatory Authority

2561. SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID:

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU:

SHRI RANEN BARMAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is planning to set up a regulatory authority to monitor the functioning of the various domestic and international airports in the country;

(b) if so, whether a legislation is likely to be enacted in this respect;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) The Cabinet has approved the proposal for setting up of Airport Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA) with the main objective to fix, review and approve tariff structure for the aeronautical services and to monitor pre-set performance standards at Indian airports. All necessary steps/ actions have been taken to introduce the Airport Economic Regulatory Authority of India Bill, 2007 in the Parliament for consideration.

High Speed Trains

2562. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to increase the speed of super-fast trains to 150 KMPH or more and develop corresponding infrastructure and operational features as part

of modernization in consultation with Commissioner of Railway Safety for safety and security of passengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the further steps taken to increase production of newly designed passenger friendly coach capable of smooth running at high speed fitted with new safety features, to make rakes of these coaches for all the high speed long distance super-fast trains by 2010; and

(d) the specific technological features of these coaches which make them more comfortable and secure in running at high speed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The Indian Railways have no plans for increasing the speed of all super-fast trains to 150 KMPH.

However, Indian Railways had planned to run its first Shatabdi train to 150 KMPH. The Indian Railways have started from 15.02.2006, running the Bhopal Shatabdi train at 150 KMPH on the New Delhi-Agra section and have also identified the New Delhi-Kanpur-Lucknow section for making it suitable for running trains at 150 KMPH.

(c) and (d) At present, Rail Coach Factory at Kapurthala has the necessary infrastructural & design capability to manufacture coaches for running trains at 150 KMPH. Railways have no plans at present to run all high-speed trains at speed of 150 KMPH. These new design coaches have a number of modern features and advantages like better riding comfort for passengers due to superior bogie and suspension, aesthetic interiors, superior technology toilets, higher speed potential enhanced safety through anti-climbing features, modern Brake system essential for higher speeds, superior materials for corrosion prevention, light weight, higher passenger capacity per coach, etc.

Project Priyadarshini

2563. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has launched project Priyadarshini to bring women into the core area of the tourism industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any training is being provided to the women in the project and any financial assistance is given to them; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) 'Project

Priyadarshini' an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism under the existing scheme of Capacity Building for Service Providers to develop capacity of women, envisaged training of identified women in various trades related to tourism sector including taxi operations etc.

(c) and (d) The Ministry has not sanctioned any fund for the training of women under the project during current financial year.

Swapping of Rail Links in Assam

2564. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways had convened a high level meeting to formulate an action plan to tackle the situation arising out of the swapping of rail links in Lumding section and other sections of North Eastern (NE) Railway, during rainy and flooding season in Assam and other parts of the NE Railway;

(b) if so, the details and the cost of the action plan formulated; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Railways are already seized of the problem as the Lumding section and other sections of North Eastern region gets frequently swapped during floods. It is observed that this problem is particularly on meter gauge section. During gauge conversion of the sections, it is being taken care that swapping of rail links is avoided as much as possible except in cases of unprecedented rainfall and floods.

(b) Since the measures taken becomes a part of gauge conversion programme, therefore, separate details and cost are not maintained.

(c) Already covered in reply (a) and (b) above.

Centrally Protected Monuments in North Eastern Region

2565. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the centrally protected monuments in North Eastern Region;

(b) the details of the funds allocated for each of these monuments during the last three years;

(c) the steps taken to develop the major ones into tourist centres; and

(d) the revenue earned from these monuments during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) There are eighty-two monuments/sites declared as of national importance in North-Eastern Region. The details of these monuments/sites and expenditure incurred thereon during the last three years are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) The Archaeological Survey of India has carried out regular repairs by way of conservation, preservation, maintenance and creating environmental development on monuments/sites declared as of national importance, besides providing tourist amenities like drinking water, toilet facilities, approach pathways, benches on important and frequent visited monuments.

(d) The details of revenue earned from these monuments during the last three years are as under:

Year	Amount
2004-05	8.75 lakhs
2005-06	8.57 lakhs
2006-07	6.76 lakhs

Statement

The details of Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites in North-Eastern Region and the Expenditure incurred thereon during the last three years

Sl. No.	Name of the monument/site, Location and District	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4	5
Arunachal Pradesh				
1.	Remains in Bishmaknagar, Mishmi, Distt. Dibang Valley	655242	398952	488456
2.	Ruins, Bhalukpong, West Kamena	-	-	-

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Ruins of Copper temple, (Tamereswari Temple) Near Paya District Lohit	-	-	-
Total		655242	398952	488456
Assam				
1.	Cachari ruins, khaspur, Distt. Cachar			
	i. A small unfinished dwelling house			
	ii. Baradwari			
	iii. East wall			
	iv. Singh Darwaza	1305916	937140	690000
	v. Temple of Ranahandi and 7 & 8 two small temples			
2.	Idgah, Rangamati Hill, District Dhubri	176966	21664	12000
3.	Rangamati Mosque, Rangamati Hill, District Dhubri	100000	3664	12000
4.	Sri Suryapahar Ruins, Dasabhuja Devasthan, District Goalpara	1156730	875034	533273
5.	Monument over the grave of Mr. B.J.Stow, Goalpara, District Goalpara	-	-	-
6.	Tomb of Lt. Cresswell, Goalpara, District Goalpara	-	-	-
7.	Ancient Caves, Jogighopa, District Bogaigaon	85170	91924	481649
8.	Monoliths, Kasomari Pathar, District Golaghar	-	-	40000
9.	Sivadol Neghriting, District Golaghat	411987	20500	427167
10.	Carvings, Inscriptions and pillar on the Urvasi Island, Guwahati, District Kamrup	-	-	-
11.	Rock-cut sculptures representing Vishnu Janardan, Guwahati, District Kamrup	18004	-	-
12.	Stone inscription inside the "Poa Mecca Mosque", Hajo, District Kamrup	-	-	-
13.	Sri Kedar Temple, Hajo, District Kamrup	-	458895	274000
14.	Sri Genesh Temple, Hajo, District Kamrup	-	25000	10000
15.	Sri Kameswar Temple, Hajo, District Kamrup	-	64000	604290
16.	Duargaril a Rock inscription, Kamakhya Hill, District Kamrup	8988	-	-

1	2	3	4	5
17.	Rock-cut figures, Kamakhya Hill, District Kamrup			
	i. Dancing Bhairava,			
	ii. Figures of Ganesa-2	540721	355868	25000
	iii. Figure of Narakasur			
	iv. Four-handed Bhairavi			
	v. Miniature Sikhara Shrine			
	vi. Sivalingas-12,			
	vii. Stone Gateway	10466		10000
	viii. Two-handed Bhairavi			
18.	Rock-cut temple, Maibong, District North Cachar Hill	-	-	-
19.	Two inscribed stones, Maibong, District North Cachar Hill	-	-	-
20.	Bolosaon Group monoliths, North Cachar Hills, District North Cachar Hills	-	-	-
21.	Derebara Group monoliths, North Cachar Hills, District North Cachar Hills	-	-	-
22.	Khartong Group of monoliths, North Cachar Hill, District North Cachar Hills	-	-	-
23.	Kobak Group monoliths, North Cachar Hills, District North Cachar Hills	-	-	-
24.	Group of four Maidams, North Cachar Hills, Charaideo, District Sibsagar	286254	466821	1199931
25.	Ahom Raja's Palace, Garhgaon, District Sibsagar	172514	67847	34964
26.	Vishnudol, Gaurisagar, District Sibsagar	27994	-	-
27.	Devidol, Gaurisagar, Sibsagar	36888	-	300042
28.	Sivadol, Gaurisagar, Sibsagar	156083	284354	-
29.	Gaurisagar Tank, Gaurisagar, Sibsagar	-	-	-
30.	Vishnudol, Joysagar, District Sibsagar	499453	439254	38798
31.	Devidol, Joysagar, District Sibsagar	26946	9000	-
32.	Ghanashyam's house, Joysagar, District Sibsagar	95862	9995	5000
33.	Golaghar or Magzine House, Joysagar District Sibsagar	54897	7956	6600
34.	Karengghar of the Ahom Kings, Joysagar, District Sibsagar	670945	1186444	901399

1	2	3	4	5
35.	Ranghar Pavallions, Joysagar, District Sibsagar	15000	15992	9000
36.	Sivadol, Joysagar, District Sibsagar	56015	14983	4956
37.	Rangnathdol, Meteka, District Sibsagar	-	-	-
38.	Vishnudol, Sibsagar, District Sibsagar	15251	-	-
39.	Devidol, Sibsagar, District Sibsagar	7968	4992	-
40.	Eight Cannons of the Ahom period on the bank of the Sibsagar tank, Sibsagar, District Sibsagar	122458	10000	-
41.	Sivadol, Sibsagar District Sibsagar	-	-	299354
42.	Bordol temple, Bishwanath, District Sonitpur	47415	9984	5000
43.	Grave of Lt. Lewis Van Sadan, Bishwanath, District Sonitpur	24910	9998	5000
44.	Grave of Lt. Thomas Kennedy, Bishwanath, District Sonitpur	-	-	-
45.	Rock known as "Sakreswar on the Island Umatumani, Bishwanath, District Sonitpur	41515	9984	5000
46.	Rock Known as "Bishwanath Sivalinga", Bishwanath, District Sonitpur	-	-	-
47.	Dhandi temple, N.C. Kamdayal, District Sonitpur	-	-	-
48.	Ruins, Singri Hill, District Sonitpur	244649	89864	5000
49.	Masonry remains on the Bamuni Hills, Tezpur, District Sonitpur	102650	34984	279938
50.	Mound and ruins of the stone temple, Dahparbatia, District Sonitpur	53887	9984	10000
51.	Rock Inscription on the bank of the Brahmaputra, Tezpur, District Sonitpur	-	-	-
52.	Sculptures in the Chummary compound, Tezpur, District Sonitpur	-	-	-
53.	Hayagriva Madhava Temple, Hazo, District Kamrup	110000	961756	786140
54.	Gun of the Emperor Sher Shah, Sadia District Tin Sakhia	-	-	-
55.	Two Swivel guns belonging to the Mughal Nawwara, Sadia, District Tin Sakhia	-	-	-

1	2	3	4	5
Manipur				
1	Temple of Vishnu, Bishenpur, District Bishnupur	-	-	45000
Total		-	-	45000
Meghalaya				
1.	Megalithic Bridge on the Um-Nyakaneth, between Jaraem and Syndai, District Jaintia Hills	270000	510850	80000
2.	Megalithic Bridge known as Thulum-wi between Jowai and Jarain, Maput, District Jaintia Hills	-	-	-
3.	Megalithic Bridge on the Um-Kumbeh, District Jaintia Hills	20000	-	-
4.	Stone memorial of U. Mawthaw -dur-briew, Nartiang, District Jaintia Hills	-	-	-
5.	Tank, Syndai, District Jaintia Hills	-	-	-
6.	Stone memorial of U-Mawthoh-dur, Bhoi Country, District East Khasi Hills	-	-	-
7.	Scott's Memorials, Cherrapunji, District East Khasi Hills	-	-	-
8.	Manipur Memorial, Shillong, District East Khasi Hills	-	-	-
Total		290000	510850	80000
Nagaland				
1.	Remains of a fort (Dimapur Ruins), Dimapur, District Kohima	793696	628843	100000
2.	Memorials of Mr. G.H. Damant, Major Cook and Subedar Nurbir Sahi, Khonoma, District Kohima	-	-	-
3.	Stone Cairn to the memory of Mr. Damant, Kohima, District Kohima	-	-	-
4.	Lt. H. Forbeb's Grave, Suchima, District Kohima	-	-	-
Total		793696	628843	100000
Tripura				
1	Sculptures and rock-cut relief of Unakuti Tirtha, Unakuti Range, District North Tripura	1174514	830425	426830
2	Ancient Remains, Baxanagar, District West Tripura	703264	1909100	2072712

1	2	3	4	5
3	Gunavati Group of Temples, Radha Kishorpur, District South Tripura	25000	39841	12480
4	Temple of Chaturdasa Devata, Radha Kishorpur, District South Tripura	274565	368639	37440
5	Bhubaneswari Temple, Rajnagar, District South Tripura	106938	22965	19970
6.	Thakurani Tilla, Paschim Pillak, District South Tripura	344739	49938	30000
7.	Ancient Mound called Shyamsundar Ashram Tilla, Baikhora Jolaibari, District South Tripura	592843	56000	887819
8.	Ancient Mound known Puja Kholo, Paschim Pillak, District South Tripura	-	-	-
Total		3221863	3276900	3487251

Sikkim

1	Dubdi Monastery, Kheochod Phalvi, Kheochod Phalvi	-	300000	250000
2	Coronation Throne of Norbugang, Near Yuksam, Kheochod Phalvi, Kheochod Phalvi	-	200000	90000
3	Radbentse site of ancient capital of Sikkim, Forest area of Pemayongtse Monastery Estate, Forest area of Pemayongtse Monastery Estate	2493000	600000	400000
Total		2493000	1100000	740000

Operations of Air India Express

2566. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the names of countries to which Air India Express is operating its flights;

(b) whether the Air India Express is awaiting for approval from many countries to operate its flights;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Air India Express and Alliance Air are proposed to be merged into a single company; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Air India Express is operating its flights to United Arab Emirates, Oman, Doha, Bahrain, Sri Lanka and Singapore.

(b) and (c) Air India Express intends to commence operations shortly to/from Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur, for which bilateral rights are available and Air India Express has been designated for operations., The procedural formalities required are to be completed by Air India Express before commencing the operations.

(d) and (e) Air India Express and Alliance Air are operated by the subsidiary companies of Air India and Indian Airlines respectively. Air India Express is planning to commence domestic operations in addition to the international operations. A decision has already been taken by the Government to merge Air India and Indian Airlines into a new company.

Laying of Third/Fourth Rail Lines

2567. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal to lay third/fourth lines between various sections in the country;

(b) if so, the sections identified for the same; and

(c) the time by which the third/fourth lines are likely to be laid?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) For laying third line, surveys on the following sections have been taken up:-

Sl. No.	Name of the section
1.	Igatpuri-Bhusaval
2.	Bhadrak-Nergundi
3.	Baruipur-Sealdah
4.	Jhansi-Bina
5.	Ballarshah-Kazipet
6.	Kazipet-Vijaywada-Gudur
7.	Renigunta-Arakkonam
8.	Secunderabad-Bhongir
9.	Durg-Nagpur
10.	Itarsi-Nagpur-Wardha-Ballarshah
11.	Jharsuguda-Champa
12.	Chakradharpur-Bondamunda
13.	3rd line as extension of Pendasali-Rajkharswan bypass upto Chakradharpur
14.	3rd line between Dongraposi-Pendasali extended upto Rajkharswan
15.	Kharagpur-Jharsuguda
16.	Rajkharswan-Adityapur
17.	Bhopal-Itarsi
18.	Ratlam-Vadodra
19.	Viramgam-Ahmedabad

At present, no survey for 4th line is in progress.

(c) The proposals are at survey stage and decision to take up the work or otherwise will depend on survey report.

Redevelopment of Mumbai High for Oil Exploration

2568. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC is planning to redevelop its Mumbai High Field for raising production of oil;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the likely increase in the production of crude oil and gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) To arrest the oil production decline in Mumbai High field, major initiatives in the form of redevelopment programme were launched by Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) in 2000-01. These projects are redevelopment projects of Mumbai High North (MHN) and Mumbai High South (MHS). The inputs envisaged under these projects have been completed by April 2007. The implementation of these projects has successfully arrested the production decline from Mumbai High field.

A project for Additional development of A1 Layer of L-III reservoir of Mumbai High North is currently under implementation and will be completed during 2007-08.

In order to maintain the high level of production and further improve the oil recovery from Mumbai High field, the feasibility study for next phase of re-development program is being carried out by ONGC.

The quantum of investment proposed to be made for next phase of redevelopment programme and the likely increase in the production of crude oil & gas would depend on feasibility study.

Proposal for Residential School for Mentally Handicapped

2569. SHRI PRATIK P. PATIL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Dnyandeve Shikkshan Prasarak Mandal, a NGO in Maharashtra has applied for a project proposal in the fields of residential school for the mentally handicapped and requested for a certificate;

(b) if so, whether the proposal is approved and certificate is granted by the Union Government; and

(c) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) The NGO has applied for registration with the National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities. There is however, no such proposal for residential school for the mentally handicapped.

(b) and (c) The certificate has not been granted to the organization since the required documents including activity

report, ownership of building and list of beneficiaries were not provided.

Eligibility Criteria for Pilots

2570. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the criteria set up for the applicants desiring to become pilots;
- (b) whether the Directorate General of Civil Aviation has set up a committee to review, among other aspects, the eligibility conditions of applicants desiring to become pilots;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the non-science students are also likely to be permitted to take up the examination for commercial pilots; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Criteria to become pilots are given in Schedule II Section J, K, M and N of Aircraft Rules, 1937. Apart from other flying related experience, medical fitness etc., an aspirant for Commercial Pilot Licence is required to possess an educational qualification of 10 + 2 with Mathematics and Physics.

(b) to (e) A Committee has been constituted to review the Pilot Examination System to ensure its conformity to International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Annexure-I and international regulations. The Committee would review the sections dealing with Commercial pilots and airline pilots as contained in schedule II of the Aircraft Rules with regard to eligibility conditions, privileges etc. and make appropriate recommendations in the matter. The Committee is yet to finalise its report.

[Translation]

Gas and Oil Exploration in Himalayas

2571. PROF. PREM KUMAR DHUMAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is now giving attention towards gas and oil exploration in the Himalayas because the analysis of the data collected from the Himalayas have made the scientists conclude that there are huge possibilities of finding petrol and gas in that area;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the amount of expenditure to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) Currently, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is holding two Petroleum Exploration Licenses viz. Kangra-Mandi and HF-ONN-2001/1 in the state of Himachal Pradesh in the northwestern Himalayan region to undertake exploration activities.

Exploration Block HF-ONN-2001/1 was awarded to M/s ONGC in 3rd round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Operator has carried out 245 Line km (LKM) of 2D, 100 sq km of geochemical survey and 124 sq. km of geological survey. Operator has made expenditure of US\$ 7.41 million till March 2007.

A few more exploration blocks, has identified in Himalayan region in the state of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and foothill areas are likely to be offered in the forthcoming round of NELP.

[English]

Stoppage of Sampark Kranti Express at Davangere Railway Station

2572. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Sampark Kranti Express (Train Nos. 2629 and 2630) running between Yashwantpur and Delhi is having only stoppages at Tumkur, Hubli and Belgaum railway stations in Karnataka State;
- (b) if so, whether the Railways have received representations from the people of Davangere in Karnataka to provide stoppage for this train at Davangere railway station; and
- (c) if so, the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Stoppage of 2629/2630 Nizamuddin-Yeshwantpur Sampark Kranti Express at Davangere has been provided from 01.08.2007.

[Translation]

Vacant Post in West Central Railways

2573. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of posts lying vacant in each division of West Central Railway; and
- (b) the steps taken to fill up the said posts so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Number of posts lying vacant

in Bhopal, Jabalpur, and Kota divisions of West Central Railway as on 31.07.2007 are 1784, 2697, and 1579 respectively.

(b) Requisite steps are being taken for filling up the vacancies through departmental promotion and open market recruitment. Indents have been placed on Railway Recruitment Boards for direct recruitment quota. Recruitment of Group 'D' staff is under process in West Central Railway. Suitability tests are being held regularly to fill up promotional quota vacancies.

Sale of Adulterated Food Items at Railway Stations

2574. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of selling of adulterated food items at railway stations as published in the 'Jansatta' dated May 18, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto;

(d) whether police and railway personnel are also found involved in such cases;

(e) if so, whether the Railways have formulated any scheme to facilitate sale of unadulterated food items to the passengers at the railway stations; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A news item on catering services at railway stations and in trains has appeared in the 'Jansatta' on 17.05.2007. In this regard it is stated that Railways provide hygienic and quality food to the passengers at stations and in trains. Regular monitoring of catering services is done by Railways and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) officials. Food samples are taken from static and mobile catering units by railways' health officials for testing as per provisions of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act (PFA).

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) IRCTC has engaged independent food audit agencies to ensure quality of food supplied to the passengers of Indian Railways. In addition, dedicated quality inspectors have also been engaged for constant monitoring of quality of food. Deterrent actions like, warning, imposition of fine, disciplinary action, termination of contracts are taken for lapses, on the part of licensees and departmental staff, in catering services.

Continuous monitoring is done of the quality of food served in Railway Stations by periodic inspections, lifting samples for check under quality control and Prevention of Food Adulteration Act 1954. In case of samples found unsatisfactory, under quality control Commercial Department of the concerned Railway is advised to take necessary punitive/corrective action. In case samples lifted under PFA Act found unsatisfactory prosecution launched in the competent court of law.

Details of Food Samples collected under PFA Act

Period	No. of Samples collected under	Found unfit	No. of prosecution launched	No. awarded punishment
2006-07	6164	158	28	41

Details of Food Samples collected under Quality control

Period	No. of samples collected under PFA Act	Found unfit	No. recommended for fine
2006-07	16399	368	224

Savings and Extravagance of PSUs

2575. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA.

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

(a) whether the gas and oil undertakings under this Ministry are indulging in extravagance and as a result of it these undertakings are increasing the prices of oil and gas products thereby passing the burden on the public;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry into the matters relating to savings and extravagance in those undertakings and the number of cases came to the notice of the Government where carelessness has been observed in the matters of economy and savings in the working of these undertakings;

(d) the expenditure incurred on the administrative expenses of the IOC, GAIL and ONGC headquarters during the last three years; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to check extravagance in the ONGC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) and (b) The PSU oil and gas companies under the administrative control of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas have been granted Navratna or Miniratna status by the Government. As a result, the powers to incur administrative expenditure are exercised by the competent authority of the respective companies. PSU oil and gas companies have informed that there is no extravagance in their administrative expenditure and strict controls are exercised by the companies in incurring any expenditure.

(c) to (e) The government keeps reviewing the functioning of PSU oil and gas companies including ONGC, inter alia through quarterly performance reviews and through the government nominees on their Board of Directors. Expenditure incurred administrative expenses of IOC, GAIL and ONGC headquarters during the last three years was as under:

	(Rs. Crore)		
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
IOC	56.99	54.74	54.53
GAIL	177.00	128.00	115.00
ONGC	313.61	360.48	384.15

[English]

Utilization of Milk Production

2576. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of milk production utilized by the processing units in the country; and

(b) the details of financial assistance provided to these units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) About 35% of milk production in India is utilized by the processing units in the country out of which 13% milk is being processed by organized sector and about 22% Milk is being processed by the unorganized sector i.e. Halwais and vendors.

(b) The Ministry of Food Processing Industries provides financial assistance for promotion of dairy processing industries. Under the Plan scheme for Technology Upgradation/ Modernization/ Establishment of food processing industries, the Ministry extends financial assistance to food processing units in the form of Grant-in-aid @25% of the cost of Plant & Machineries and technical civil works subject to maximum of Rs. 50.00 lakhs in general areas and 33.33% subject to maximum of Rs. 75.00 lakhs in difficult areas such as Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand,

Sikkim, North-Eastern States, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) areas. Food processing units using milk as raw material for processed products are eligible for assistance under the scheme.

In order to ensure speedy disbursement of financial assistance, the Ministry has decided to decentralize the disbursement procedure through Scheduled Banks/ FIs under this scheme w.e.f. 01.04.2007.

[Translation]

Policy for Commercial Development of Railway Land

2577. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD:
SHRI HEMMAL MURMU:
SHRI ASADUDDIN OWASI:
SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA
DESHMUKH:
SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:
SHRI K.S. RAO:
DR.M. JAGANNATH:
SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have formulated any policy for allotting their unused/vacant land on lease;

(b) if so, the details of the policy and norms fixed therefor;

(c) the zone-wise details of ongoing/pending projects for commercial development of such land; and

(d) the role of RLDA and IRCTC in this regard alongwith the details of agreements entered into by them with various parties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) The vacant land is required by the Railways for its future development works. However, till such time, the land is required by Railways for its own operational use, the same is put to various short-term uses like commercial licensing, commercial plantation, retail outlets, Grow More Food (GMF) scheme, etc. In addition, where potential exists, it is proposed to undertake commercial development of land through Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA).

(b) As per the policy, land under commercial plantation & commercial development schemes will be allotted through open tender after following transparent bidding process. Land for retail outlets may be allotted to oil companies operating in the area through Limited offer. Railway land under commercial licensing is given to the

interested parties for loading/unloading, stacking purposes etc. In this scheme, parties are required to offer committed traffic to the Railways apart from normal land licence fee. Under GMF scheme, railway land may be licensed to railway employees belonging to Group 'C' and 'D' employees in identified urban areas only.

(c) The details of 92 sites entrusted to Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) for commercial development of Railway Land are given in the enclosed statement.

(d) RLDA has been set up as a Statutory Authority by an amendment to Railways Act, 1989 for development of vacant railway land for commercial uses for generating revenue by non-tariff measures. So far, no agreement has been entered into by RLDA with any developer. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been set up to upgrade, professionalize and manage the catering and hospitality services at stations, on trains and other locations. No role of IRCTC has been envisaged in commercial development of railway land/air-space.

Catering and hospitality facilities like Food Plazas and Budget Hotels for passengers' benefit are being commissioned by IRCTC at or adjoining station area utilizing available space for such purposes. Till now 43 Food Plazas have been licensed and tenders for 20 Budget Hotels have been awarded by IRCTC.

S.No.	Railway	Name of site
1	2	3
1.	Eastern	Belgharia
2.		Bidhan Nagar
3.		Halishahar
4.		Ballyghat
5.		Kancharapara
6.		Budge-Budge
7.	East Central	Gautam Budha Institute, Gaya
8.	East Coast	Vishakhapatnam (2 sites)
9.	Northern	Railway Institute Vidhan Sabha Marg, Lucknow
10.		Delhi-Sarai Rohila
11.	North Central	Gwalior
12.		Nirala Nagar (Kanpur)
13.		Idgah
14.		Mathura Junction

1	2	3
15.		Kampoo Kothi
16.	Northeast Frontier	Karimganj
17.		Silcher
18.		New Coochbehar
19.		New Alipurduar
20.		Alipurduar
21.		Kurseong
22.		Darjeeling
23.		Kishanganj
24.		Katihar
25.		Jorhat
26.		Makum
27.		Sibsagar
28.		Margherita
29.		Burdwan Road, Siliguri
30.		Between Road Over Bridge & Jorapani near New Jalpaiguri
31.		In front of New Jalpaiguri Station
32.		In front of Power House of New Jalpaiguri
33.		Tin Batti More near New Jalpaiguri
34.		Near circulating area
35.		Mahananda Colony, Siliguri
36.		By the side of Darjeeling More
37.		Diesel Shed Road Siliguri
38.		Panchnai River and Transit hostel, Siliguri
39.		Hawker Corner at Siliguri
40.		Amingaon - Hajo Guwahati Road
41.		Amingaon - Hajo Guwahati Road
42.		Amingaon - Amingaon-Rangiya Road
43.		Amingaon - Amingaon-Rangiya Road

1	2	3
44.		Amingaon-Rangiya Rajib Gandhi Indoor Stadium
45.		Side of Amingaon - IIT Road
46.		Amingaon near CONCOR complex
47.		Amingaon - Hajo Guwahati Road
48.		Pandu New Colony -I
49.		Pandu New Colony-I
50.		Pandu on Adabari - Pandu Road
51.		Pandu on Adabari - Pandu Road
52.		Pandu on Adabari - Pandu Road
53.	South Central	Between MMTS stations- Bharanagar & Boarabanda
54.		Near Uppal bus stand
55.		Moula-Ali-I
56.		Moula-Ali-II
57.		Guntakal
58.		Guntakal
59.		Aurangabad
60.		Hingoli Station area
61.		Adilabad
62.		Washim Station
63.		Mudkhed
64.		Hafeezpet
65.		Near Railway hospital at Vijayawada
66.		In front of TA Camp Staff Quarters, Moula Ali
67.		Near Moula Ali flyover
68.	South Eastern	Bokaro-I
69.		Bokaro-II
70.		TATA
71.	South East Central	Zone-II/Bhilai
72.		Zone-II & III Bhilai
73.		In front of Zone III/Bhilai

1	2	3
74.		PP Yard/Bhilai
75.		Urkura
76.		Kapa
77.		Wagon Repair Shop Colony
78.	South Western	Malleshwaram Railway Station
79.		Yeswanthpur
80.		Bangalore City
81.	Western	Bhavnagar Terminus side to Manekwadi Station
82.		Manekwadi station
83.		Manekwadi station
84.		Takhteswar station
85.		Takhteswar station
86.		Krishnagar
87.		Krishnagar Stn. to Chainage 246
88.		Jamnaqar - Old Station Area
89.		Maninagar (West)
90.		Maninagar (East)
91.	Integral Coach Factory, Perumbur	Kakkapallam Padi, Chennai

[English]

**Domestic Air Service to Foreign
Airline Companies**

2578. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to open up the domestic air service to foreign airline companies; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Storage of Crude Oil

2579. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that China imported 12.4 million barrels of crude for its strategic storage

tanks in December, 2006, which was 50% higher than its intake in November, 2006 taking advantage of cheaper oil;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government also considers such courses for building up reserves based on cheap crude prices;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) As per the FACTS Global Energy Report Issue of March 2007, 12.4 million barrels of crude were offloaded to the Chinese storage sites of its Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPRs) at Zhenhai, Zhejiang Province in December, 2006. This was in addition to the 3 and 4 million barrels of injections in November, 2006.

(c) to (e) Yes Sir, In order to enhance the energy security of the country and to safeguard against short term supply disruptions, Government have approved setting up of 5 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) strategic storage of crude oil at three locations, viz. Vizag (1.0 MMT), Mangalore (1.5 MMT) and Padur, Udipi (2.5 MMT). This project is likely to be completed by the end of 11th Five Year Plan. The Government is planning to further enhance its strategic reserve capacity to 15 MMT in the next phase which will meet our corresponding requirements.

[Translation]

Pharmaceutical Companies

2580. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the registered pharmaceutical companies in the country and the value of their production;

(b) whether many unregistered pharmaceutical companies are producing medicines in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any rules have been formulated by the Government to check such pharmaceutical companies; and

(e) if so, the action taken by the Government against the said companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) As per the information furnished by the

Directorate General of Health Service, there are about 10,000 Pharmaceutical units in the country and the value of production is about Rs.36,000 crores.

(b) to (e) Manufacture of medicines should be carried out under a valid drug license issued by the State Drugs Licensing Authority. Manufacturing of drugs/medicines without a valid drug license is a punishable offense under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act and Rules. It is the responsibility of the State Drug Control Authorities to keep a strict vigilance in this regard. In case, any company/person found manufacturing medicines without a license, prosecution has to be filed in the Court of Law by the State Drugs Inspector.

[English]

Gauge Conversion of Dhasa-Jetalsar Railway Line

2581. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the survey for gauge conversion of Dhasa-Jetalsar meter gauge line has been completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

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

(d) the time by which the survey is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per survey report, the cost of conversion of 104.44 Kms long line has been assessed as Rs 216.97 crore with rate of return of 9.98%.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Jagdishpur-Haldia Pipeline by GAIL

2582. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has approved the request of Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) for inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) for 5 new natural gas pipelines in the country including the 876 km. long Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline;

(b) if so, the details of the agencies who have been awarded these jobs alongwith the progress and the schedule of completion of the jobs; and

(c) the sources of gas to fulfill the requirements of various States including West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar, through which the proposed pipeline are supposed to traverse?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL):

(a) Yes, Sir. Government has issued authorizations to Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) for laying 5 new natural gas pipelines in the country, including the 876 km long Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline.

(b) The project has to be completed within 36 months from the date of first notification under sub-section (1) of Section 3 of the Petroleum and Minerals Pipelines (Acquisition of Right of User in Land) Act, 1962. The job has not been awarded.

(c) The pipeline will have a provision for bi-directional flow. The sources of gas indicated for the Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline are Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import by Petronet LNG Limited and Hazira LNG Limited and indigenous gas, including from the offshore KG basin field.

Capacity of Coaches/Compartments

2583. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have proposed to increase the capacity of coaches/compartments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the experts have cautioned against compromising passenger comfort and safety while undertaking the change in designs;

(d) if so, the views expressed by the experts in this regard;

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Railways to ensure passenger comfort and safety while increasing capacity of compartments/coaches;

(f) whether the Railways has drawn a roadmap for aiming at 10 billion passenger mark in the next 8 years;

(g) if so, the detailed strategy chalked out by the Railways in this regard; and

(h) the estimated expenditure in this regard?

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

(b) Enhanced capacity coach layouts have been developed for Sleeper class coaches, AC 3-tier coaches, First class AC coaches, and other composite coaches such as 1 AC cum AC 3-tier and AC 2-tier cum AC 3-tier. The objective of enhanced berthing capacity has been achieved mainly by introduction of additional middle berth on the longitudinal side in AC 3-tier and Sleeper class coaches and also by means of minor variation in the bay width on the transverse side.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The design of the longitudinal middle berths and its mounting arrangement has been duly assessed and tested before finalization of the same. Due attention has been paid to ensure safety, comfort and ergonomics for the passengers.

(f) to (h) No assessment for 8 years has been made. However in the Working Group (WG) document on Railway program for XI plan, a target of 8.4 billion passengers has been projected. The XIIth plan is not yet finalized.

Promotion of Tourism in Orissa

2584. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

SHRI ARJUN SETHI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to refer to the Unstarred Question No.432 dated July 27, 2006 and state:

(a) the details of the names of projects sanctioned and financial assistance given during 8th, 9th and 10th Five Year Plans in the State of Orissa, project-wise;

(b) the details of funds sanctioned for each plan period, utilized and intended developments made at the sites;

(c) the details of the project proposals received by the Union Government from the State Government of Orissa for improvement of tourist spots/places during the said period;

(d) the details of the projects cleared by the Union Government so far; and

(e) the time by which the remaining proposals/projects will be cleared by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) A list of projects sanctioned to the State of Orissa during the 8th, 9th and 10th Plan is enclosed as statement.

Detail of projects sanctioned during 8th, 9th and 10th Five Year Plan for the State of Orissa is given as under:

(Rs. in lakh)

S.No.	Plan	No. of projects Sanctioned	Amount Sanctioned
1.	8th	46	940.19
2.	9th	63	1316.25
3.	10th	37	7235.39

Development and promotion of tourism is undertaken primarily by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/Union

Territory Administrations for tourism related projects which are identified in consultation and interaction with them under schemes for Product/Infrastructure Development of Destinations/Circuits and Assistance to Large Revenue Generating Projects.

Project proposals received from the State Governments/ Union Territories that are complete in all respects are examined on the basis of scheme guidelines and inter-se priority and funds released subject to availability under the respective heads

Implementation of projects is the responsibility of the State Government. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India monitors the progress of the projects from time to time in consultation with State Government/Union Territories as well as through Domestic India Tourism Offices. The balance fund for a project is released only on receipt of completion/ utilization certificate in respect of the installment released earlier for it.

Statement

Projects Sanctioned to the State of Orissa during the 8th, 9th and 10th Plan

(Rs. in lakh)

S. No.	Name of the Project	Amount Sanctioned
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1	2	3
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8th Plan

1992-93

1.	Wayside Amenities at Sakhi Gopal	13.53
2.	Yatri Niwas at Puri	44.85
3.	Bali Yatra at Cuttack	12.00
4.	Trekking equipment for Makhendraqui	1.99
Total		72.37

1993-94

1.	Konark Festival	3.24
2.	Bali Yatra	12.05
3.	Garden Festival	0.50
4.	Financial assistance for Illumination of Jagannath Temple	10.00

1	2	3
5.	Beach Festival	05.00
6.	Tourist Complex at Gopalpur	38.23
7.	Tourist Complex at Paradip	31.65
8.	Fairs and festivals	0.00
Total		100.67

1994-95

1.	Tourist Lodge at Rayagada	25.20
2.	Tourist Complex at Hirakud	40.30
3.	Tourist Complex at Koraput	42.43
4.	Tourist Complex at Narsinghanath	41.23
5.	Beach Festival, 1994	10.00
6.	Illumination of Sea Beach at Puri	32.81
7.	Rajaseri Festival, 1995	01.00
Total		193.66

1995-96

1.	Beach cleaning equipment, Puri	09.30
2.	Amenities Centre at Dhauli	20.26
3.	Floating Restaurant at Barkul	42.89
4.	Tourist Lodge at Badrarama	36.41
Total		108.86

1996-97

1.	Tourist Complex at Upperjonk	08.86
2.	Kendrapara Yatra	01.00
3.	Wayside amenity at Ramachandi	08.86
4.	Development of Biranchi Narayan Temple	15.06
5.	Refurbishment of Monuments at Ratnagiri	31.00
6.	Renovation of Laxmi Barah Temple at Aul	07.00

1	2	3
7.	Wayside amenities at Songhara	28.35
8.	Baripada Yatra	01.00
9.	Upgradation of Forest Lodge at Dangamal	08.86
10.	Tourist Complex at Amathgarh	08.86
11.	Tourist Complex at Kapilas	18.00
12.	Refurbishment of monuments at Udaigiri	20.00
13.	SEL Show at Konark	91.85
14.	Refurbishment of monuments at Lalitgiri	25.00
15.	Construction of Tourist Info-cum-Cultural Centre at Kendrapada	99.85
16.	Konark Festival	05.00
17.	Wayside Amenities Centre at Ghatgaon	25.00
18.	Wayside Amenities Centre at Kaipadar	08.86
19.	Wayside amenities at Satpada	25.00
20.	Rath Yatra	02.00
21.	Renovation of Lord Baldev Son Temple at Kendrapada	07.50
22.	Wayside amenities at Talchua	08.86
23.	Tourist Complex at Sohela	08.86
Total		464.63
Grand Total (8th Plan)		940.19

9th Plan**1997-98**

1.	Tourist Centre at Kherigr Road	20.00
2.	Freedom Fighters Memorial Trust-cum-Tourist Complex in Jaipur	49.99
3.	Tourist Reception Centre at Baripada	40.00
4.	Refurbishment of Mahabinayak Temple at Chandikhol	16.66

1	2	3
5.	Refurbishment of Baldevji Temple at Kendrapada	16.66
6.	Rath Yatra	04.00
7.	Konark Dance Festival	05.00
8.	Tourist Centre at Belkhendi	20.00
9.	Public Conveniences at Dhauligiri	15.00
10.	Tourist Reception Centre at Mahndragiri	25.00
11.	Public Conveniences at Nandan Kanan	15.00
12.	Tourist Reception Centre at Balasore	40.00
13.	Tourist Reception Centre at Ratnagiri	75.00
14.	Tourist Reception Centre at Lalitgiri	25.00
15.	Public Conveniences at Gopalpur on sea	13.12
16.	Public Conveniences at Kalijan Island	13.76
17.	Tourist Reception Centre at Udaigiri	25.00
18.	Tourist Reception Centre at Ranipur Jharial	20.00
19.	Refurbishment of Grameshwar Mahadev Temple, Belar Nuagaon	03.30
20.	Refurbishment of Chandramauli Temple at Pattamundai of Kendrapada	10.00
21.	Refurbishment of Binod Bihari Temple and Beautification of Raghunathpur	10.00
22.	Refurbishment of Kichakeshwari Temple at Khiching	03.30
23.	Public Conveniences at Jajpur	13.03
24.	Refurbishment of Jagannath Temple, Derabis	16.60
25.	Beach Festival	05.00
26.	Development of Khurda Fort at historical part	33.33
27.	Refurbishment of Dadhibamana Temple and Beautification of temple complex at Aureshwar	03.30
28.	Tourist Centre at Harishankar, Bolangir	20.00
Total		557.05

1	2	3
1998-991		
1.	Tourist Reception Centre at Raurkela, Distt. Sundergarh	43.20
2.	Bali Yatra	03.00
3.	Development of Chandrabhaga Beach, Konark and Landscaping	41.00
4.	Construction of Tourist Reception Centre at Pariakhemundi	43.20
5.	Pun Beach Festival	05.00
6.	Tourist Reception Centre at Dhenkanal	43.20
Total		178.60
1999-2000		
1.	Konark Festival	01.48
2.	Wayside amenities at Odgaon	05.00
3.	Wayside amenities at Dappanayakani	05.00
4.	Additional accommodation at Yatri Niwas, Konark	48.00
5.	Wayside Amenities at Bhadrakali	05.00
6.	Tourist Complex at Keonjhar	45.00
7.	Yatri Niwas at Chandaneshwar	56.76
8.	Additional accommodation at Yatri Niwas at Satpada	32.19
9.	Wayside amenities at Gorakhnath	05.00
10.	Wayside amenities at Barapali	05.00
11.	Wayside Amenities Centre at Mantridi	05.00
12.	Wayside amenities at Mahurkalia	05.00
13.	Chow Festival	01.00
14.	Wayside amenities at Chatikona	05.00
15.	Wayside amenities at Devgaon	05.00
16.	Fair and festivals	05.00

1	2	3
17.	Tribal Dance Festival	01.00
18.	Water Sports Equipment at Satpada	20.00
19.	Wayside amenities at Chandikhol	05.00
20.	Tourist Complex at Sabalpur	45.00
21.	Additional accommodation at Yatri Niwas at Konark (Phase II)	80.00
Total		385.43
2000-2001		
1.	Development of Buddha Jayanti Park at Chandrasekharapur, Bhubaneswar	36.91
2.	Tourist Complex at Baliharchandi, Distt. Puri	50.00
3.	Construction of Trekking Base Camp at Kuldiah, Distt. Balasore	45.00
4.	Yatri Niwas at Hingula Pitha	25.03
Total		156.94
2001-2002		
1.	Beach Festival	03.40
2.	Computerisation	20.00
3.	Konark Festival, 2001	03.40
4.	Publicity and advertisement support	11.43
Total		38.23
Grand Total (9th Plan)		1316.25
10th Plan		
2002-03		
1.	Rural Tourism Project at Raghurajpur	50.00
2.	Computerisation of office and its Groups	7.50
Total		57.50
2003-04		
1.	Development of Puri as a Tourist destination	394.55

1	2	3
2.	Konark Festival, 2002	5.00
3.	Folk Dance Festival, 2003-04	5.00
4.	Rajarani Music Festival, 2003-04	5.00
5.	Buddha Mahotsav	10.00
Total		419.55

2004-05

1.	Development of Peace Park and Amphitheater at Dhauli (Distt. Khurda)	488.51
2.	Integrated Development of Buddhist Circuit in Orissa - Development of facilities at Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Udaigiri and Langudi under Tourist Circuit	740.67
3.	Shreekshestra Vasant Festival at Puri	15.00
4.	Kharvela Festival., 2004-05	5.00
5.	GOI-UNDP Endogenous Tourism Project at village Pipli in Puri Distt. (Software)	20.00
6.	GOI-UNDP Endogenous Tourism Project at village Raghurajpur in Puri Distt. (Software)	20.00
7.	Development of Village Pipli in Puri Distt. (Hardware)	50.00
Total		1339.18

2005-06

1.	Development of Gopalpur-on-Sea (Distt. Ganjam)	447.22
2.	Development of Sakhi Gopal (Distt. Puri)	460.96
3.	Development of Taptapani in Distt Ganjam as Tourist Destination	500.00
4.	Integrated Development of Tourist Circuit Bhubaneswar-Dhauli-Puri-Konark	720.09
5.	Development of Chilka Lake (Distt. Puri and Ganjam) as Tourist Destination	389.05

1	2	3
6.	Development of Rural Tourism at Village Khiching, Distt. Mayurbhanj	50.00
7.	Shreekshestra Festival at Puri	15.00
8.	Puri Beach Festival, 2005	4.00
9.	Konark Festival, 2005	3.00
10.	Rajrani Festival, 2005 at Bhubaneswar	3.00
Total		2592.32

2006-07

1.	Development of Simlipal in Distt. Mayurbhanj as a tourist destination	297.12
2.	Puri Beach Festival, 2006	05.00
3.	Konark Festival, 2006	05.00
4.	Ekamra Utsav, 2007	10.00
5.	Shreekshestra Vasant Utsav, 2006	10.00
6.	Integrated Development of Chandipur-Talsari-Udaypur-Chandaneswar- Remuna-Panchlingeswar-Nilagiri Circuit	800.00
7.	Development of Village Barpali, Distt. Baragarh, Rural Tourism (Hardware)	50.00
8.	Development of Village Hirapur, Distt. Khurda, Rural Tourism (Hardware)	50.00
9.	Development of Village Padmanavpur, Distt. Ganjam, Rural Tourism (Hardware)	50.00
10.	Development of Village Deulajhari, Distt. Angul, Rural Tourism (Hardware)	50.00
11.	Integrated Development of Koraput Circuit "Koraput-Deomali-Jeypore-Upper Kolab-Gupteshwar as a tourist circuit in Orissa	692.00
12.	Development of Eco-Tourism at Bhitarkanika	383.22
13.	Development of Satkosia as a Tourist Destination in Orissa	424.50
Total		2826.84
Grand Total (10th Plan)		7235.39

Subsidization of LPG for the Traditional Fisherman

2585. DR. K.S. MANOJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is promoting the conversion of kerosene using outboard engines into LPG outboard engines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to provide LPG subsidy for the traditional fisherman in view of the quota cut and scarcity of kerosene oil;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government of Kerala has submitted any proposal for the subsidization of LPG to the traditional fisherman; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Setting up of New Steel Plants

2586. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) proposes to set up new steel plants;

(b) if so, the probable locations of the proposed plants, State-wise; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to enhance the supply of steel to check the price rise in view of the growing demand and the soaring prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) proposes to set up two Greenfield plants, one each in the States of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. The exact locations of proposed plants are yet to be finalized. At the same time SAIL is also trying to takeover few existing sick units like Malvika Steels Ltd. in U.P. which is one of them.

(c) The Government is working on various measures to improve the steel production capacity in India which inter-alia includes large scale capacity addition by the Public Sector Steel Plants. For effective coordination and monitoring of all issues concerning major steel investments in the country, an Inter Ministerial Group has been set up under the Chairman-

ship of Secretary (Steel). A Steel Price Monitoring Committee has also been constituted to monitor, analyses and discuss the price movements of steel commodities. To improve the reach of steel products, Steel Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) have taken up the appointment of district dealers in every district in the country. The steel PSUs have also made arrangements to transport the materials to the dealers' premises and the cost of transportation is borne by the producers.

[English]

Privatisation of Airports

2587. SHRI HITEN BARMAN:

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to privatise some more airports in the country;

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

(c) the airports selected for privatisation;

(d) the amount likely to be earned from this move; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken to safeguard the interests of the employees likely to be affected by privatisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Revival of Steel Plants

2588. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH:

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the profit making steel plants as well as those in sick conditions;

(b) the steps taken by the Government for revival of such sick steel plants;

(c) whether the steel production is sufficient to meet the domestic demands fully;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the steel production in the country is declining;

(f) if so, the steps being taken to improve the situation; and

(g) the programmes chalked out by the Government for expansion of steel industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) During the financial year 2006-07, all steel plants having installed capacities of 1.0 million tonne per annum or higher have made net profits except Ispat Industry which has incurred a net loss after tax payment for Rs. (-) 10.26 crores. The details of profit before tax (PBT) and profit after tax (PAT) in respect of these plants are given below:-

(Figures in crore rupees)

Company	PBT for 2006-07	PAT for 2006-07
Steel Authority of India Ltd.	9422.62	6202.29
Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd.	2584.00	1363.0
Tata Steel Ltd.*	6313.02	4165.61
Jindal Steel and Power Ltd.*	940.90	705.95
JSW Steel Ltd.*	1927.14	1303.89
Essar Steel Ltd.	683.46	436.49
Ispat Industries Ltd.*	2.65	(-)10.26

(*: Source: National Stock Exchange)

(b) None of the above steel plants are sick, hence does not arise.

(c) During the year 2006-07, the country is a net exporter of steel with a total export of 4.75 million tonnes and import of 4.10 million tonnes of steel. The apparent domestic consumption of non-alloy finished steel in India during 2006-07 is 43.74 million tonnes.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) No, Sir. The crude steel production in the country in 2006-07 was 50.86 million tonnes (prov.) over 46.46 million tonnes in 2005-06, which is an increase of 9.47%.

(f) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

(g) Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) have planned to augment the hot metal production capacity from 14.6 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) to 26.0 MTPA and from 4.05 MTPA to 6.5 MTPA respectively.

Railway Ticket Booking through Post Offices

2589. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the norms fixed for selecting the post offices for selling of railway tickets;

(b) whether post offices in Madhya Pradesh have also been selected;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken to prevent irregularities in booking of rail tickets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) to (d) Initially 28 Post Offices have been identified for provision of facility of issuing reserved railway tickets. These Post Offices have been identified as mutually agreed by the Ministry of Railways and Department of Posts which include Non Rail Head and remote locations sanctioned for provision of Computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) facility and also those suggested by Department of Posts. Since no location in the State of Madhya Pradesh was there in the list of sanctioned locations mentioned above and also Department of Posts did not propose any such location, the same was not identified for provision of this facility.

(e) Adequate safeguards have been kept in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to avoid its misuse.

[English]

Wagon Requirement of Coal India Limited

2590. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the mismatch between requirement and availability of wagons in the peak season is a major concern for Coal India Limited (CIL), as it results in pithead stocks accumulation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the CIL proposes to formulate a field-wise wagon loading programme attuned to the offtake target so as to ensure optimum utilization of infrastructure available with Indian Railways;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the response of the Railways on the CIL proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. Offtake of coal, field-wise is decided by a linkage committee which takes into account requirement

of customer, coal availability and movement. Railways are supplying wagons to coal companies for transportation of coal as per linkage and offer made by them based on the availability of coal and maintaining close watch on supply of wagons to coal companies of Coal India Limited (CIL) to ensure optimal utilization of infrastructure available with Indian Railways.

**Wardha-Nanded New Railway
Line Project**

2591. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has conveyed their willingness to Railways to bear the 50% cost of Wardha-Nanded via Yavatmal-Pusad new Railway line project as included by Railways in 2007-2008 Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Maharashtra Government has put some conditions for 50% cost sharing of this project;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Railways have accepted those conditions; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the work on this project is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (f) No, Sir. Railway had requested State Government of Maharashtra to share at least 40% of the cost as a special case in view of difficult conditions amongst farming community in Vidharbha region, without linking it with National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and State Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS). Now, State Government has consented for meeting the cost of earthwork and ballast through State Employment Guarantee Scheme Fund without taking any recourse to Government of India's Funds under National Rural Employment Programme. Since the offer of State Government is much less than 40%, they have been asked to share at least 40% cost of the proposed line.

[Translation]

Regular Air Service

2592. SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK:
SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:
SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to start regular air service from some more airports in the country;

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

(c) whether the Government has held any kind of talks with different aviation companies;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which regular air service is likely to be started from the said airports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-East region. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.

At present scheduled domestic air services are available to/from 16 airports, across the country.

Crude Oil in Krishna Godavari Basin

2593. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":
SHRI SURAJ SINGH:

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

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has been allotted Krishna-Godavari basin to explore crude oil and gas reserves;

(b) if so, whether the assessment in regard to production cost for the development and production in the basin has been done;

(c) if so, the production cost as per the initial and the latest assessment; and

(d) the production cost of crude oil and gas separately alongwith the details of the production cost in the said basin as compared to other basin?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has been allotted 10 Petroleum Exploration License (PEL) blocks on nomination basis and 11 blocks under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) for exploration in Krishna Godavari Basin.

(b) to (d) Cost of production varies from field to field and is not uniform for a basin. KG basin has both onland and offshore areas which have different costs due to the nature of

activities. The cost of crude oil production during 2006-07 of ONGC from nominated field was in the range of Rs. 8485 per tonne to Rs. 10458 per tonne depending upon size of reservoir and location and availability of infrastructure. The cost of natural gas production during 2006-07 was in the range of Rs. 3353 per thousand cubic metres to Rs. 3896 per thousand cubic metres.

[English]

Surcharges on the Carriage of Goods

2594. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railways are considering to defer the 10 per cent surcharge on the carriage of goods on mini rake and two point rakes in the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also true that the Railways are considering to lease out terminals to users of freight rakes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Sir, Ministry of Railways has withdrawn 10 percent Supplementary surcharge on commodities having classification above Class 130 when transported in Mini-rakes and Two Point Rakes w.e.f 20.5.2007.

(c) No, Sir. Presently, there is no policy for leasing out railway terminals to users of freight rakes.

(d) Does not arise.

12.00½ hrs.

REFERENCE BY THE SPEAKER

Congratulating Indian Football Team on Winning the Nehru Football Cup

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the Indian Football Team has made the nation proud when they lifted the prestigious Nehru Cup after defeating the formidable Syrians at the Ambedkar Stadium, yesterday, on 29th August, 2007.

The spirited performance by the Indian Team would certainly usher in a new era in the Indian Football.

I am sure the House would join me in congratulating Captain Bhaichung Bhutia and his team-mates for their historic win and wish them great success in their future matches.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: We also congratulate the President of IFA.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): Sir, Pradeep was the scorer. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He is an Indian first and we are proud of him. I hope he is outside your influence.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You may send Shri Mohan Rawale as a Deputy Manager for the World Cup.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Shri Pradeep scored the goal which brought Nehru Cup for India. So, he has to be applauded.

MR. SPEAKER: Please write it down; I cannot follow. Are you interested in football? Is he talking on football? Thank you very much.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN' (Begusarai): You appoint him as a 'Manager'. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Then, they will not reach there.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much. We are very happy and proud of them.

Now Papers to be laid.

12.01 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI-MATI AMBIKA SONI): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the North East Zone Cultural Centre, Dimapur, for the years 2000-2001 to 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the North East Zone Cultural Centre, Dimapur, for the years 2000-2001 to 2003-2004.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed, in Library, See No. L.T. 6847/2007]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Culture Fund, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Culture Fund, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6848/2007]

- (5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indian Museum, Kolkata, for the year 2004-2005, along with Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Indian Museum, Kolkata, for the year 2004-2005.
- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[(Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6849/2007)]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): Sir I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 14A of the Aircraft Act, 1934:-

- (1) The Aircraft (Carriage of Dangerous Goods) (Amendment) Rules, 2007 published in Notification No. G.S.R.231(E) in Gazette of India dated the 24th March 2007, together with an explanatory note.
- (2) The Aircraft (Amendment) Rules, 2007 published in Notification No. G.S.R.232(E) Gazette of India dated the 24th March 2007, together with an explanatory note.
- (3) The Aircraft (4th Amendment) Rules, 2005 published in Notification No. G.S.R.676(E) in Gazette of India dated the 19th November 2005, together with an explanatory note and corrigendum thereto published in Notification No. G.S.R. 136(E) in Gazette of India dated the 4th March, 2006.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6850/2007]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):-

- (1) Memorandum of Understanding between the Hindustan Antibiotics Limited and the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6851/2007]

- (2) Memorandum of Understanding between the Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited and the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6852/2007]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

- (1) A copy of the Railway Protection Force (Amendment) Rules, 2006 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R.14 in Gazette of India dated the 27th January, 2007 under sub-section (3) of section 21 of the Railway Protection Force Act, 1957.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6853/2007]

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): Sir, on behalf of Shrimati Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan, I beg to lay on the Table:-

- (1) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) on the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 for the year 2005 under sub-section (4) of section 21 of the said Act.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6854/2007]

- (3) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6855/2007]

- (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:-

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India, Kanpur, for the year 2005-2006.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India, Kanpur, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

- (5) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (4) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6856/2007]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Production Sharing Contract (Hindi and English versions) between Niko Resources Limited and the Government of India with respect to Contract Area Identified as Block CB-ONN-2000/2.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6857/2007]

12.02 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Fifty-fifth Report

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Sir, I beg to present the Fifty-fifth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Public Accounts Committee (2007-2008) on "Develop of Land by the Delhi Development Authority".

12.02½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Fifty-seventh Report

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South): Sir, I beg to present the Fifty-seventh Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Finance on the State Bank of India (Amendment) Bill, 2006.

12.02½ hrs.

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCE

Nineteenth Report

[English]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad): Sir, I beg to present the Nineteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Government Assurances regarding requests for dropping of assurances.

12.03 hrs.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

- (I) Productivity linked reward for port and dock workers and employees*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri T.R. Baalu. You can lay it on the Table of the House.

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): Sir, shall I lay it?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: I am laying that Statement on the Table of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Some reward is being given. Thank you.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: The Port and Dock Workers of Major Ports and Dock Labour Boards are not covered by the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965. They are being paid Productivity-Linked-Reward (PLR) instead. From 1994-95, they were paid PLR on the basis of Memorandum of Settlement dated 8.2.1996 between the Management of Major Port Trusts and Labour Federations of Port and Dock Workers under the Industrial Dispute Act, 1947. Under the scheme, the PLR was paid upto 2001-02.

A new PLR scheme was evolved by Indian Ports Association in consultation with Major Federations of Port and Dock Workers. In the new Scheme, there are three parameters i.e. Average Turn Round Time of ships with weightage of 30%, Average Ship berth day output with weightage of 35% and unit cost of handling with weightage of 35%. Government approved on 8.2.2007 the new PLR Scheme for the period 2002-03 to 2009-10. A new settlement has also been signed between the Port Management and Federations on the new PLR Scheme on 10.4.2007. The

*Laid on the Table and also placed in Library see No. L.T. 6858/2007

joint reference earlier made to the National Tribunal, Mumbai on the question of payment of PLR on the basis of Port-wise productivity has also been withdrawn.

Now, the PLR for the year 2006-2007 is due for payment on or before 1-9-2007. The Indian Ports Association have made the computation of PLR for the year 2006-2007 as per the agreed performance parameters and methodology and the PLR percentage is arrived at 21.38%, subject to the maximum ceiling of 20%. I have pleasure to inform the Hon'ble House that in accordance with the new settlement arrived at between the Port Management and the Major Federations, PLR for the year 2006-07 is being released by the Major Port Trusts and Dock Labour Boards to the Port & Dock workers, employees and officers on schedule. The maximum payment per employee at the rate of 20% will be Rs.6,000/-. This will benefit about 66,000 Port and Dock Workers, employees and Officers and the financial implications will be about Rs. 40 crores. The expenditure on account of PLR shall be met by the Major Port Trusts and Dock Labour Boards from their own resources, without budgetary support from the Government.

12.04 hrs.

- (II) **Status of Implementation of recommendations contained in 98th Report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations of the Committee contained in 83rd Report on the "Functioning of Commission of Railway Safety"**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): Sir, I am lying this statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in 98th Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on "Action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations of the Committee contained in the 83rd report on the 'Functioning of Commission of Railway Safety' in pursuance of the direction 73 A issued by Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha Parliamentary Bulletin Part II dated 01 September, 2004 under the provisions of rule 389 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

* Laid on the Table and also placed in Library See No L.T. 6859/2007

The 98th Report on the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture contains 10 recommendations. Eight out of ten recommendations were accepted/partially accepted. Of the eight accepted/ partially accepted recommendations, action has been completed in six cases and no further action is required, at present. A Statement indicating the action taken/status of all the recommendations contained in the Standing Committee Report is also laid on the table of the House.

12.05 hrs.

MOTION RE: REPRIMANDING SHRI RAJESH KUMAR MANJHI, MP FOR HIS MISCONDUCT

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Pranab Mukherjee to move the Motion. This is another very sorry incident.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, with your permission, I beg to move, with a heavy heart, the following Motion:

"That this House while agreeing with the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Committee to Inquire into Misconduct of Members of Lok Sabha, in their First Report, laid on the Table of the House on 23 August, 2007, reprimands Shri Rajesh Kumar Manjhi for his misconduct and for having committed contempt of the Committee as well as the House and resolves that:

- "(i) Shri Rajesh Kumar Manjhi may be suspended from the membership of the House for thirty sittings of the House; and
- (ii) He may be restrained from talking his spouse or companion on official tours till the conclusion of the Fourteenth Lok Sabha."

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate. The question is:

"That this House while agreeing with the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Committee to Inquire into Misconduct of Members of Lok Sabha, in their First Report, laid on the Table of the House on 23 August, 2007, reprimands Shri Rajesh Kumar Manjhi for his misconduct and for having committed contempt of the Committee as well as the House and resolves that:

- "(i) Shri Rajesh Kumar Manjhi may be suspended from the membership of the House for thirty sittings of the House; and

- (ii) He may be restrained from taking his spouse or companion on official tours till the conclusion of the Fourteenth Lok Sabha."

The motion was adopted.

12.07 hrs.

CLINICAL ESTABLISHMENT (REGISTRATION AND REGULATION, 2007*

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please wait. You are all aware of the procedure.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the registration and regulation of clinical establishments in the country and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the registration and regulation of clinical establishments in the country and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: I introduce the Bill.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, you can speak one by one.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): What happened to the notice of privilege given by us against Ronen Sen? ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have got the reply today. I will have to go through it and take a decision. I will take a decision soon. I have got it but I have not been able to go through it.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhunjharpur): Sir,

* Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part-II, Section 2 dated 30.8.2007

I would like to raise the Bhagalpur issue. ...(Interruptions) It is a very important issue. It is a very sensitive issue. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South): Sir, this is a State matter. ...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Sir, the Bhagalpur incident is very sensitive. ...(Interruptions) There is a violation of human rights. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Sir, a very heinous act has been committed there. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: To whom I should listen to? Please you tell me.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Sir, I have been making this request since yesterday. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: What is the subject? What are you doing? Please do not do this. Let me hear what is happening.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot hear anything. I do not know what you are trying to raise. Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav, you please come here.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You should come and sit here.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, a heinous act has been committed there. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please, sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please speak one by one. I will decide whether it is admissible or not.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): On behalf of the Government, I would make this request. Let the hon. Speaker decide the issues. Each one can speak then. ...(Interruptions) Why do you keep on doing this? Let the hon. Speaker decide about it.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY KRISHNA (Barh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no rule of law in Bihar. ...*(Interruptions)* It was an attempt to kill a person belonging to minority community by dragging after tying him to a motorcycle. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet at 12.30 p.m.

12.10 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till thirty minutes past Twelve of the Clock.

12.30 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Thirty Minutes Past Twelve of the Clock.

(MR. SPEAKER in the Chair)

12.31 hrs.

OBSERVATION BY THE SPEAKER

Condemning recent Incident in Bhagalpur, Bihar

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please take your seats. I have received several notices with regard to an incident, very unhappy and extremely serious incident, which had taken place in Bhagalpur in the State of Bihar, as we all know. I believe all of you will agree with me that this incident is extremely serious and condemnable. It is against human rights and on behalf of the entire House, if you all agree, I wish to condemn the incident that had taken place. It is not a question of apportioning blame here.

I am sure all appropriate action will be taken by the appropriate authorities in the matter. But we wish to condemn and we hope and believe that India, with such an old civilisation of which we are proud or with our tradition, such a similar incident will not happen anywhere in the country. I am thankful to all the leaders for their kind response to this matter. I think we should deal with this matter rising above party considerations. On behalf of the House, I condemn this.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is unrest in Agra. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will give opportunity to all of you one by one. Whose number in notice is above. I will call him first. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Speaker, Sir, we heartily accept your proposal that such incidents should not be occurred. State Government has taken appropriate action in this regard. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have already said that I am sure appropriate action is being taken by the appropriate Government.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: I have spoken as far as the matter related to Agra is concerned.

[English]

That is another very unfortunate incident, but since the matter relates to Parliament also, I am allowing him to raise. Shri Shailendra Kumar. I will call all the members who have given notices.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chall): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to raise a very important issue. This incident occurred on the day before yesterday when people of Muslim Community were returning after attending their function 'Shak-e- Barat' related to their religious faith, three young boys were riding on their motorcycle. Though traffic was stopped at that time and it was 'no entry' area, but I don't know how a truck reached there. I think the driver was in inaberrated form. He crushed three young boys. They died on the spot. After that when people chased him then going ahead he crushed a rickshaw puller which caused high tension there. In such a situation police should have gone there and. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Don't go into the details. This is a serious issue. No running commentary, please.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: Police should have controlled the situation reaching there, but ...*(Interruptions)* the mob had taken a violent turn there. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will call them to speak whose name is there in the list.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: It turned into so horrible riot there that 20 vehicles were set on fire. The situation is not under control of police. I would like to inform the Government thorough you Sir, that curfew has been imposed in six police stations. Situation is very serious there. The Government need to take immediate effective steps to control the situation and to check the police which is mercilessly committing atrocities on the people and sending them into jail, and Rs. 5 lakh each should be given to the next of kins of the deceased.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Sir, day before yesterday on 28th August Shab-e-Barat function had to take place followed by a procession at Agra. Earlier, traffic movement was restricted at place of function as a precautionary measure but this time administration did not take precautionary measures due to which four people of minority were killed in a road accident at 4 O' clock in the morning. None of the police personnel visited the spot to take stock of the situation till 6 O'clock due to which people burst out in anger. If precautionary measures had been taken, as it was taken earlier, the accident could have been avoided at Agra. Local administration is fully responsible for this incident. Four people were killed and curfew has been imposed in 6 areas....*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No, that will not go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You only refer to this incident.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Sir, whatever happened in Agra is due to carelessness of the administration and it should be strongly condemned. Government of India should take cognizance of the matter and interfere to restore peace in the area. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You can only refer to the unfortunate incident that has taken place.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs should make a statement in this regard. ...(Interruptions)

* Not recorded

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You are all very responsible Members.

[Translation]

You are all senior Members of Parliament.

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR (Bareilly): Sir, a very unfortunate incident took place in Agra and whatever we read in newspapers and saw on television it appears that there might be some negligency on the part of administration. If the procession was taken precautionary measures should have been taken to avoid any such incident....*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This will not go on record.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Sir, we want that law and order situation may be restored there. ...(Interruptions) Sir, this is the fact. There is no question of minority. ...* Therefore, it is my request that you may kindly issue instructions so that law and order situation be ensured there.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel – Not present

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panaskura): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an extremely unfortunate incident. There was a festival of a particular community and after the festival was over, there was a truck accident. It was a road accident. The condition in the country has turned out to be such that an unfortunate road accident immediately gets transformed into a communal clash. That is the tragedy of the whole thing. There was Shab-e-Barat At 4 o'clock in the morning there was an accident on the road and some people were killed in that accident. Since the people of a particular community were killed by the truck driver, the whole incident, which should have been considered to be a road accident, has been transformed into a communal clash. My honest concern is that this is how communal forces and all shades of fundamentalism are at work to make use of every simple incident to fan a clash in the country with an ulterior motive of destroying the secular environment of the country.

So, I call upon the Government of India to properly advise the State Government of Uttar Pradesh to take stringent measures to curb the clash as it could have international significance because tourists are coming to have a look at Taj Mahal. They are being debarred. If this incident and situation continues, it is going to be a slur on the dignity of the country of India. Therefore, that should be taken care of very seriously and I condemn the incident.

* Not recorded

[Translation]

SHRI RAJ BABBAR (Agra): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you and the House that the unfortunate incident is being condemned in the House. But it is unfortunate that the incident is being transformed into a communal clash, whereas there is nothing like that. Agra is a very peaceful city. Specially, in the incident no religion or caste was involved. It may be a minor thing for them who wanted to transform it into a communal clash. It all started after four children of a family were killed by a truck. It must also be taken into account as to how that truck approached there. Always there were arrangements for shab-e-Barat or Kawarias procession. But on that fateful day traffic was allowed to move at 3 O'clock in the morning instead of 7 O'clock as earlier. It is either corruption or malafide intention or lack of administrative efficiency of the administration, due to which four children were killed. After that people burst out their anger. People gathered on the spot and some of them provoked the family members of the deceased. After that they put the truck on fire at the Police Station. This fact must be taken into account. It is not a matter of communal clash or four children of a family have died or people of some other community came out into streets but the fact is this that four children were died and people gathered on the spot, put the truck on fire but police remained inactive. Not only this, they put two more trucks and later three trucks more on fire but police remained inactive. Total 20 trucks and other vehicles were put on fire. Then they started putting the trucks on fire at M.G. Road which engulfed the adjoining houses and shops also. Local people called the fire brigade but they could not reach the spot because road was blocked by the irate crowd on side and those people whose house and shops were set on fire on the other side. No religion or caste was involved in the incident. There was nothing like communal clash because irate crowd set trucks on fire without knowing their caste and religion due to which houses were also burning. I would like to say that when I was informed about the incident at 4 O'clock, I tried to contact the Chief Minister. But I have to say it with regard that it has become a trend for the last few years not to entertain certain public representatives and political management has been started in the country. Politics is being dragged into it and Managers are managing everything. It is the result of the said trend because there were such instances when nobody wanted to listen to anyone. I am sorry to say that when a police officer ordered a sepoy to move forward, he replied in the negative by saying that he might die by doing so. When such a kind of political management is there, when people are appointed on the basis of caste, creed and religion, the outcome is Agra. A place of international importance in world came down burning in the fire of communalism. I would like to request you, Sir, we talk of nuclear deal, we talk of coming

20 years as what would happen then, what would be the quality of uranium and from where we would get it. Then we talk of those 51 nations from where we can get it, then we estimate those four more countries like Nigeria and Ankola, from whom we may get uranium. But I would like to say that with the substandard variety of fuel this country is burning in the name of caste and creed. ...*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not refer to that.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJ BABBAR: I am referring to this because whether it is a minister or a Chief Minister, it is not a question of them. Whether you admit it or not today, but now the House will think over it. ...*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do not refer to that.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJ BABBAR: Today the need is this whether we. ...*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Bring it to me. No, sorry, Mr. Raj Babbar.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJ BABBAR: No matter whether one belongs to Ahmedabad in Gujarat, and comes in way of the Chief Minister's car, if his name happens to be Hasan, he is beaten or one happens to be a dalit of Gohana, he is beaten, or one's name happens to be Salim or something else, he is dragged behind motorcycle. As long as this kind of political management prevails and citizens of this country are not treated as human beings, but are treated on the basis of caste, creed or religion, they would continue to be burning as cheap fuel. I would like this House to decide on this issue, send a parliamentary committee there and review the situation. Members of BJP, Samajwadi party, Congress and all the parties should visit under the leadership of the Members of BSP and a censure motion should be passed. We are discussing uranium deal, we are discussing nuclear deal here, but what we have to do is to stop the cheap fuel of casteism with which people are being burnt. No matter whether a shop owned by some Pachauri or a factory owned by some Kalim is burnt, the loss is of crores. It cannot be compensated by just Rs. 1 lakh or 5 lakh. Today, the House has to decide to let stand those people stand on their feet again whose shops, factories have been burnt, otherwise

* Not recorded

they would never be able to stand on their feet again for their life. The House is not here to see one's caste, and wait when I come to the House elected and then see, what my community is and manage accordingly, I beg for your leave and say that a Parliamentary Committee may be set up which should make a decision and the House should decide who is at fault, whether it is State Government or somebody else, the House should make a decision regarding the amount incurred by the State to save the city and to improve the condition there.

[Translation]

SHRI MUNSHI RAM (Bijnour): Mr. Speaker, Sir, a certain amount was deposited in RD in the Post Office every month from the salaries of the teachers of Shri Krishna Inter College, Village Jalilpur-Chandpur, Bijnor. At the time of maturity, the staff of the Post Office withdrew Rs.25-30 lakhs and the teachers are not getting their money back. I would like to request the Government, through, you that the matter may be investigated and action should be taken against the guilty officers-staff and innocent teachers may be given their money back.

[English]

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRAKUMAR (Calicut): Sir, coconut is an important oil yielding crop of India, especially in the southern States. Kerala alone accounts for around 46 per cent of the total cultivated area in the country. Unfortunately, the annual rate of growth in Kerala has been declining. This is mainly due to debilitating incidence of root (wilt) disease, pest like Eryophid mite and inclement weather like drought. Out of the 15 crore of coconut palms in Kerala, two crores of palms have been affected by the dreadful root (wilt) disease. Further since 1997 there is rampant attack by eryophid mite as a result of both, it is estimated that Kerala state loses nearly 300 crores of nuts annually and financial loss of Rs. 1200 crore. Wilt disease, pests and inclement weather has also badly affected another plantation crop of Kerala namely arecanut which is grown on a large area by farmers to supplement their income along with coconut. The situation is further aggravated by the falling price of these produce which have put the farmers in a pitiable situation.

The Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme for copra has not brought any solace to coconut farmers of Kerala since not even 5 per cent of the farmers do not process coconut into copra. The reduction of basic customs duty of edible oil like palm oil, soybean oil, sunflower oil every now and then by the Government of India has also extenuated the price fall of coconut oil, copra and coconut. We apprehend that with the implementation of regional Trade Agreements like SAFTA and ASEAN, the situation will become more grave and the plight of 3.5 million coconut farmers in Kerala will be in distress.

Studies made by various committees and commissions like Commission on World Trade Organization's concerns in agriculture headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan and Committee constituted by Coconut Development Board with Dr. K.V. Bavappa as Chairman have recommended rejuvenation of old and senile plantation in a phased manner by replanting with quality planting materials. The Coconut Development Board has accordingly prepared a project report for replantation and rejuvenation in the traditional States namely Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, Orissa and Union Territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep over an area of 4.56 lakh hectares, which is under consideration of the Government. The total project cost is reported to be Rs. 6320 Crore with a subsidy component of Rs. 1382 crore.

I strongly urge the government to clear this project without further loss of time as the coconut and arecanut farmers all over the country particularly in Kerala have pinned all hopes of their survival with this project. Any further delay in implementation of the project will only add to the miseries of the growers.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shrimati Sujatha. Please be brief.

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA (Mavelikara): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Aranmula temple is a famous pilgrim centre in the central Kerala. This place is also famous for art and craftsmanship. The Aranmula Mirror is unique and is known world over. The UNDP has accepted Aranmula as an ideal tourism village.

The Snake Boat Race of Aranmula being organised every year in front of the Parathasarathy temple in the Pamba river in which over 40 snake boats participate attracts thousands of people from the State as well as from outside including the foreigners. Those boats are owned by the local people in the village. This boat race festival is devoted to Lord Krishna. The boat race has a long history and the beginning of this magnificent event dates back to 13th Century A.D. Due to lack of sufficient water level in the river Pamba, the conducting of the boat race has been facing difficulties for the last couple of years. The State Government has submitted a project proposal to the Centre for the construction of a Rubber Stadium like the one constructed at Parvatheepuram in Andhra Pradesh in order to overcome the present obstacle. The estimated cost of the Stadium is Rs. 13 crore.

I urge upon the Government to give necessary clearance for the proposal and sanction the amount sought for the project.

The State Government has also submitted to the Centre

a proposal 'Kala Gram' for the development and protection of the traditional art and crafts of Aranmula. The cost of the project is estimated at Rs. 11 crore. I urge upon the Government to sanction the fund.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Kiren Rijiju.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Chaudhary Lal Singh, you are only disturbing the House. You have to wait for my decision. I am sorry. Just because you are disturbing the House, I cannot call you.

Now, Shri Kiren Rijiju.

SHRI KIREN RIJIJU (Arunachal Pradesh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today, the political leaders and the Civil Society members from North Cachar Hills District, Assam are holding a dharna at Jantar Mantar regarding the term of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous District Council, Assam, whose term was to expire on 20-12-2006 but the Government of Assam extended its term by six months on the ground of delimitation of the Council constituencies as per Paragraph 26A of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.

At the instance of the hon. High Court of Guwahati, the polling date was fixed on 12-6-2007. Unfortunately, the two contestant candidates, Shri Purnendu Langthasa, the Chief Executive Member of NCHADC and Shri Nindu Langthasa, the Executive Member of NCHADC were killed by the extremists on 4-6-2007, and on the ground of the law and order situation, the Government of Assam postponed the election indefinitely and placed the Council under the Governor's Rule since 21-7-2007. The Government should have countermanded the two seats and should have gone ahead with the election for the whole District Council. In the meantime. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Is it under the Central Government?

SHRI KIREN RIJIJU (Arunachal West): Yes, Sir. It is placed under the Governor's Rule now.

The hon. Supreme Court on 13th July, 2007 directed that the election to the Council should be held within 12-2-2008 and even earlier if possible. The Deputy Commissioner of the District has also submitted that the law and order situation has now improved. There is a bad precedent that the election to the Hills Autonomous District Council is always postponed. I would request the hon. Minister of Home Affairs to advise the Governor to hold the election as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy — not present.

Now, Chaudhury Lal Singh. I would have called you earlier but unnecessarily you disturbed the House. Now, please speak.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, why are you leveling charge on me?

MR. SPEAKER: Because, it is necessary, so I am doing it.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: You are an elderly person.

MR. SPEAKER: All right. Please speak.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise an important issue of my State with your permission about which I have given you in writing also. When NHPC came in Jammu-Kashmir for Salal Project on a commission of 2 percent and said that the first phase would be handed over. Now, 30 years have been passed instead of ten. They had said that they would provide 50 percent jobs of executive and non-executive cadre. In the draft note they had prepared, they did not provide even 33 percent. The situation has reached the point that the engineers of Jammu-Kashmir are on hunger strike. The unemployed youth who should have got the jobs did not get any. They had assured that the area will be provided electricity, but that also has not been given. They are saying to hand over where the amount invested on 1 megawatt was Rs. 13 crore, but they are not ready to hand over where the amount invested is Rs. 1 crore. Remaining projects of NHPC are also being handed over, but what I have to say is that our unemployed youth whether they are engineers, technocrats or of executive or of non-executive cadre should be provided jobs. This is a very serious issue. They have taken Rajiv Gandhi Electrification Project. The Government should pay attention towards the unemployed youth.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: For my safety, I have to call him to speak!

...(Interruptions)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, recently, I had been to Jamia Islamia University in Delhi. Hon. Mr. Ahamed was also with me. We went to participate in a festival there. I could find a large number of Kerala students studying there. They had requested us that there is no written test/examination being conducted in Kerala for getting

admission in Jamia Islamia University. So, for admission, they have to come and appear in the examination held in Delhi, which is very hard and expensive.

Since there are a large number of students from Kerala seeking admission there, it is very just and proper that the University may kindly take action to sanction a centre for examination in Kerala. I request that the Ministry of Human Resource Development should give necessary direction to the concerned university for opening a new examination centre at Trivandrum or any other part of Kerala.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the greater Visakhapatnam city is a fast growing city in the South Asia. So many big industries including the Caltex, Hindustan Shipyard, Gannagavaram Port are located there. Even the Vizag Steel Plant is also located there.

Recently, a new runway was completed and handed over to the Airport Authorities. New flights are running there. But in spite of the night landing facilities provided there, the flights are not operating during night time. That Airport belongs to the Defence people. It is due to lack of infrastructure and staff that the night landing facilities are not operating there. The concerned file is pending with the Ministry of Finance for sanction of posts.

Now, as a number of people are flying from Visakhapatnam to Singapore, Malaysia and other countries, I would request the Government of India to initiate immediate action to sanction posts for the Defence Ministry.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (Aurangabad, Maharashtra): Mr. Speaker, Sir, everybody is benefited through nationalised banks under centrally sponsored schemes. But due to lack of staff in these banks whether these are in rural areas or in small towns, plans and applications are sanctioned in 20 days instead of normal 2 days. Going in person I was told that there was staff crunch. Adequate staff should be provided because beneficiaries are not getting the benefit of centrally sponsored schemes due to this.

13.00 hrs.

I would like to take about my own district that there is shortage of 119 officers in banks, out of it the number of clerks is 61 and the total staff shortage is 219. If all the districts are to be seen, the staff in nationalised banks, State Bank, Bank of Maharashtra or Bank of India is very thin, as a result, beneficiaries do not get the benefit of centrally sponsored scheme. So, it is requested that Hon. Minister of Finance should issue such an order that the staff are recruited at the earliest.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Mr. Hannan Mollah, you raise only one matter.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to a very important matter. The hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs is here. It needs his initiative also. Sir, you know the National Common Minimum Programme assured two specific legislations for this country. We have already passed three years, and our term is coming to the end.

MR. SPEAKER: It is another threat.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: We have two years' time. ...*(Interruptions)* But they take 18 months for a year.

MR. SPEAKER: All right.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: It is very slow. It is because of that I want that these two legislations that they promised, in the National Common Minimum Programme should be brought quickly. One is the 33 per cent reservation for the women and other is two Acts for the unorganized sector workers.

MR. SPEAKER: They should be brought forward quickly. That is your demand.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: I demand that the Government should take note of this, and in this Session these two Bills should be introduced. That is my request to the Government.

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Sujan Chakraborty is to associate with this matter.

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY (Jadavpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, please give me one minute.

Sir, on the 8th August, there was a nation-wide strike. The issue is very serious.

MR. SPEAKER: It is always serious.

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY: The number of unorganized workers is also increasing. During 1991, the percentage of unorganized workers was 90 per cent, and now it is already 93 per cent. Mostly, they are below poverty line. Normally, almost they do not have labour laws applicable to them. There is almost no social security. Therefore, I would request, through you, firstly, to ensure that by the Eleventh Plan, at least, three per cent of our GDP should be expended for the interest of the unorganized workers.

And, secondly, if we can, the Government should enact law on the welfare of unorganized workers and on the unorganized agricultural labourers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shrimati Jhansi Lakshmi.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH (Aligarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, please listen to me.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: If you disturb me, then I have to take some action. Your matter is not permissible. I will not allow. It is a State matter. Please sit down.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, farmers will die. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Acquisition of land by the State is not a Centre matter.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH: It is a Centre matter. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry please. If you argue with me, then I will not allow.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH: It is my personal request. We have to request again and again.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No, I cannot. This is not the time to argue with me.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH: You do not give time to new Members.

MR. SPEAKER: You make efforts to remove me.

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH: We occasionally ask for time but you do not allow even that.

MR. SPEAKER: You can speak.

[English]

but not on this matter. Everything will be deleted.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH: This is wrong.

MR. SPEAKER: You can't face me to accept it as a Center matter.

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH: Can't we raise problems of our state. Then why have we come here? The people of state have elected me. ... (Interruptions)

13.03 hrs.

(Chaudhary Bijendra Singh then left the House)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If it is permitted, it will be taken up after six o'clock. Yes, you can walk out.

Now, Shrimati Jhansi Lakshmi. She is also a new comer. I decide on the basis of the subject. It was decided that only five matters will be taken up. I have already allowed at least 17 to 18 matters, and how much time was wasted.

It is very easy to accuse the Chair. Get somebody here and I am quite willing to go away immediately. I do not mind. I never came here on my asking. It is very easy to make allegations.

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA (Bobbili): Respected Speaker, Sir, I rise to bring to the notice of the Government a very important issue, that is, HIV/AIDS tests be made mandatory before marriage for eligible men and women. The number of men and women testing HIV positive has increased phenomenally. Before marriage, some boys and girls are not disclosing that they have tested HIV/AIDS positive. After marriage, it is coming to the notice of either wife or husband that he or she is HIV/AIDS positive; and by that time, the damage has been done to the life of the girl or the boy. For no fault of hers, she got infected with HIV positive because before marriage, adultery was committed by her husband.

Sir, about seven lakh tests have been conducted on men and women. Out of this 2 to 2.3 per cent of the men and women have been tested positive. There should be an awareness campaign on HIV/AIDS test positive and the dangerous consequences. There should be discussions and seminars on the issue from medical, social and ethical angles. Even the purohits, priests, pastors and Qazis should be mandated that they should not solemnize the marriage unless the boy and the girl produce HIV/AIDS test negative certificate from the recognized medical institute. More HIV testing laboratories should be opened all over the country.

In the absence of a law on this subject, it is difficult for the law-enforcing agencies and health agencies to check the rise of couples testing HIV/AIDS positive. Therefore, I would request the Union Government to enact a law immediately to save the lives of the young couples who are human resource wealth of the country.

Sir, before I conclude, I would like to add that leprosy wards in the hospitals be converted into HIV/AIDS wards. The services of doctors and paramedical staff working in the leprosy wards could be utilized for attending to HIV/AIDS patients. This is already being done in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

Thank you very much. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have already allowed 17 hon. Members to raise important issues.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Now the hon. Minister of Health and Family Welfare to make his statement.

...(Interruptions)

13.06 hrs.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS – *Contd.*

(iii) **Resident Doctors strike at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the resident doctors of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi are on strike. *...(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Sir, this is not correct. *...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA (Hamirpur, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir please allow me to speak. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will not allow you.

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: You do not speak at the back-benchers. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly wait.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You can take action against me. Hon. Minister to make his statement now.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, he is misusing the House to make a wrong statement. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: How can you say it?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, he is making a suo-moto statement by misusing the House.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Let him complete the statement. I have allowed him to make the statement on an important matter.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra: *

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It is not to be recorded.

*...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: If you will not allow him to make the statement, he will lay the statement on the Table of the House.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, he is a senior Member. I request him to allow me. *...(Interruptions)*

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, I lay the statement on the Table of the House.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): ** Sir, the resident doctors of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi are on strike on the issue of delay in award of degree to the successful students by the Institute. As per the procedure followed, every year a Convocation of AIIMS is required to be held some time in the month of February when the degrees are awarded to the successful students who must appear in person at the Convocation to receive the degree unless he is permitted to take the degree in absentia. The degrees shall bear signature of President, Director, Dean and the Registrar of AIIMS. The Director, AIIMS, however, Sir, has not organized the Convocation for the last two years. As a special case considering the requirement of original degrees for students appearing in USMLE, USA etc. 54 MBBS degrees of 2005 were signed by all concerned to be awarded to the students. Similarly for the year 2006 also 49 MBBS degrees were forwarded by the Director, AIIMS only on 20th August, 2007 for my signature as President, AIIMS. These degrees were signed amongst others by one Dr. Sandeep Aggarwal as Registrar of the Institute. As per the AIIMS Regulations, the appointing authority for Registrar is the Governing Body. Shri

* Not recorded.

** The speech was laid on the Table and also placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6860/2007

V.P. Gupta was appointed by the competent authority as Registrar in 2002 and he has been functioning since then as Registrar, AIIMS. His continuance in the post of Registrar was also considered by the Governing Body in its meeting held in January, 2007 and again in May, 2007 and the Governing Body decided that he should continue to function as Registrar. The degrees forwarded by the Institute were, however, signed by one Dr. Sandeep Aggarwal who is not Registrar, AIIMS appointed by the Governing Body. I have returned the degrees to the Director, AIIMS for rectifying the mistake at the earliest so that the degrees to the students who require such degree urgently can be issued immediately.

You will appreciate, Sir, any degree signed by an unauthorized person will render the degree illegal and invalid. It is unfortunate that the resident doctors resorted to strike without appreciating my concern for their future. I have instructed the Director, AIIMS to take necessary steps to ensure the strike is called off and the patient care services in the Institute are restored immediately.

My utmost sympathy is with the students who are waiting the award of degrees for more than two years which is primarily due to delay in holding convocation. I have asked the Director, AIIMS to convene the convocation within a period of one month so that pending degrees could be awarded to the students without any further delay.

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2 p.m.

13.06 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till
Fourteen of the Clock.*

14.03 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at three
minutes past Fourteen of the Clock*

(SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN in the Chair)

14.04 hrs.

- (iv) **Correcting Reply given on 23.08.2007 during discussions on Demand for Supplementary Grants (Railways) 2007-2008 regarding change in the name of 'Gadar Express' to Pratham Swatastrata Sangram Express to be run between Barrackpore-Kanpur-Jhansi in memory of the First War of Independence.**

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Sir, while giving reply on Demand for Supplementary Grants 2007-2008 on 23-08-2007 I had announced to start a new train named 'Gadar Express' to be run between Barrackpore-

Kanpur-Jhansi in memory of completing of 150 years of the First War of Independence in 1857.

Some Members had expressed their reservations on the name 'Gadar Express' during discussions on Demand for Supplementary Grants 2007-2008 in Rajya Sabha on 29-08-2007 because accordingly to them it has a negative connotation.

Keeping in view the feelings of honourable Members of the Rajya Sabha, I propose to change the name of the train from 'Gadar Express' to "Pratham Swatantrata Sangram Express".

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6861/2007]

14.05 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next item is Matters under Rule 377. If the House agrees, then the Matters under Rule 377 listed for the day may be treated as laid on the Table of the House.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (Berhampore, West Bengal): No, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, it will be treated as laid on the Table.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Sir, we would like to read it out in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we will pass on to the Legislative Business for the day.

(i) **Need to review the progress of Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana on periodical basis**

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindugul): PMRY is meant for providing self-employment to the millions of unemployed youth in the country. As the scheme is operational for many years with the 100 percent assistance from the Government of India, a periodical review of the scheme is called for in different parts of the country particularly in Tamil Nadu.

I request the Central Government to look into the matter.

(ii) **Need to release a commemorative postage Stamp and First Day Cover in the honour of Shri P. Kakkan, a great freedom-fighter and social reformer from Tamil Nadu on his Birth Centenary**

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): Shri P. Kakkan was born on 18 June 1909 at Thumbaipatti Village, Melur

*Treated as laid on the Table.

Taluk, Madurai District. Late Shri P. Kakkan after completing his early education and teachers training, started working for the upliftment of downtrodden Scheduled Castes people. Under the direction and leadership of Mahatma Gandhiji and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a movement was launched in the year 1932 where under SCs were allowed to gain entry in the temples of Southern India. Shri P. Kakkan actively participated along with his mentor Shri Vaidhyanatha Iyer and Shri K. Kamaraj in this social upliftment movement.

On 8 July 1939, Shri P. Kakkan and other leaders entered into Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple under the leadership of Shri Vaidhyanatha Iyer. It was the first in the history of Southern India during the regime of British that Scheduled Castes people had Darshan of Lord Meenakshi Sundareswarar in that temple. After that only, throughout the country, Scheduled Castes people were allowed to have Darshan in various Hindu temples. During Quit India Movement, Shri Kakkan was arrested in Thanjavur and remanded to judicial custody and imprisoned for 1-½ years. In the prison, he was ill-treated by the Britishers and he sustained injuries all over his body.

In the year 1952, Shri Kakkan won the Parliamentary elections and became Member of Parliament from Madurai Central Constituency and served for five years. In 1957 & 1962, Shri P. Kakkan was elected as MLA from Melur and Samayanallur Assembly Segments and occupied various positions as a Home Minister for 9 years in Tamil Nadu Government. He lived a simple life and followed strict austerity measures so much so that he did not have any property in his name. He lived in a rented house in Chennai until his death. He was an example of simplicity, honesty, selfless service who worked for the upliftment of the downtrodden. He died in harness on 28 December 1981. His birth Centenary falls on June 18, 2009. I request the Government to honour Shri P. Kakkan by releasing a commemorative postage stamp and First Day Cover on the Birth Centenary year.

(iii) Need to include Panipat city in the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission

DR. ARVIND SHARMA (Karnal): With the Common Wealth Games scheduled to be held in Delhi in the year 2010, the Union Government has increased developmental spending in the National Capital Region Panipat City which is the part of my Lok Sabha constituency, Panipat has emerged as a major Industrial & Petrochemical hub and Centre for Textile Exports. While the population of the city has increased manifold over the last few years, the civic infrastructure has fallen way short to handle the increasing pressure. A large number of skilled & unskilled people are coming to the city in search of better employment opportu-

nities. Some of them find residential accommodation in colonies of the city and some like labourers have to seek refuge in the unauthorized colonies & slum clusters.

The local administration and the civic agencies have been trying their best to absorb the increasing pressure on resources but they do not have the sufficient funds to provide basic civic infrastructure like drinking-water, light, accommodation, road & transportation, sewage & sanitation, beautification of the public parks to the common people of the locality.

I would, therefore, request the Government to include Panipat City in the Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission at the earliest.

(iv) Need to start railway services between Bhiwadi in Rajasthan and Rewari in Haryana

[Translation]

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Sir, Bhiwadi, which falls under my Parliamentary Constituency Alwar, is developing as an important industrial center in Rajasthan. This industrial city in the National Capital Region has inland container depots besides more than one thousand industrial units and a big factory for manufacturing Honda Car is also being established there. If a train is started from Bhiwadi to Rewari then this industrial area will be connected with the entire country through Ahmedabad and Delhi. In the year 2003-2004, the cost of 25 km rail line was estimated to be Rs.100 crore as per the survey conducted that year. A lot of changes have taken place in the last 4 years and if a new survey is conducted then the cost must have increased since then.

So, I would like to request the honourable Minister of Railways to conduct a fresh survey of this line in order to pave way for the construction of this rail line.

(v) Need to rename Fort William, Kolkata, West Bengal as 'Siraj Fort'

[English]

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (Behrampore, West Bengal): This year marks the 150 anniversary of Sepoy Mutiny which is recognised in the History as the First War of Independence. This year also marks 100th anniversary of Satyagraha and the 60th anniversary of Independence. This year also marks the 250th anniversary of Battle of Plassey where the fate of India was determined. In the field of Plassey, the Army of Nawab Sirajdullah, the last sovereign ruler of Bengal fought a valiant fight with the British Army led by Robert Clive. But the irony of fate was that the Nawab was defeated

at the hands of British and fell victim to the well-knit conspiracy hatched against him by some betrayers of his Army. As an outcome of the Plassey Battle, British had established its political domination upon Bengal, Bihar and Orissa only to be culminated into the total subjugation of India. The Fort of Calcutta presently the Headquarters of Eastern Command (Fort William) still bear the name of British. In respect to the memory of the soldiers who lost their lives for the sake of Independence and butchered by the sword of British. I would urge upon the Government to rechristen the name of Fort William and instead confer upon the Military establishment the new name 'Siraj Fort'.

(vi) Need to conduct a special drive for recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country

[Translation]

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur): Sir, I would like to request the Union Government to fill up the group 'A' vacant posts reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country as also group B, C and D posts in all departments of Union Government lying vacant within 6 months by launching a special drive so that people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes could be given priority and can get an opportunity to earn their livelihood.

I would request the Government to make a provision to take stringent action against the officers responsible for not filling the vacant post within the above time limit and also punish them.

(vii) Need to convert the Bharuch-Jabosar railway line into broad-gauge and restart the railway line between Netra and Ankleshwar extending it upto Nandubar with broad-gauge

SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA (Bharuch): Sir, people of my parliamentary constituency Bharuch are facing difficulties due to non-fulfillment of their demands regarding railway. There is an urgent need to convert the Bharuch-Jabosar narrow-gauge into broad-gauge. It is a very backward area. The Ankleshwar to Netra narrow-gauge line has been lying closed for the last many years. There is a need to convert it into broad-gauge and extending it from Netra to Nandurbar in Maharashtra via Dadia Para, Sagbara, Sailamba. It is a tribal area and people have to face lots of difficulties due to lack of railway facilities. If broad-gauge railway line is constructed between Netra to Nandubar then the tribal people of these areas of Gujarat and Maharashtra will have convenience in travelling and it will also help in economic development of these tribal people.

I would like to request the Government through the House to convert the Bharuch-Jabosar railway line into broad-gauge and to restart the railway line between Netra to Ankleshwar after converting it into broad-gauge and extending it upto Nandurbar.

(viii) Need to ban telecasting of violent scenes and obscenity on visual and print media

SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI (Sarguja): Indecent, obscene, horrifying and disturbing scenes are being telecast on the television in the country presently, which is influencing the psyche of Indian people, especially that of the youth. People are influenced by print, audio and visual, all the three medias. People get influenced by the print media and even greater is the impact of audio. This fact gave origin to the tradition of narrating tales and listening to them. A person gets influenced most by visuals. Just because of this interest of the people, the art of theatre came into existence. When a young person sees a hero or a villain on screen or any other visual media playing the role of a bad man, a gambler or a debauch person or having several such vices, he tries to imitate those vices in his real life. If we want to develop India into a great country then we need to build the character of its citizens. The depiction of crime, obscenity, nudity and horrifying and disturbing scenes by the electronic media is perverse and leading to disorientation and loss of direction in the society. To save the country from this danger a moral code of conduct should be specified for the depiction of scenes and events by the electronic media, so that refined public taste could be developed. Immediate ban should be imposed on the telecast of indecent offensive, vulgar and horrible scenes. The Government of India and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting need to take immediate steps in this direction.

(ix) Need to provide ration to migrant workers through PDS outlets

[English]

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN (Deogarh): A large number of poor people migrate to places other than their place of birth in search of work for the better part of the year (8-9 months). However, since ration cards entitle the card holder to ration based on only one address of residence, migrant workers are not authorized to ration at any PDS outlet (Fair Price Shop) other than the one they are registered with. Transferring the card would work only if the whole family of the migrant worker shifts to a new address since ration cards are issued on family basis and not for individuals. It is, therefore, required to devise a method to allow migrant workers and other floating population to be able to utilize ration cards at their work place while allowing family to utilize the card at the residence address at the same time.

- (x) **Need to revive the closed units of Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited in Gorakhpur and other parts of the country**

[Translation]

YOGI ADITYA NATH (Gorakhpur): Fertilizers Corporation of India Limited has played an important role in the success of green revolution in the country but due to negligence of management and inadequate attention of several Governments at the Centre this undertaking is now on the verge of closure. The Gorakhpur unit of the Fertilizers Corporation of India Limited which was started in 1969 was closed in 1990 just because of a minor accident. On the one hand lakhs of employees and workers associated with the said undertaking have been left in the lurch and are facing lots of hardships due to the bad condition of the undertaking, on the other hand the farmers are also not getting timely supply of fertilizers on fair prices due to which the condition of farmers is deteriorating in predominantly agriculture dominated country like India. Over the last few years it has been observed that farmers have to face the shortage of fertilizers during the season of sowing which ultimately results in suicide by the farmers.

Therefore, I request the Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers to immediately make provisions for the revival of all the closed units of Indian Fertilizers Corporation of India Limited including the Gorakhpur unit and the land acquired at the time of setting up of these units may completely be utilized for setting up industrial units only.

- (xi) **Need to pronounce measures for the revival of sagging coir industry**

[English]

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Coir Industry is one of the major traditional industries in the Country. More than 6.5 lakhs workers which consist majority of women are depending on this industry for their livelihood. "Alappuzha Coir" – The Golden Yarn of God's Own Country is very famous in the world. But the coir industry is now moving through a very crisis period. In addition to the inherent problems in the industry, now the coir industry is facing a setback in the coir exports due to the appreciation of Rupee in the world economy which is not only reflected in the exports but also reflected in down line industry. Coir exporters are at a huge loss since they had made the agreements with the foreign buyers, when Rupee had a depreciated value. Urgent intervention from the Central Government is imperative to tide over this crisis. So, I request the Government to extend the following measures which is already there in other similar industries to rescue the coir industry:-

- (a) To extend the Duty Drawback Support at the rate of 10% of FOB value to all coir products which is now given for jute, woolen, cotton and other products.

(b) External Marketing Assistance (EMA) which is now available to jute floorings at the rate of 5% of FOB value and raised the maximum EMA benefits allowed to a particular beneficiary from 20 lakhs to 20.5 crores. This should be extended to coir industry also.

(c) Market Development Assistance (MDA) subject to a limit of Rs. 1,10,000/- is given to exporters having turnover upto Rs. 10 crores. This should increased to Rs. 3,00,000/- with turnover upto Rs. 20 crores.

(d) Reimburse the cost for ISO Certification and other certification. Enhance the Limit to 5 crores for availing SSI status for industrial units as in the case of some other industries.

- (xii) **Need to provide stoppage of Patna-Mathura Express (Train No. 3237) at Jaunpur district headquarters**

[Translation]

SHRI TUFANI SAROJ (Saidpur): Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Railways towards Patna-Mathura train No. 3237 (Patna-Mathura Express). Though, this train has a stoppage at Shahganj station in Uttar Pradesh but it does not stop at Jaunpur district headquarters.

Sir, Mathura is a religious place, and people in large number visit Mathura, the birth place of Lord Krishna to have a 'Darshan' of Lord Krishna. There are large numbers of followers of Jaigurudev in Jaunpur district also and since Mathura is the headquarter of Jaigurudev also, followers of Jaigurudev keep visiting Mathura. Since this is the only medium to reach Mathura, the pilgrims have to face a lot of inconvenience in reaching Mathura.

Therefore, through you I request the hon'ble Minister of Railways to make provision for stoppage of Patna-Mathura Express train No. 3237 at Jaunpur district headquarter so that it becomes convenient for the pilgrims and other people to visit Mathura.

- (xiii) **Need to construct a bridge over river Bhutahibalan in Madhubani district, Bihar**

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): The Government of Bihar was intimated vide letter No. RW/NH-12011/08/2006/BR/NH-3 dated 20th December 2006 of the Ministry regarding appointment of Consultant for preparing

DPR regarding construction of a good quality bridge over Bhutahi-Balan river in Lokaha falling between the stretch of 194-195 kilometer on National Highway No. 104. The tenders were invited in this regard. The tender was sanctioned on 8.2.2007 and a period of six month was fixed for completion of DPR work. Even after expiry of the fixed period, the final DPR of the proposed project could not be prepared due to which the work of repair of road and construction of bridge could not be started. Several people meet an untimely death by drowning while crossing the river in the rainy season every year as there is no bridge over Bhutahi Balan river. The NH-104 is the life line of the people living on the Indo-Nepal border areas and it is also very important strategically. I request the Government to take positive steps to start the repair work at important National Highway No. 104 along with the construction of a high quality bridge over Bhutahibalan river.

- (xiv) **Need to start the construction of bridge on river Krishna at Karad in Satara district of Maharashtra**

[English]

SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL (Karad): Sir, there is an urgent need to start the sanctioned project of constructing a bridge on river Krishna at Karad in Satara District of Maharashtra. The Union Government has sanctioned the bridge under the Central Road Fund. For the last three consecutive years submersion of existing low-level bridge due to flood water of river Krishna is hampering the traffic on inter-state Highway connecting Maharashtra and Karnataka.

- (xv) **Need to expedite the construction work and commissioning of Trivandrum International Airport Terminal-II and Air India's Aircraft Maintenance Unit at Thiruvananthapuram**

SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN (Thiruvananthapuram): The foundation stones for the construction of Trivandrum International Airport Terminal II and the Air India's Aircraft Maintenance Unit at Trivandrum were laid long back by the Hon'ble Prime Minister in the presence of the Civil Aviation Minister. But the construction work is progressing very slowly. So, I urge upon the Government to take steps to expedite the construction of these projects and ensure their early commissioning.

- (xvi) **Need to start construction of National Highway No. 85 (Hajipur to Gopalganj via Chhapra-Siwan) and National Highway No. 101 (Chhapra to Muhammadpur via Baniapur) in Bihar**

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Sir, the condition of roads in several States of the country is very

bad especially the condition of National Highways in Bihar is pathetic. One would find only remnants of roads in Bihar. After declaring the main roads of the State as National Highways sanction has been given for construction of a stretch of 890 k.m., which mainly includes National Highway No. 101 Chhapra to Muhammadpur via Baniapur and National Highway No. 85 between Hajipur to Gopalganj via Chhapra Siwan. The construction work is getting delayed as no tenders have been invited for the construction of sanctioned 890 k.m. stretch in Bihar which mainly includes National Highway-85 between Hajipur to Gopalpur via Chhapra-Siwan. This Highway connects two States i.e. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The sanction has already been accorded for the construction and widening of this Highway but the tender have not been invited so far.

The condition of National Highway No.-101 has also become very bad due to onslaught of floods every year in Bihar. The estimates have been prepared for the construction and widening of the National Highway No.-101 but construction work could not be started as no tenders have been invited after getting sanction of the estimates. It is very important to start the construction work by getting the estimates sanctioned, as the condition of road is very pathetic.

Lakhs of people of the villages connected to the said road will be benefitted once the construction of the said highway begins after getting approval. The hopes and expectations of the people are still alive, but due to constant delay in construction work and negligence being shown in this regard the hopes of the people are fading away.

Through you, I request the Government to immediately invite tenders in this regard and start the sanctioned construction work of National Highways 85 and 101.

- (xvii) **Need to conduct survey for connecting Sirkali-Karaikal, Mayiladuthurai-Karaikal and Kumbakonam-Karaikal with National Highway**

[English]

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Karaikal district of the Union Territory of Puducherry is 160 Kms. away from Puducherry, the capital city of the Union Territory. This district is surrounded by Nagapattinam and Thanjavur districts. It is surrounded by places like Sirkali, Mayiladuthurai, Kumbakonam and Nagapattinam. Since this district is situated in the midst of a backward district it has also remained a backward region for long time. Although the Union Territory as a whole has progressed phenomenally, the Karaikal region has remained undeveloped relatively. With a view to overcome this backwardness and to accelerate its development, the Government of Puducherry has declared Karaikal

as a separate district recently. The physical infrastructure like roads, railways, airways, waterways is owefully inadequate or nearly absent. The district is not at all connected by railways. The only means of common transport is roads which are in miserable condition. The recent Tsunami and the regular natural disasters like floods have been continuously devastating the road conditions. Karaikal is attracting a large number of tourists because of its religious possession of Saneeswaran temple and Karaikal Ammaiyar. But the tourists and public face difficulties to reach Karaikal. Since Karaikal is a part of the Union Territory, the Government of India, the Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways is requested to connect Karaikal by National Highways or connect by the State Highways with the funding of Government of India. I, therefore, urge upon the Government to conduct immediate survey and lay pucca roads connecting Sirkali, Karaikal, Mayiladuthurai-Karaikal and Kumbakonam-Karaikal. Such a move would catalyze the economic, social and tourist development of Karaikal.

(xviii) Need to promote labour-oriented techniques for the overall development of the economy

[Translation]

SHRI SURAJ SINGH (Balua, Bihar): Sir, the facts highlighted by renowned economist Shri Arjun Sen Gupta Commission regarding labour class of country are astonishing. On the one hand country is celebrating its 60th Independence anniversary, on the other hand 397 million labour in unorganised sector are shown dredged in poverty and helplessness by Sen Gupta's reports. The 10th Five Year Plan is over now and 11th Plan is about to start. We should find out the reasons due to which common man is still reeling under poverty and depression. In fact the direction of development is not according to the need of country. Today on the one hand there are large number of unemployed people and on the other hand shortage of labour force is obstructing our development. Direction of development is not clear. The development of the country should be based on labour oriented techniques. Capital oriented techniques will only create imbalance in development and various other problems.

Hence, I urge that we should prefer to adopt a policy of promoting labour oriented techniques to capital oriented techniques and move our society ahead on the path of all-round development.

(xix) Need to provide special financial relief package to the flood-affected people in Jharkhand

SHRI HEMMAL MURMU (Rajmahal): Sir, every year five lakh people are affected by floods and soil erosion in

Rajmahal, Sahibganj, Borthawa and Pakur etc. of Jharkhand. In our area the Union Government has approved projects for anti-erosion works but its benefit has not reached to affected people. Recently, in our area a boat capsized and twenty people died, even the bodies of some people could not be traced.

Recently, we have informed Union Government to take steps for controlling floods but no measures have been taken as yet.

Hence, the Union Government is urged to provide special financial package to control flood in effected areas and to provide relief to the flood affected people.

(xx) Need to provide more seats to the hill States in Lok Sabha

[English]

SHRI NAKUL DAS RAI (Sikkim): The Central Government must keep in mind the ground-realities in the hill States of India while framing the policies. The existing approach of the Union Government is entirely not benefiting the hill states. These states are sparsely populated and as a result per capita development cost is more. I, therefore, appeal to the Union Government to make special policies which directly benefit the population in the hill states.

India is a federal state. Our federalism has been appreciated worldwide. Giving more voice to the people of the hill states can further strengthen this. This can be done by increasing the number of seats from the states in the Lok Sabha. As a lone MP from a hill state, I have experienced the difficulties to serve the citizens in a holistic manner as my constituency is the entire state. Population alone should not be yardstick for the creation of a constituency. More representatives from the states in the Lok Sabha will ensure complete development of the State. Therefore, more representations are necessary in Lok Sabha from the hill states to strengthen our democracy and federal character and ensure development process.

14.06 hrs.

[English]

INLAND VESSELS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2007*

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Inland Vessels Act, 1917, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The Inland Vessels Act, 1917 (1 of 1917), is an Act consolidating the enactments relating to inland vessels. It is a comprehensive Central legislation with all aspects concerned therewith, namely, inland water limits, registration, survey, certificate of competency, licensing of masters and crew, investigation into casualties, protection and carriage of passengers, insurance against third party, etc. The State Governments are vested with executive powers under the Act.

The Inland Vessels Act, 1917 (1 of 1917), was last amended in the year 1977, and since then several major developments have taken place in the inland water transport sector. Some of the important developments are declaration of the three National Waterways, and constitution of the Inland Waterways Authority of India. The three National Waterways that were declared are:

- (i) Allahabad-Haldia stretch (1,620 kms) of the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system in 1982;
- (ii) Sadiya-Dhubri stretch (891 kms) of the Brahmaputra river in 1988; and
- (iii) Kollam-Kottapuram stretch of the West-Coast Canal along with Champakara Canal and Udyogamandal Canal (205 kms) in 1992.

Three more waterways are under consideration of being declared as National Waterways. There are some other waterways being developed by the State Governments.

The Inland Waterways Authority of India is constituted for development, maintenance and regulation of the National Waterways for shipping and navigation. The Government, having recognized the need to actively promote the inland water transport sector so that it has a reasonable share in the inter-modal mix of transport, is giving the much needed thrust to revive this neglected mode of transport. With the likely increase in inland water transport system in the country, a review of the existing statutory provisions relating to inland vessels was considered necessary.

A Committee under the Chairmanship of the Joint Secretary (Transport) was set up in August 1991 for the purpose. The Committee comprised Members representing, among others, concerned State Governments, namely West Bengal, Kerala, Bihar, etc. In all, 128 amendments to the Inland Vessels Act, 1917 were recommended by the Committee with a view to updating it having regard to the present day operational developments. The recommendations of the 1992 Committee were reviewed by a Group constituted in 2002 with the IWAI and representatives of the State Governments of Kerala, West Bengal and Goa. The

Group suggested deletion of 36 amendments proposed by the 1992 Committee, and recommended 92 amendments. These were further reviewed by the Ministry and the primary 68 amendments in 14 categories are covered in the present Bill.

The Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, 2005, to amend the Inland Vessels Act, 1917, was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 8th December 2005. The Bill was referred to the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture by the hon. Chairman of the Rajya Sabha for examination and report.

The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee submitted its report as the 100th Report on the Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, 2005, in which it has recommended certain amendments to the Bill. The Department has considered the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, and agrees with the recommendation with regard to the increase in the period of validity of temporary permit as per clause 5 of the Bill which is proposed to be increased from 30 days to 45 days.

As regards other recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, the Department of Shipping feels that these recommendations are not acceptable at present.

The salient features of the proposed amendments in the Bill are:-

- Extension of inland water limits to include smooth and partially smooth waters and waters up to maximum significant wave height of two metres. This will result in extensive use of inland waters by inland vessels which otherwise are not permitted to go beyond prescribed limits.
- Inclusion of dumb barges to be towed by the mechanically propelled vessels in the definition of mechanically propelled vessels, which are currently outside the ambit of the Inland Vessels Act, 1917.
- Dividing the inland water area into three zones based on maximum significant wave height criteria through notification by the respective State Governments to facilitate safety of vessels by providing suitable construction and manning norms based on operating conditions and also to provide for flexibility of classification of inland waters into different zones.
- Extending the validity of certification of registration, competency or licence or crew of land vessels issued by one State Government to the States in order to provide relief to the vessel owners and crew and issuance of temporary permit by the surveyor pending

[Shri T.R. Baalu]

the issue of the certificate survey in the interest of overall development of inland water transport sector.

- Liberalizing the criteria of transfer of certificate of registration to avoid hassles to the owners carrying out inter-State operation.
- Making provision for induction of suitable trained manpower of Army, Navy and the Coast Guard into inland water transport fold to address the problem of shortage of manpower in the inland water transport sector.
- Amendment of Section 54C so as to make Section 134 and Chapters X, XI, and XII of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, applicable in relation to mechanically propelled vessels with certain modifications and also to provide insurance of vessels against third party risks, compensations for accidents and Claims Tribunal, etc.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Has the Amendment of Section 54C been passed by Rajya Sabha?

SHRI T.R. BAALU: It has been passed by Rajya Sabha. The other salient features are:-

- Empowering the State Governments for prescribing the requirements of (i) hull, equipment, machinery in respect of inland mechanically propelled vessels, (ii) life saving appliances and (iii) apparatus required for communication and navigation in the interest of enhanced safety.
- Providing for prohibition of discharge oil, oily mixture, hazardous chemical or obnoxious chemical at inland port, power of entry and inspection and power to the Central Government for making rules for prevention and control of pollution, punishment for contravention of the provisions of this Chapter and rules made thereunder.

The Bill with the amendments has already been passed by the Rajya Sabha.

This august House will appreciate that the amendments in the Bill are required for the smooth operation of inland vessels in the context of overall development of the inland water transport sector, which, I hope will be accepted by this august House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Inland Vessels Act, 1917, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA (Hamirpur, U.P.): Sir, through you, I will urge the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)**

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: It need not go on record. There is no provision for you to speak now. It is for discussion. How can you make a mention?

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): He is making a mention about the previous thing concerning the Railways and not to the present hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All these matters can be referred to when you speak. There is ample time and opportunity. Nobody is denying you any opportunity.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: He is not mentioning anything about this Bill. He is mentioning about something else.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is not the matter under discussion now.

[Translation]

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR (Chimur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I feel that this Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill has been brought in a hurry. It still has a number of lacunae. We have not developed our waterways as per the requirement of country during past 60 years. A number of new waterways can be developed in this country. In 1955 Dr. K.L. Rao had conceived a proposal of interlinking of rivers. Had we implemented that proposal, this country would have been a number of new waterways. But Union Government had not paid any attention to the same and as result made legal provisions for all those old waterways. Amendments have been carried out in this Act of 1917 only twice or thrice. Three waterways have been declared as National Waterways — Allahabad to Haldia stretch of Ganga, Bhagirathi and Hoogli river system is National Waterways number-one. Sadia Ghbri stretch of Brahmaputra river is National Waterways number-two and Kollan-Ketapuram stretch of Western Coast Canal along with Champakara canal and Udyhog Mandal Canal is National Waterways number three. This is welcome announcement. But there are a number of perennial rivers in the country where inland water transportation is possible and vessels are being operated in these rivers, but they are not under control of any authority, they have not been developed. The European countries have provided transport facilities through waterways by bringing a number of rivers under interstate waterways. Hence, I would like to urge from the

* Not recorded.

Government that that new and existing waterways should be brought under the Bill and shipping and navigation facilities should be provided by regulating them. About recently I would like to say that though dockyards are under control of army and army officers but they are not fully under their control. The whole world know from where explosives used in Mumbai bomb blasts came. They had been transported through international waterways and later on supplied through gulfs i.e. through internal waterways to Mumbai. Whether we cannot control or bring such waterways i.e. such gulfs under ambit of this Bill for regulating the same?

Sir, steps should have been initiated in this regard but that had not happened hence, I would like to say that small amendment made in this Bill will not serve the purpose, because permits were issued earlier also. So some special provisions should be made in this regard. There are separate norms regarding insurance and compensation in the country. If a farmer commits suicide, in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh compensation of rupees two lakh is provided to their Kith and Kin, if someone dies in rail accident then a compensation of rupees five lakh is given to his relatives. If a man-eater lion eats someone in forest then compensation of rupees two lakh is given. There are such laws regarding compensation. Kindly tell us as to what amount of compensation would you like to pay? Whether value of human life is different in different parts of country. We do not help the family of deceased person in a proper way. But whether a provision of compulsory insurance can be made in this Bill as an insurance of Rs. 5-10 lakh is made in case of air journey. So as to what amount of compensation will you pay? This Bill has stated nothing about compensation.

Hon. Chairman, Sir, I would like to request that only framing of rules will not be sufficient but we have to make a clear cut provision that has to be mentioned that an amount of rupees 10 lakh per family will be paid as compensation. Whether hon. Minister wish to make such amendment in this Bill? I feel that in place of making amendment time and again incorporating all these aspects, a comprehensive amendment should be made in the Bill.

Sir, I would like to ask one more thing from hon. Minister that a committee was constituted to examine this Bill and again a committee was constituted to review the findings of the said committee. I have not gone through the said committee report. Had I seen it I would have been in a better position to explain it. But why did you ignore all those recommendations given by the Committee? As to why those recommendation were not incorporated in the Bill? Whether committee had not deliberated seriously on it? If committee had deliberated seriously then as to why you deleted the same?

Sir, I feel that the Government of West Bengal had deliberated on it, but Government of India for the whole country. Only one State Government have considered it. It seems that you have done it to please the people supporting your Government you have mentioned about the Government of West Bengal but still you have to clarify as to why the report of the Committee has been deleted and the same has not been incorporated in the Bill?

Sir, I have fully gone through this Bill. Lot of accidents occur. Stress has been laid on operating mechanically propelled boat. It is o.k. but I would like to say that there are no proper arrangement of training for this purpose in country. For Seamen, only training centre is in Mumbai. Can we provide them special training on the lines of pilot training in this regard? If not, this type of accidents will keep taking place. We need to provide them technical training for this purpose.

Sir, I would like to say that licence is issued to a bus driver. Blue line buses have caused havoc in Delhi. Accidents are routine and newspapers are filled with such news items. It appears that qualification and training are ignored at the time of issuing licences. I would like to ask whether such things also take place in this department? These facts should be kept in mind while issuing licence. I would like to tell you that I can get licence from any where in the country. This is the real picture of the country. Therefore, I would like to ask whether you are going to make special provision for licencing system. There is need to elaborate such things.

Sir, under one section, you have enhanced the amount to Rs. 50 thousand from Rs.25 thousand and under clause (B) of section 2 Rs. 12,500 has been enhanced to Rs.25 thousand. Motor Accident Claim Tribunal has been renamed as Inland Vessel Accident Claim Tribunal. It is very vague. Merely changing the name and doubling the money will not serve the propose. Necessary provisions have not been incorporated in the Act.

Sir, I will conclude my speech after mentioning one point regarding pollution. Pollution is one of the most critical issues before the country. Ganga is the most polluted river and so is Yamuna. Yamuna river can be used as waterways. Crores of rupees have been spent for cleaning the Ganga and Yamuna rivers but without any result. Therefore, I would like to say that we need to explore new waterways and take special measures to check pollution in old waterways. Pollution reflects the failure of our democracy. Whether the Government are going to retrieve the situation. If the Government would like to do something in this regard, Hon'ble Minister should elaborate this before passing the Bill. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. You have covered all the points.

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR: Yes, Sir, I am concluding.

[Translation]

Sir, I will conclude after mentioning the point regarding pollution.

You would like to get benefits from rivers but don't want to act towards flood control. Whether the provision for flood control has been incorporated in the Bill? You can say regarding pollution and flood that it is not my department but merely saying so will not serve the purpose. It is the collective responsibility of the Cabinet. Therefore, you have to take action for flood control whether it is Brahmaputra, coastal area, Ganga or Bihar. What action are you going to take to check pollution? It is fine that you will ban chemicals but what will you do to check pollution caused by motorboats? Nowadays, kerosene is freely being mixed with diesel. I expect that the Hon'ble Minister will definitely elaborate as to what special action they are going to take to check pollution. Otherwise this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee of the Parliament so that a comprehensive Bill may be prepared. It is my humble request.

[English]

SHRI K.S. RAO (Eluru): Sir, I am very happy that the hon. Minister has brought this Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, which was first brought in 1970 and later amended in 1977. Already, 30 years have passed. We all are witnessing that the conditions are changing too fast, particularly in the last two decades. Fortunately or unfortunately, the Standing Committee has also submitted its Report early and the moment the Report was submitted the Minister has brought this Bill into the House.

The constraint of availability of oil in this country has made the transport cost exorbitantly high. It has been made clear time and again by the Minister of Petroleum that we are short of Hydrocarbons in this country and we have to necessarily depend on imported oil for transport. So, the cost of transport, both personal and cargo, is increasing not only outside the country but also within the country. It is our duty to utilize the inland waterways which are available in abundance in this country. There are perennial rivers which can be connected and the inland waterways can also be taken up. This way we can reduce the cost of transport, save foreign exchange, improve tourism and provide rural employment. This will also give impetus to the tourism industry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you gone through the Standing Committee Report?

SHRI K.S. RAO: Yes, Sir. It will give impetus to the

industry engaged in the manufacture of vessels, floating jetties, small boats and small vessels. All these things can also be manufactured. Today, even the fishermen who were earlier engaged in this business are devoid of employment. They are now jobless. If we give them an opportunity to make investment at the lower rate of interest, they will jump into this business and manufacture these vessels in the country itself. We do not then need to import these vessels. There are a lot of people who can make these vessels. I am happy that at least now this Bill has been brought before the House. My only worry is the Minister has stated in a reply before the House that subject to availability of funds he will take up those three waterways which were earlier declared as National Waterways and then think of other things. Where is the shortage of funds in this country today? Days are gone when Ministers used to reply, "We appreciate the suggestion made by Shri Radhakrishnan or some other Member. It is a very good suggestion. It is a very good project but I regret to say that the funds are not available". This was the usual reply in the earlier days. But the Ministers cannot take shelter under that now. Any amount of fund is available internationally. We have now agreed for globalization.

How many crores of rupees are required by the Minister? The money is available. If it is not available with the Government, let him take assistance of the private sector. There are people who are prepared to take up projects under BOT, under annuity, under joint venture, and under public-private partnership. All that they have to do is to apply their mind. They must be committed and devoted. It does not require years. I was seeing the statistics which he gave. He said that 2.82 billion kilometres of transport was done in 2005-06. Now he proposes to increase it to five billion kilometre tonnes by the year 2011-12. He further proposes to increase it to 20 billion kilometre tonnes by 2025. But he has said that it is all subject to availability of funds. Tomorrow, he could say that he wanted to increase it to five billion kilometre tonnes but unfortunately the Finance Minister did not allow as the funds were not available. That is not the solution. The hon. Minister is also an experienced, learned and a young man who can understand the international situation. My humble request to him is that the money is available in plenty at lesser rate of interest and it is highly workable. It would also reduce inflation. The Government is breaking its head due to inflation. The Opposition is criticising the Government day-in-and-day-out on the price increase. All this can be curbed by his Ministry by encouraging the inland waterway and by making it national waterway. For example, in Andhra Pradesh, Godavari and Krishna are perennial rivers. Buckingham canal is also a perennial river which is connecting Kakinada to Pudducherry.

Since my childhood, I have been hearing that the Buckingham canal is going to be an inland waterway. But till today, it has not been done. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about the inland traffic?

SHRI K.S. RAO: What he was telling is that it has to start from Kakinada and it must go to Vijayawada and from there it must go to Tamil Nadu and from there to other places. My other colleague is apprehensive that the hon. Minister will start it from Pudducherry instead of starting from Kakinada. ...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, my humble request to him is that please remove that condition of availability of funds. Let him plan how much money is required to make more and more waterways. He has said that he has proposed to the Standing Committee to make the Buckingham canal a national waterway. But we do not know how much time the Committee will take and how much he will take to make it a national waterway. But I think all this is not required. It can be done overnight. He must have the determination to do it. It is not in his interest. It is in the national interest and it is in the interest of everybody. Today, suppose Krishna-Godavari basin is a bowl for paddy, rice, fruits, vegetables, palm oil, sugar and many other things. All this can be brought to Kerala at a lesser cost. Today, Kerala is importing a lot of rice from Andhra Pradesh. You can get it at a very cheap transport cost through Buckingham canal. So why should we increase the prices? Why should we delay the project? It must be taken up immediately. I would request the hon. Minister not to keep in his mind that the funds are not available. Funds are available in plenty. If they are not available through budgetary support, let him raise bonds or let him take money from international sources and let him start the work immediately.

Similarly, many other Members have got good rivers in their respective States also. For example, Brahmani and Barrack in Orissa and West Bengal respectively can be connected immediately without any delay. So, all of us must bring pressure on him or the Government to see that not only these two rivers but many other rivers are developed as national waterways. He could bring this into its purview because he is amending the Act to provide all those facilities so that it can go on smoothly.

The hon. Minister has stated that he is amending the Act in order to provide for the same insurance facilities that are being provided to the transport sector. That is an excellent idea. If tomorrow some mishap happens, then both the parties as well as the third party that is being transported in the vessel, be it cargo or men, would get the compensation. In the absence of such a provision this cannot be a progressive law. This is an excellent move.

I would like to suggest that not only within the country but the inland waterways must be connected to the ports as well wherever it is feasible so that this transport can go in bulk to other countries as well. They can go to the ports and from there they can re-load and transfer it to the international ships; not that these vessels would go into international waters. If necessary, the hon. Minister may make the necessary amendments in the law to give effect to this provision so that this could be brought under its purview. He may initiate steps in this regard immediately. However, I would like to commend him for all the other provisions in the Bill.

My next point is about road traffic. My hon. Colleague was mentioning about this. Nowadays travelling by road is terrorising oneself and this is because road accidents are too many. The television channels are flashing news of road accidents day in and day out. Hundreds of people are dying because of road accidents. Why is this happening? It is because of heavy road traffic and even because of the changing habits of people. Earlier we did not think of coming to Delhi but today the youngsters are coming to Delhi just for pleasure trips. They are getting habituated to it. Earlier we could not think of going beyond our districts. But today there is no limit and restriction to moving out of our towns and going anywhere. Such a situation leads to heavy traffic congestion and consequently the number of road accidents also is increasing. If one were to improve upon this situation, then waterways can serve as a good mode to reduce this congestion. It would not only help in earning revenues but also help in reducing road congestion and consequent road accidents. This has to be encouraged. From every angle, be it for reasons of reducing road accidents, or reducing cost of transportation, or saving foreign exchange, this needs to be given encouragement.

Let us take for example the Buckingham canal. Once it is constructed, we can plant trees on both the sides of the canal. This will help improve our environment. My humble request to the hon. Minister is that he should think big. This amending Bill would help a few problems. I appreciate this move. But I would also like to tell him that he should not be limited in his approach; he should not be contented about the fact that he has brought this Bill which his predecessors did not think of bringing forward. He should move forward.

The hon. Minister in the Bill has made provisions for changing the definition of inland vessel and inland water so that it helps the internal situation. This is another appreciable move. Similarly, this can be made inter-State. The certificate need not be limited to one State. A certificate given by one State must be acceptable to other States also. Let him make whatever provision is required to be made in this regard. He can also work on a formula as to how revenue between the

[Shri K.S. Rao]

different States would be shared. This should not become a point of dispute between the States.

The next point is about pinpricks. That has to be reduced. The time period for issuing licences, certification, survey and all those things would have to be reduced. The hon. Minister, in the Bill, has suggested another good thing. There are a lot of people working in the Army who are acquainted with running these inland water vessels and he proposes to seek the services of these personnel employed in the Coast Guard and all, to begin with, to train more and more people in the villages for doing these things. I am happy about that fact. This is a very encouraging thing.

My last point is about pollution control. The hon. Minister has made a provision for strict rules in regard to environmental violations. The punishment should be substantial to see that inland water is not polluted at any time. If one were to be liberal and the punishment is made nominal, then people will not care for it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about pollution?

SHRI K.S. RAO: Sir, I have already mentioned about it. I appreciate the move of the hon. Minister for bringing forward this Bill immediately after the Report of the Standing Committee was submitted. I only wish that he would put his mind into this aspect and include all other things to make it work better.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur): Sir, I support the Bill. While supporting the Bill, I would like to remind the House that there was a Review Committee constituted by the Government which has gone into the entire aspect of the inland waterways development. It is a Committee in which Governments of Goa, Kerala and West Bengal were represented. That Committee recommended a comprehensive legislation to be brought about in place of the present legislation which was originally formed in 1970. Of course, the Minister had incorporated good amendments. But I would like to remind the House that what is required is probably a comprehensive legislation dealing with the entire aspect of the problems of inland waterways.

Secondly, that Committee has again recommended for a National Maritime Policy. This Committee was constituted probably two decades before. In reply to the other House, the hon. Minister said that the UPA Government is considering a National Maritime Policy to be pronounced as soon as possible. That is a welcome step. But before the National Maritime Policy is pronounced, I would like that policy to be discussed. An opportunity should be created so that the policy will be widely discussed all over the country. It would help the

whole purpose for which it is brought. If that is done, the whole purpose will become fruitful.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has not announced the policy so far.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: He has not announced but he has promised in the Rajya Sabha that such a policy is coming. I am only saying that such a policy should be put before the country for a greater discussion among the people.

As I am supporting this Bill, I would not go into the details of it. There is one new aspect in the present amendment which is about pollution control which the Chair has also mentioned.

MR. CHAIRMAN: When the traffic becomes heavy, pollution will be natural.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: But the new amendment says that pollution control measures should be taken. Oil spills and waste water should be controlled.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Bill has taken some measures.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: That should be taken seriously. Probably, when they are making the rules, he may go into that aspect in more detail but this is one of the problems. If not controlled in the context of greater development of inland water transport, probably it will lead to the death of rivers, backwaters and lakes. It is likely to happen if we do not control pollution. Pollution control measures are to be properly taken. I think the Bill has noted that problem which I appreciate.

Let me come to the problem of Kerala. It is one of the three proposed waterways. Since 1977 when the first amendment to the Bill was passed, three important developments took place. Three national waterways were declared. The third one was Kottapuram-Qullon National Waterways. I have seen the reply laid by the Minister in the other House.

Now, there are lot of problems. Whatever is the problem, we have to take sufficient steps not only to complete this National Waterway No. 3 but also work on Kollam to Kottappuram is to be completed. But Kottappuram to Kasargode, namely, to the northern end of Malabar and then Kollam to Kulachal, probably beyond Kerala's border are traditional waterways that we have. Somehow we are moving at a snail's pace in this. I do not blame the Centre. The State has to share the responsibility. I do not say that it does not take action. But some more interest should be taken by the Centre in providing money. I think the last Finance Commission has provided more than Rs. 300 crore to Kerala for the development of inland waterways. Here I might remind

this House and since you are in the Chair, it is all the more reasonable to remind that in our younger days probably there was much more inland waterways transport in Kerala. Most of the river systems were utilized. In Varkala that tunnel was utilized and you could go to Parvathiputhanar and beyond. Now all that is silted. No effort is made to desilt it. So what I am suggesting is that it is possible now also. The hon. Minister has taken, I am sorry to say, a very pessimistic view. He went to Kerala three times. It is true. He met three Chief Ministers and probably they did not cooperate. But, whatever it is, you may have to go fourth or fifth time. I do not say that you do not do that. You go and discuss with the Government and also as you wanted to discuss with the people, that opportunity can be taken. But one thing, when these national waterways are made, the problem of fishermen is a real problem. Some rehabilitation package should form part of it. If some rehabilitation package is offered and they are given sufficient other opportunity to do their work, I do not think they will stand in the way of building National Waterways in Kerala.

Sir, to this northern part from Kottappuram to the northern end of Malabar, the old British time 'Cannoly' canal is there. That was constructed by the British. Without spending much money, just making it at the national standard, you can build most of the canals, cutting a few portions. There are backwaters to connect it. So, if we all take interest, it is possible. When the hon. Minister was there, he was kind enough to make an announcement in the meeting with the MPs. Sir, you were also there. He announced that the Government of India would like to announce new waterways if that is offered to Nedumbassery airport, that is Cochin airport. At that time, we offered, and you promised that it would be done. But now I am sorry to say, you wrote a letter saying that unless and until the other impediments are removed, this will not be announced. Please do not take that attitude. Simultaneously, let us do that; otherwise, some impediments will be there and the entire system will get affected. So, I think, more liberal attitude should be there wherever it is possible. It is not a small stretch. If some 60 kilometres of national waterways from Kottappuram to Kalady is made, the port connectivity will be done. If port connectivity is done, all the important tourism centres including Kumaramkom and Alleppey etc. will be connected by waterways. ...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, I will take two more minutes. Kerala has another importance. Probably, it is one of the States where tourism has been declared as an industry and tourism has been very highly developed. So if these waterways are developed, I am sure that it will be a great boon to Kerala to develop further in big strides in the tourism industry.

I hope the Minister will take a little more liberal view. Do not insist that everything should be complete before taking

the next step. We will help to get it completed whatever is not complete so far. But, let us go ahead with the new proposals, then, probably we will be able to make a breakthrough. Sir, what I would like to say is that in today's context when oil crisis is gripping the entire world and retarding the growth of economy, this national waterways' proposal will help immensely for the transport of goods, for people to go from one place to another; for tourism and all that. Taking all this into account, I wish that the Government go ahead giving more attention to this project. This is all wholeheartedly wish to submit.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod): Sir, I support the Inland Vessels Amendment Bill, 2007. This is very happy to note that the Government is taking some interest to promote our inland navigation. Sir, the first Act came in the year 1917. Sir, between 1917 and 1977, there were a number of amendments incorporated in this Bill. Sir, it means that the inland navigation needs intensive study, especially in the wake of scientific and technological development that has taken place. The Standing Committee has made such a criticism that the Government or the Minister is coming with piecemeal amendments. You see that within the short period of time, this Act has had to witness a number of amendments. It means that the potential requirements or all the needs of the day were not intensively studied by the Ministry. It was the criticism made by the Standing Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Most of the amendments were accepted.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Only a few amendments were accepted. But there were a number of amendments that the Standing Committee had put forward. During British rule, there was a much significance, as far as the inland navigation were concerned. It may be due to the lack of road facilities.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You were saying that the hon. Minister was telling that the recommendations were accepted.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: But, now there is very fast development in the field of the transport facilities. This may be one of the reasons for the slow progress in the case of the inland navigation and waterways. In order to protect and strengthen the inland navigation, it is glad to note that the Government has decided and declared three inland waterways. I am thankful to the Minister that three more waterways are going to be announced. Sir, the main objective that the Minister has pointed out in the Statement of Objects and Reasons is the extension of the inland waterways. Of course, it is very essential in the day to day working. It is only on the basis of classification that we can use the vessels and also the extension or the validity or the certification of the registration. It is also without the certification, without the

[Shri P. Karunakaran]

registration, there are a number of vessels that are functioning. There is also the induction of the suitable tradesmen power from other sectors. There is a very important provision made here for the pollution control. Sir, the very important issue that Raoji and others have mentioned is the investment. So, we have mentioned the objectives clearly. But, the Budget proposal or the allocation for the promotion of the sector is very important. So, the Government has to allocate more funds for this. Otherwise, it will not be possible to develop inland waterways as this has to compete with other transport facilities. As has been mentioned by other hon. Members, it is not only the question of developing transport facilities, but it is also connected with promoting tourism in the country.

For example, take the case of Goa, which is a very good example as far as tourism is concerned. Then, inland waterways can be used fully to promote tourism in Kerala also. So, by using inland waterways, we can develop transport facilities and also promote tourism in the country. The Transport Ministry and the Tourism Ministry have to work together to make this possible.

With regard to the definition of inland waterways it is true that there are some positive changes compared to the earlier Bill. But still it needs more attention because more waterways can be included. There is a suggestion that the waterways nearer to sea mouth can be included in the list of inland waterways. I do not know whether they are included or not. Then, fishing vessels are not included. It is true that the functions of the fishing vessels are different. At the same time, fishing vessels can function smoothly through inland waterways. So, they can also be included.

With regard to inland waterways, the main issue as far as Kerala is concerned is dredging. Most of the rivers in Kerala are not fit for running of vessels or boats due to various reasons and the most important reason is dredging. Then, there are also objections for this from fishermen in some areas. A large number of fishermen depend on the sea and also rivers for earning their livelihood and there are a large number of fishing nets along the waterways. So, a proper rehabilitation scheme has to be announced before carrying out dredging. In Kerala, we face many problems and Shri Chandrappan has pointed out some of the issues. I would request the Government that they should take up both dredging and rehabilitation together.

Another important issue is the reduction of pollution. Now-a-days, most of our rivers and waterways are polluted. This will affect our environment very badly. The ships or vessels discharge oil and other extracts into the sea and

rivers and this affects our environment. So, a clause for preventing pollution of our rivers is required to be included in this Bill. Pollution of rivers is not the only issue here, but pollution has become a major problem for human beings also. The other most important issue is issuing of certification. Then, monitoring has to be done with utmost care. Of course, that provision is already there in this Bill.

14.59 hrs.

(SHRI MOHAN SINGH *in the Chair*)

Sir, though it is not directly connected with this Bill, I would like to point out that there was an accident in Kumarakom Waterway in Kerala in the year 1995 in which 32 persons have lost their lives. In the year 2007 itself there was an accident in Thattacaud Waterway in which 30 students have lost their lives. The Government of Kerala has set up an Inquiry Commission and that Inquiry Commission has submitted its Report. It stated that there was no licence for the vessel which carried the students and the condition of the vessel was not at all good. So, the certificate has to be issued with utmost care. Then there should be proper monitoring of the vessels. If the officers concerned do not perform their duties of monitoring, then action has to be taken against them.

I would like to suggest that the harbour waterways should also be included in the list of waterways in some specific areas. For this, a modification in the definition of waterways may be required. As far as Kerala is concerned, Kollam-Kottapuram Waterway has been included as the third waterway.

15.00 hrs.

In the earlier days, this was fully utilised, but now it is not possible to utilise it because of so many reasons. The State Government is taking steps, but I am sure that the Central Government and the State Government can deal with the issue sitting together. The hon. Minister has come there to discuss the issue.

Sir, the Government of Kerala has given some suggestions, especially, with regard to the inland navigation, that is, excavation of Vadagra-Mahi Canal, which is most important in the development of the northern part of Kerala. Then, there is a suggestion for the development of 12 feeder canals in the Kottayam district. Kottayam district is the most important place where Kumaram is there and where so many tourists come. So, that also has to be taken up. Then, there is a suggestion with regard to improvement of the feeder canals to Vembannad Lake. Sir, the hon. Prime Minister and many others have come there because they knew the investment is very important. So, that also has to be taken up.

The improvement of Kochi sea port and airport waterways is important as far as the airport and sea port and other development of Kochi in particular and Kerala in general is concerned.

I once again support this Bill with these suggestions.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail): Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, 2007 introduced by Shri T.R. Baalu, Minister of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways which has been brought to amend the Inland Vessels Act, 1917. As it has been seen that it was last amended in 1977 and things have changed since then. As Hon'ble Minister has announced, transport facility through three waterways which will be beneficial for the country. These three waterways have a total distance of just 2716 kilometer. I am happy that I belong to Allahabad and you are going to connect Allahabad and Haldia to National Waterway No.1. Haldia, Kolkata, Farakka, Patna, Bhagalpur, Varanasi and Allahabad are included in it. I welcome the proposal because this one is included in the three Waterways announced by you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is not a fresh announcement.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR: It has also been said that the existing terminal will be upgraded. It is a regular feature in Allahabad and Hon'ble Chairman is well aware of the fact that large ships stuck under Yamuna bridge and special attention should be given to this aspect also. In my view dredging operation may be started there. Though dredging work is usually undertaken but volume of water is very large there. Some Hon'ble members have suggested that rivers should be dredged to check pollution and there should be better arrangement for fishermen. There are various natural resources like Shilka sand at that place. Quality of the sand is good which will provide employment opportunity for the local people. It has been demanded that 374 kilometer long waterway from Triveni to Farrakka which is being demanded to be opened for night time traffic will benefit the passengers and it will fetch the Government larger revenue from freight ships. It has been seen that International maritime boundaries have been extended by the announcement of such waterways.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, beautification work of ports and terminals may be commenced so that tourism industry is benefited and revenue could be earned by transportation of goods. Movement of Natural Resources from one place to another will be easier and as a result production will increase. Employment opportunities will also increase. As other Hon'ble Members have said, interlinking of rivers may be considered

a vital step in this regard as at some places there is a scarcity of water and at other places there is surplus availability of water. With these words I conclude my speech.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on this Bill. Hon. Minister has introduced Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, 2007 in the House. I welcome and support this Bill. Certainly the water is available in abundance in the large part of the country. Earlier there was neither air cargo facility nor Railway Network. Transportation of passengers and goods were done through waterways but gradually it became out of fashion. The successive governments did not pay any attention towards this. Today we are paying least attention to develop waterways. Now, air facilities, Railway facilities and public transport system are more developed and people prefer travelling by road, rail or air to waterways. It is good sign that Government has paid attention to this and it is going to implement the report of Standing Committee, but is not accepting all the recommendations made by the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee have given some concrete suggestions, perhaps Government is not implementing them fully. The government should accept various suggestions given by the Standing Committee.

Sir, we are importing oil from abroad. We are not self-dependent in this respect. We are importing 75 percent oil of our requirement from abroad. Its prices are rising. We have to spend a large amount on import of oil and it is affecting our economy. I think if waterways are improved and streamlined more goods can be transported at less cost and we can save a huge amount.

Sir, the Ganga flows through major parts of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, from where I belong to and you also belong to the same region. As I have mentioned that earlier people used to travel short and long distance by vessels. People used to travel short distance between North Bihar and Central Bihar by vessels. Now, bridges have been constructed so vessels are no longer used for transportation. Travelling and transportation by vessels was easy. In Patna, the Ganga has changed its course and now flows off the city. Sir, you, used to visit Patna, you will find that once the Ganga flows there. I belong to the city of Patna, situated on the bank of the Ganga. But the city of Patna which was situated on bank of Patna was extremely beautiful. Large scale pollution has adversely affected the Ganga. Water in various rivers of the country is drying up. This needs to be considered on high level. It seems that in coming days Ganga will disappear. Erosion continues and all garbage is being thrown into it. The Government of India has launched an Action Plan to clean the Ganga. It is a different issue. If there is sufficient water in the Ganga, it can be used as a waterway. It has been

[Shri Ram Kripal Yadav]

cleaned in some parts. Vessels are being operated from Kolkata to Patna but not effectively. Due to silt in the Ganga vessels cannot be operated smoothly. They have faced a lot of difficulties to cover that distance. If the Government has decided to operate this waterways smoothly then, first of all it should be desilted. Only then vessels can be operated there smoothly. The Government should pay attention to this. This will also help in development of tourism.

Sir, I am not talking about the whole country or the whole world. In my State the Government has opened its office and have built platform but for this it should seek cooperation of State Government. It will be a great achievement. It will create opportunities for employment. It will help in eradicating unemployment and poverty in the country. Effective steps should be taken if you want to do this. Policies are often formulated but if intentions are not good then no policy will be executed. You need to promote it. It is the age of globalisation and privatisation. People of other countries of the world will come here for trade. The Government should give them incentives. Big companies are entering in every sector. They should be given opportunity in this field so that economy can be strengthened, employment opportunities can be created and tourism industry may get a boost. But for all this rivers and waterways should be desilted and investment is needed. People will prefer waterways to railways to transport goods if it will be cheaper and less time consuming.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Try to be brief and precise.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: I am talking about solid issues. It will provide employment opportunities which will eradicate poverty. Tourists visit from all over the world. It will attract tourists. A number of States are dependent only on tourism for their revenue. Taking into account all these things you have to provide sufficient budget. Cooperation of other departments should also be sought for this purpose. To save the Ganga and other rivers, pollution should be checked. If rivers ceased to exist, your thoughts cannot be translated into action.

With these few words I support this Bill with the hope that Government will pay attention to the suggestions given by hon. Members and take action on them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have taken 15 minutes for speaking on desilting, pollution and tourism.

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I stand here to deliberate on the Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill,

2007. Though belated, the decision to amend the Inland Vessels Act, 1917 is definitely very significant. I believe, this would steer the course of the near dormant yet high growth potential inland water transport sector.

As this House is aware that this Act was amended last time nearly 30 years ago in 1977. The changes to the Act from perspective of developing the sector, enhancing safety of the IWT operations and introducing measures to protect the environment, are the three major issues, which are before us and are addressed in this Bill.

However, development of the sector will ultimately depend on the flow of investment both public and private. Attracting investment is not a very easy task as there are certain interest limitations of inland water transport. As per the National Transport Policy Committee Report of 1980, our country's waterways including waterways navigable by country boats extend to 14,544 kilometre, out of which 5,685 kilometre is suitable for mechanized crafts.

The three national waterways, which are being developed by the Government, extend to a length of only 2,716 kilometre. Besides waterways of Goa and Mumbai are also used for navigation. In addition, country boats of various sizes, as in Kerala, our State of Orissa and also other parts of the country, use rivers, canals for navigation also. At present, only 2.82 billion tonne kilometre of cargo is being transported by inland water transport mode, and the Government intends to achieve 20 billion tonne kilometre of cargo transport by IWT mode by 2025. In the next five years, that is by 2011-12, it is estimated to reach a level of 5 billion tonne kilometer.

But to achieve this target, you need investment. Are you encouraging private investment or going in for joint venture or you are moving in both directions? Already three waterways, namely, Allahabad-Haldia stretch of the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly rivers, the Sadiya-Dhubri stretch of the Brahmaputra river, and the Kollam-Kottapuram stretch of West Coast Canal and Champakara and Udyogmandal canals, have been declared as national waterways and they have been notified. These are the three National Waterways which have been notified and the Government is working on declaring the Kakinada-Puducherry canals integrated with rivers Godavari and Krishna in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu respectively. The East Coast canal integrated with river Brahmani in Orissa and Barak in West Bengal as national waterways which are in the pipeline, and the Bill is before the House for consideration. These are good projects.

There is a need to identify the inland water transportation as a thrust area. Unless you declare it as thrust area, you cannot develop different waterways in future. In the Tenth Plan, the budgetary provisions for the development of inland

water transport infrastructure have been raised to Rs.636 crore. In the Ninth Plan, it was only Rs.150 crore. No doubt, the credit should go to the Minister. But my question is: how much is actually the expenditure? What is the outcome? That also should come before the nation.

Now, I come to the details. Currently, inland vessels are only allowed to ply on calm waters as it was not considered safe for them to enter tidal waters. However, tidal waters up to two metres of wave height have now been deemed fit for navigation by inland vessels.

It has been seen that inland vessels are capable of plying on some parts of the sea without compromising the safety of the vessel. There was a need to redefine inland water limit and it has been done so. All steps be taken to ensure the safety of human lives and also of the vessels.

The other important feature of this amendment Bill is the provision of compulsory third party insurance for inland vessels. I believe this provision will ensure that water vessels are treated on par with any motor vehicle on the road.

The new amendment would also make it mandatory for inland vessels to undergo regular pollution checks. Now, inland vessels registered in one State should now be allowed to operate in another State for three years as against the current period of one year after it was found that 12 months was too short a time. These are certain suggestions, which had come from the Standing Committee, which the Government has accepted.

During the British regime, the Act was enacted to consolidate—and this is really very interesting—the enactment relating to inland vessels. It was a Central legislation on regulation of inland vessels. It concerned with inland water limits.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI B. MAHTAB : It concerned with registration, survey, certificates of competency and licensing of Masters and Engineers, including Engine Drivers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: I have some more points to say. I need hardly two or three minutes' time. I will conclude.

The State Government is vested with the executive power. It was the railways, which first gave a major blow to inland vessels transport. Then, came the roads. Inland water transport is not only less pollutant but also cost saving. Therefore, modern waterways be developed and we should try to integrate it with the National Maritime Development Programme.

I would urge upon the Government to make a comprehensive review, and instead of bringing piecemeal legislation, the law should be commensurate with the requirements of inland water transport, its infrastructure and ultimately its overall development.

The earlier amendment of 1977 mainly pertained to providing for insurance of mechanically propelled vessels. The concept of national waterways was not envisioned prior to the commencement of the Constitution. After Independence, the inland water transport has become a shared responsibility of the States and the Union. Many significant developments have taken place and there is a need to give more stress on pollution-free transport at a reasonable cost. The Inland Vessel Transport Bill will certainly play a greater role in it. There is a need to have a comprehensive national maritime development programme.

In clause 30, on insertion of new sections, there is a provision relating to punishment for offences relating to pollution. Here I would draw the attention of the House and also the hon. Minister. It has been very categorically stated—“Whoever contravenes any provisions of Chapter 6 (A) (B) of any rule made thereunder”. It is because the rules are to be framed by the Government here. In a proviso it is stated and I draw your attention to this also that—“Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall render any such person liable to any punishment provided in this Act if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge”. If this is there, it will create havoc because ultimately the person who is the owner of the vehicle should be responsible for the unlawful act which is there. I would request the hon. Minister to consider this and also try to have it linked with the Motor Vehicles Act and see how this contravenes it.

Lastly I would conclude by saying that a proper coordination is necessary between the States and the Union. In this Bill prevention and control of pollution and protection of inland water should be given more priority. With these words I support the Bill.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): MR. Chairman, Sir, I support the Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, 2007. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The boat has started rowing in the desert for the last two years.

...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Standing Committee which is constituted by the Parliament, is comprised of the Members of all the parties, who after

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

confabulations reach a consensus on certain issues. Such a Committee constituted in this regard made its recommendations, but the hon'ble Minister said in the beginning that some recommendations have been accepted and some have been rejected. Therefore, through you, I would like to know the reasons for which recommendations made by the standing Committee have been rejected and had all these recommendations been accepted, it would definitely have been a comprehensive bill, and repeated amendments would not have been required. India is called the cradle of nature. God has bestowed us with rivers, seas, mountains and all kinds of climate. There is a great potential of inland water transportation in our country, but as the hon. Member who spoke before me said that hon'ble Minister of irrigation, Shri Rao had thought of linking of rivers many years ago. Then, the NDA Government, under the leadership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, came to power. At that time also the issue of inter-linking of rivers was discussed, some schemes were formulated, but the UPA Government has left all these schemes in the lurch. If the schemes of inter-linking of rivers had taken off, we would not only have protected many parts of our country from the fury of floods and prevented the water from going down the drain into the sea, but would also have augmented the operation of inland vessels and water transport. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The water would have reached Rajasthan also.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Yes, Sir, Rajasthan too would have got water you are right. You have endorsed my views; I am grateful to you. But our Government have not paid attention in this regard. I would also like to say that whether it is Ganga, Brahmaputra, Cauvery, Krishna, Godavari, Mandvi of Goa or Zuari river, all can be inter-linked, as has been mentioned.

Navigation can be done in rivers flowing towards sea, since these rivers pass through plains. The transportation of goods or passengers can be done easily through these rivers. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you have studied 'Ramcharit Manas,' 'Maryada Purushotam Shri Ram' had made a mention of 'Kewat'. It means at that time also, transportation through river used to take place. I would like to point out that rivers get silted. About Ganga River, it is often said 'Ram Teri Ganga Maili'. The Brahmaputra and many other rivers are also in the same state. If efforts are made, the Ganges from Allahabad to Haridwar can definitely be declared as national waterway. Navigation can be done there. Earlier, transportation of wood was done through Brahmaputra river. In ancient times, trade was carried out through this route. Therefore, there is a need to develop inland vessels route.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Sardar Sarovar Canal emerges from Narmada river dam in Gujarat and its water reaches Kutch. Similarly, Marudhar Indira Gandhi Canal in Rajasthan is very wide and it emerges from Bhakhra canal. Similarly, Ganga canal emerges from Haridwar. There is heavy flow of water in these rivers, since this Canal is very long and wide, therefore inter-state shipping can be possible. But there is need for development of infrastructure for water, land and air transport from the point of view of economic development of the country. I would like to urge the Government that this sector should not be neglected. This amendment bill has been brought, though promotion of sea-trade is being discussed, but there is a greater need for promotion of domestic trade through inland water way. There is need to pay attention towards local people.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through this Bill, it has been said that ex-servicemen would be re-employed. Our ex-servicemen whether they are from navy, or coast guard are very experienced people. If experienced persons and fisherman are involved, it will be good, because they are acquainted with the water routes, but it would be better, if they are trained also. By this way they would be able to get employment, salary and allowances and they would also be rehabilitated. Today, the condition of fishermen and sailors is very pathetic. Attention should be paid towards them. It should not be so that after recruiting ex-servicemen, they are employed in petty jobs like those of boatmen and potter and they may get deprived of employment and the problem of livelihood may emerge before them. There is a need to pay attention towards this fact.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, a Committee of representatives has been constituted in Kerala and Goa. Mandavi and Zuari rivers flow through Goa where cruise navigates at night for tourists. If from cruise transport point of view, it is declared as national waterway and if this kind of proposal comes from the State Government, the Union Government should understand the importance of this water route and make a declaration in this regard. Therefore, desilting of remaining rivers should be done in order to facilitate inland vessel transportation there.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the issue of pollution has been discussed over here. Crores of rupees are spent for cleaning the water of Yamuna in Delhi along with the Ganges and many other rivers in the country. Many schemes have been formulated in this regard, but still pollution is there. It has been stated that no oil, petrol, diesel etc. from a vessel should be discharged into inland water. A provision for imposing fine has also been made. A provision for one year imprisonment has been made. Whoever violates the rule, shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend up to one year, and a fine of fifty thousand rupees, which is very less. In

case of matter like pollution there is a need to pay attention towards banning the transportation of hazardous chemicals or substances. Special attention should be paid in this regard.*(Interruptions)* There is a need to enact stringent legislations in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me time to speak.

(English)

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (Berhampore, West Bengal): Sir, I must appreciate the hon. Minister Shri T.R. Baalu for piloting this Bill under the nomenclature of Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, 2007.

Sir, over the years, it has been observed that the inland water sector has been treated as a neglected child in the developmental process. If we see the modal share of inland water transport, it is found that the share of inland water in the modal mix is really gloomy.

The UPA Government, especially hon. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, has declared that inland water transport has to be given a thrust so as to increase the share of inland water transport in the modal mix of transport in our country.

Sir, the Government has already declared three National Waterways, namely, Allahabad-Haldia stretch of the Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system, Sadiya-Dhubri stretch and Kollam-Kottapuram stretch of the West Coast Canal. From the statistics, it is found that over the years, especially in the last three years, the volume of the cargo transported through the National Waterways I, II and III has been decreasing. However, in addition to the present three National Waterways, the Government is pondering to declare three more Waterways as National Waterways, that is, Kakinada, Puducherry and Barak River on the East Coast corridor. I do not have any objection in declaring more National Waterways because the more the National Waterways, the more inland water transport will be taking place. But for the exploitation of the existing three National Waterways, it will require another two or three years time. If we add more National Waterways, where the funds will come from? There lies the question.

Sir, India is a country which has been bestowed with natural endowments like water wealth. Waterways extending up to 14,500 kilometres are very much in India, which are easily navigable. If we add all the routes in terms of kilometres, then it is clear that only a fraction of the navigable Waterways are now being exploited. Over the years, this sector has been a victim of severe negligence and indifference. However, it is a well recognised fact worldwide that inland water transport system in contrast to other modes always bears fruit for the environment and also in terms of economy and fuel efficiency. One litre of fuel can carry more than 100 tonnes of cargo for

a distance of one kilometre through waterways. In comparison with that, one litre of fuel can carry about 24 tonnes of cargo by roadways; and about 85 tonnes of cargo by railways. From this account it is easily conceivable that waterways always provide more fuel efficiency and less pollution. It is a less accident prone sector which needs to be given special emphasis. To this end, I think this Bill will help a lot.

As per the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill, the Government is considering to increasing absorption of trained personnel for manning of vessels. On the one hand the Government says that the existing manpower has to be pruned, to be deflated, has to be retrenched and they have been offered VRS; and on the other hand the same Ministry is now considering absorption of trained personnel for manning of vessels. It is incorporated in the Bill also. So, it really seems to me as self-contradictory because the existing manpower can easily be given priority, opportunity, to expand the capacity of inland water system.

The Inland Vessel Bill also devised a very innovative approach whereby they are incorporating the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act 1988 for prevention and control of pollution in inland waterways. Henceforth, in place of 'motor vehicle' the 'inland vessel' will be construed as a mechanically propelled vessel. In place of public place in the Motor Vehicles Act, this Bill will incorporate 'the inland water'. The reference of a public service vehicle will be construed as a reference to 'public service vessel'. Goods vehicle will be construed as 'goods service vessel'. State transport will be construed as 'state water transport'. Driver of a vehicle will be construed as 'master of a vessel'.

It is clearly indicated in this Bill that this Government is going to invest more funds to create more infrastructural facilities and give other incentives to give a fresh impetus to this sector. I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to why he is not bringing the Inland Vessel Act into the ambit of the tonnage tax regime.

If the inland vessels are brought into the tonnage tax regime, I think, the inland vessels owners would be benefited. They will be implicitly insensitised. This is true that the Plan allocation for this sector has not been utilised, and under-utilisation has become an Achilles heels as far as inland transport system is concerned. Hence, we need optimum utilisation of the Plan allocation. In addition to it, private sector investment should be made imperative because Government would provide infrastructural facilities, such as, fairway terminals Navigational Aids etc. But so far as the number of Vessels and other facilities are concerned, I think, the private sector should be encouraged. May I know from the hon. Ministers as to how much private investment has so far been made in this area.

[Shri Adhir Chowdhury]

I would also like to suggest that in the light of the other Department, like the National Highways Authority of India, why are you not considering the Maritime Authority of India so that more institutional mechanism could be provided to this sector. We know that in the present globalised scenario, Global Warming has also become an issue. But over the years the inland water transport is decreasing. In spite of its environment friendly potentialities, more funds, more institutional mechanism, more private investment and more incentives should be infused to this sector. With these words, I support the Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak in support of this Bill. Waterways are the cheapest means of transportation in the world. With the changing times, there is need to change ourselves and go with the time. Fortunately, India has a very long sea coast. I come from Maharashtra. Thane, Mumbai, Ratnagiri and Sindhu Durg of Maharashtra are located along the western coastal region. Its total length is 570 k.m. Three new inland waterways have been identified in this Bill. There is need to increase the number of inland waterways. Tourism has been promoted along all 570 k.m. long coastal areas about which just now I have mentioned. The tourists from all over the world come here. There was a time when tourists used to visit especially Goa to enjoy the coastal region, however, today tourists have gradually started visiting the coastal area of western Maharashtra and day by day the number of tourists is increasing.

Like the coastal region of Maharashtra, there is backwater in Kerala and the Government of Kerala is extensively using backwater to promote tourism in the State. The tourists from all over the country and abroad visit Kerala to enjoy backwater. They get the enjoyment of marine tourism there. They go there to enjoy this pleasure. The coastal areas of Maharashtra enjoy almost the same as is enjoyed by Kerala.

There were some old ports, however, today there is no port there. Earlier there were five ports located along Rewas to Dighi, Dighi to Dabhol, Dabhol to Jaigarh and Jaigarh to Malwan and the entire international transportation of passengers and goods was done through these ports and thus goods were also transported through the water ways. Today, all these ports are lying closed. Today, there is no international transportation of people and goods through these ports. However, there is ample opportunity over there and we should promote it and international transportation should be restored and the goods transportation should also

be started. There is need to promote these ports like three inland waterways that have been selected.

Through you, I would like to submit to the hon'ble Minister that there is ample scope of waterways along the western coastal region of Maharashtra and tourism can also be promoted there through backwater and along with this, employment opportunity can also be generated through tourism. Tourism has maximum potential of employment generation and when we start international transportation through these ports, it will certainly generate some employment opportunity in various water transportation service sectors.

The Government of Maharashtra has already constructed coastal highway there and its construction is almost complete. If the water transportation service is also commenced along with the coastal highway, it will certainly boost the progress of entire western coastal region of Maharashtra which is also known as Konkan region and it has five districts of Thane, Mumbai, Raigarh, Ratnagiri and Sindhu Durg and the people of that region may get the benefit of excellent transportation service.

Today, when we are engaged in commercial and industrial development the movement of goods through water ways will provide cheapest means of transportation. Several projects are going to be commenced there. The raw material and other goods necessary for industries are imported from foreign countries through the waterways, as there is no alternative because it is the cheapest means of transportation. So, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister that he should develop fourth inland waterway as he has selected three inland waterways in this area to promote especially western coastal region of Maharashtra so that it may play important role in the development of this region.

[English]

PROF. M. RAMADOSS (Pondicherry): Respected Chairman, Sir, on behalf of the PMK Party and its founder President I rise to support the Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, 2007. Before I go into the nitty-gritty of the Bill, I would like to convey our sense of appreciation to the hon. Minister on two counts. One, he was kind enough to connect Kakinada - Puducherry through inland waterways transport. This scheme would help the development of Kakinada and Puducherry and Yanam which is a part of the Union Territory of Puducherry. Therefore, we congratulate the hon. Minister for providing a stimulus to the industrial development of Puducherry.

Secondly, as far as this Bill is concerned, this Bill is in consonance with the changing times. It is a highly timely Bill

which is required to accelerate the development of the inland waterways in the country.

As you know, the Government of India brought this Bill in 1917 which was amended in 1977. After this amendment, much water has flown. There has been tremendous development of the economy as well as on other fronts. For example, the Indian economy has been registering greater pace of progress. We are now in a higher trajectory of growth path of achieving an unprecedented rate of 9.2 per cent. If economy is like a body, then transport constitute the nerves of the body and without nerves, the body cannot survive and maintain itself. Therefore, transport system has to grow *pari passu* with the development of the Indian economy. It is in this context that the waterways transport which has become an essential transport system in the country has to be developed. So, transport development is an adjunct of economic development of this country.

It is not only that. Waterways transport helps in the transport of not only men and materials, raw materials and others, but it also accelerates the industrial development in different parts of the country and finished products from the industry are transported from the place of production to the place of export. Therefore, the contribution of waterways to export value is also greater.

The hon. Minister for Tourism is here. She would appreciate that if the Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Shipping and Tourism operate together, they would be able to exploit greater potential from the inland waterways because voyage in inland waterways helps the tourist inflow and attraction also.

So, on all these counts, the inland waterways have to be changed in accordance with the changing times and that is why, the Government of India has declared three National Inland Waterways and the other three are in the stages of consideration. We have also constituted Inland Waterways Authority. In consonance with all these changes, the statutory provisions have to be changed. That is why, the hon. Minister is before us with the changes in the form of the Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill.

Now, the salient features which provide a lot of advantages to the development of this sector are as follows. It seeks to extend inland water limits. It seeks to amend the definition of mechanically propelled vessels. It makes certification of regulation issued by a State valued in other States. It provides for induction of masters and engineers from the Coast Guards, Navy and Army without examination. It applies certain sections of the Motor Vehicles Act. It provides for pollution control of inland waterways. These are the six important features and all these features have tremendous merits and advantages on the economy.

For example, extension of inland water limits provides for extensive use of waterways and its potential. The definition of mechanically propelled vessels will help faster movement of goods and services and it provides for modernisation of the vessels that we are going to use. Providing certificate for engineers and others will overcome the shortage of engineers by inducting people from Army, Navy and others. Applying some sections of the Motor Vehicles Act will provide for the safety and security of the passengers who are travelling in these mechanical vessels.

Therefore, this Bill is absolutely significant and it has got tremendous value on the economy. At the same time, as a matter of suggestion, I would like to tell the hon. Minister that there is a lot of dredging work which has to be done in various waterways so that you are able to make the movement of goods and services fast.

There should be coordination between the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Shipping through a Memorandum of Understanding which can be reached. I would also request the hon. Minister to assess the real contribution of the inland waterways to the gross domestic product of the country. As of now, we have statistics with regard to the length of the waterways and other things.

16.00 hrs.

But what is its contribution in terms of income, in terms of employment and in terms of exports etc., so that we would be able to relate this contribution to the investment?
...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

PROF. M. RAMADOSS: One of the hon. Members had mentioned that the investment in this sector is lagging and it is not coming back. I should tell him that it was during this UPA Government that the investment in the inland waterways has been stepped up from Rs. 150 crore to Rs. 650 crore. Of course, this investment is not enough and there should be more investment and I hope that in the Eleventh Plan it will come. The National Maritime Policy, which is on the anvil, must devote some concentration on the aspect of the waterways. There is an apprehension, as is expressed by one of the hon. Members, whether the extension of inland water limits would affect fishing operations of the inland fishermen. I would request the hon. Minister to evaluate the impact of this on the fishermen community and if they are likely to be affected by these far-reaching changes, I would request him to work on a rehabilitation plan. I also would request him to examine the feasibility of running a waterway transport system from Chennai to Velanganni via Pudducherry and Karaikal which is the need of the hour and it would augment the transport facility of the people and it would also augment tourism potential of Pudducherry.

[Prof. M. Ramadass]

Sir, with these few words, I once again compliment the hon. Minister and support this Amendment Bill.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have some more Bills and the hon'ble Minister has also to reply. The rule is that those members who want to express their views should give their names before commencing the discussion. However, when the list is finalized, several Members give their names. It is not the proper method. The time for discussion is over and still two Members are yet to speak. I would like to request that you should conclude in two minutes time each.

[English]

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Sir, I rise to support the Inland Vessels (Amendment) Bill, 2005. I would like to request the hon. Minister to take steps to expedite the completion of National Waterways No. 3, namely, Kottappuram to Kollam waterways in Kerala.

I would also like to request the hon. Minister to extend the National Waterways No. 3 to Neeleswaram and also to Trivandrum. There is a request from the State Government in this regard. I have some apprehensions also. I come from Alleppey which is considered as the rice bowl of Kerala. The paddy fields in Alleppey are very low-lying, namely, 1.5 to 2 metres below sea level. So, in order to ease the voyage in waterways, there will be dredging of the waterways. The farmers in Kuttanad have the apprehension that if the dredging of the waterways is done, there is chance of the inclusion of salt water into this paddy field which is below the sea level. So, adequate measures should be taken to limit the dredging of the waterways in order to prevent the seepage of saline water into the paddy fields.

Sir, another thing is in the National Waterways No. 3 at Tannurmukkam and Triknopura. There are salt water barrages to control this saline water inclusion. This salt water barrage will be closed during three months in a year. When it is open for the continuous voyage of the container traffic, there is also a chance for the seepages of salt water.

Along the size of the waterways, there are large paddy fields. The banks of the waterways are not properly protected.

When the movement of the containers in the lake occurs, because of the waves in the waterways, there will be breakage of the banks and the chances of leakage of water, and it would damage the crops. So, these things should be taken into consideration while the Minister expedites the opening of the waterways.

There is one more thing. Even though there are

measures to prevent spillage of oil and to prevent pollution of the waterways, there is enough chance for spillage or leakage of oil into the waterways. Where the width of the waterways is narrow, the chance is more. So, adequate measures should be taken to prevent the pillage of oil.

There is an Inland Cargo Terminal at Allapuzha. The proposed site is the site where the famous Nehru Trophy Boat Race is taking place. Also, Alleppey is now emerging as a backwater tourism destination and house boat tourism. The site proposed for the Inland Cargo Terminal at Alleppey is the same site where the famous Nehru Trophy Boat Race is taking place and also it is the site for the house boat terminal. There was a request from the State Government and also from the local people. We also met the hon. Minister several times. But still the site is not translocated. There are other sites which are suitable near the current site for the cargo terminal. So, I would also request the hon. Minister to kindly consider the request of the State Government as well as the people of Alleppey to trans-locate the terminal.

With these words, I support the Bill.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Sir, at the very outset, I would like to say that I gave my name late because I was in the constituency.

Coming to the Bill, I would like to say that this is an archaic law which is being amended today making it more stringent, more environment friendly and making the inland waterways more effective. Here, my contention is that there were natural waterways in 1917. But, after Independence, a lot of big water bodies and big dams have been built like Balimela, Upper Indravati Projects which comprises 110 sq. kms or 200 sq. kms. Take the example of Hirakud dam. So, these dams are there. A lot of villages are not commutable because of the water bodies. So, the only way to commute is through boat. There are dams like Upper Indravati, Rengali. The only way to commute is through boats because all the roads have been cut-off. I have already mentioned about Balimela.

There is an example in Balimela where three blocks of Koraput district in the Chitrakonda area are there. They want to go and join Andhra Pradesh because there is no communication facility from Orkel to Chitrakonda. So, the three panchayats want to join Andhra Pradesh because they are not getting the Government facilities there. So, I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister, through you, Sir, that these big water bodies which have been created after Independence should be taken care of. A lot of villages are beyond road communication or rail communication. The only way for communication is through boats. Therefore, I urge upon the Minister that if the Ministry comes up and gives good boats, Government facilities could reach the poor people.

Orissa is a maritime State full of waterways and dams. The Mahanadhi and Brahmani deltas are there. They are old waterways there. Today also, they are there. So, it is high time that certain waterways in Orissa declared as national waterways. An Inland Waterways Regional Office may be located in Bhubaneswar or in any part of Orissa, preferably in Bhubaneswar or Cuttack. This is very essential. These are my few demands.

It is a very good law which he is piloting today because it is very environmental friendly. It will check pollution. New engines will be put; outboard machines will be put for running the boats. So, it is a very welcome Bill. There is nothing to oppose it. But here again I would like to say that today in my constituency Kalahandi, in Koraput and all places, there were boats which were giving health services to people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They are famine-prone areas and drought is there.

[Translation]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: There is Inderawati dam that retains 110 cubic water and 45 villages are located on the other side of the dam and there is no means of communication among them. The motorboat that operated earlier and provided medical facilities to villages has gone out of order. It has also been conveyed in the Report of the Ministry of Health and it is on account of this that hundreds of people are suffering from cholera and diarrhoea. So, I would like that inland water connectivity should be provided there at the earliest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please make water available in Kalahandi.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): In fact, I have to thank all the Members of Parliament who have participated in this discussion and who have given valuable suggestions to this enactment, Sir.

First of all, why is this amendment necessary? What is the reason for this amendment to this Act of 1917? First of all, this amendment needs to meet the challenges of changing world economy and the changing needs. Sir, rivers and other water bodies, everything is there. Suppose, if a particular river falls in the sea. River system is there, the tidal waves are there and in the sea, smooth and partially smooth sea will be there.

So far, the inland vessels are not allowed in the smooth and partially smooth sea. But, they can sail in river and upto the tidal waves, and beyond that, we will not allow the vessels

to sail in smooth and partially smooth sea. Just like that for this matter we want to have this enactment and not only that, it needs a lot of changes particularly in the field of control of pollution in inland water and compatibility of insurance of vessels against risks and also access to Indian water limits to cover smooth and partially smooth waters. It helps divide the inland water into three zones so that if a particular vessel has to sail in a particular zone, the construction material will be something else. If it is an appropriate zone too, the construction material will be something else. If it is zone 3, the construction material will be compatible with the sailing in the particular zone. And, exceeding the validity of certificate and such things of competencies, licence and survey of inland vessels are approved by one Government to other State Government and it also helps induction of the trained manpower from Army, Navy and Coast Guard. It will facilitate provisions for the insurance of vessels against the risk compatible with Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. We are also inserting a new chapter in the Act for prevention of pollution in the inland waters by Indian vessels. For these purposes, this Act is being amended. After so many of years, we have come forward with a limited purpose. It is not a comprehensive Bill. Many friends have said that a comprehensive Bill should be there. But, it is only for limited purposes. It is because of the experience we have gained so far, we have got this up. It is not that overnight we have brought this Bill. It was put in the web site, it was in the public domain and we consulted the State Governments also and then we have brought this Bill. I would also like to inform that it is not that it cannot be amended. As and when it is required, definitely it will be amended. Then, suggestions made by hon. Members would be taken into consideration when they are to be considered.

I would like to reply to the specific points raised by hon. Members. Prof. Mahadevrao Shivankar asked about new waterways that are to be developed. I would like to inform him that new waterways are under consideration. I will come back to Parliament as soon as it is approved by the highest authority. Then, he wanted to know about the safety and security of international waterways. I would like to inform the House that to enhance safety and security, the Merchant Shipping Act is being amended to include ISPS also. Then, he raised a point about training issues. There is a National Inland Navigation Institute at Patna and we are training people in that institute.

Then, he wanted to know as to why all the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee have not been accepted. We have accepted some of the recommendations which warranted immediate attention and other recommendations are not acceptable at present. When necessity arises, we will take up other amendments also. He

[Shri T.R. Baalu]

wanted the Government to adopt uniform criteria for declaring inland waters. I would like to submit that adopting uniform criteria is not feasible as conditions vary from place to place. He raised a point about Buckingham Canal. I would like to inform that Buckingham Canal is being declared as National Waterway No.4 and we will come back to Parliament very shortly after the approval of the highest authority.

Then, Shri K.S. Rao also asked about the Buckingham Canal. I would like to give the same reply to him also. Then, he raised a query regarding Krishna-Godavari Waterway also and said that it is pending for a long time. I would like to inform him that the delay is due to the process which is followed. We will definitely bring an enactment before the Parliament.

Sir, most of the hon. Members have asked similar questions. Shri Chandrapan said that some of the pressing issues have not been addressed. He said that there is a need for bringing a comprehensive legislation to deal with all the issues. I would like to state once again that this is not a comprehensive Bill and I would like to inform that we will definitely bring a comprehensive legislation in due course of time.

He said that there are a lot of problems in the development of Kollam-Kottapuram waterway as the National Waterway No.3. He is well aware that we discussed this matter with the hon. Chief Minister also many times. He also said that I should visit Kerala. I am prepared to visit Kerala even 30 times because it is 'God's Own Country'. I would like to request all the hon. Members of Parliament to prevail upon the State Government to see that the social problems are solved amicably.

It is not like that the Minister cannot deal with the subject matter, but the matter pertains to a social problem which has to be addressed very cordially and in a peaceful atmosphere. This is what I would like to tell Shri Chandrapan. He has also raised a matter of Kochi Port to be connected. We are ready to connect it, but the particular issue should be solved.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPAN (Trichur): In that sector, that is, Kottapuram to Karam, I think, there is no problem.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: I have already promised in the meeting with the Members of Parliament, it will definitely be considered. For that matter, if you want, I can go in for a DPR. We will take up the issue after the other issue is settled.

Shri Karunakaran has raised an issue of more funds allocation for development of inland waterways as this will boost tourism. I agree with the hon. Member that this will

definitely boost tourism and to increase the allocation of funds.

The next issue was with regard to the monitoring and safety regulations to avoid boat tragedy in waterways. Under the present Highway Act, this responsibility rests with the respective State Governments, so the State Government has to look into the matter.

The next issue is regarding excavation of Vadagra-Mahi Canal. I have already stated that a kind of further extension will be considered only after the settlement of the particular issue... (*Interruptions*) Whether it is Tamil Nadu or Puducherry, the same answer is there.

Next issue was raised by Shri Shallendra Kumar regarding need for periodic dredging of sand from the bed of the river at Allahabad and Varanasi. We are planning to procure a low draughted dredger so that dredging can be done in the shallow area. This will be done as quickly as possible.

Everybody has said about the linking of rivers. It is in my friend's domain, I think, the hon. Minister of Water Resources will take up the matter.

Shri Ram Kripal Yadav has said about gradually shifting of cargo. Yes, gradually it will be shifted whether it is rail, road or other modes as it concerns the Railway Board and Civil Aviation Departments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is sleeping.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: He has said that we have to retrieve it. Yes, we have to retrieve this system. But unless we improve this system, it cannot be done and at the same time, this is environment free and cheapest mode of transport. Definitely, the Government of India will take care of it.

Shri Mahtab has observed that adequate development of inland waterways all over the country be taken up. We are addressing the system, that is why, we have come forward for and are going in for another three waterways to be declared as national waterways.

The next issue was with regard to steps taken to ensure safety of inland vessels. We have considered it and it is in the Bill. I would request my friend to go through the Bill.

Shri Rasa Singh Rawat has asked why the suggestions made by the Parliamentary Committee were not included. I have already answered it.

The next issue is regarding linking of rivers. I have already answered that. Another issue is regarding the gradual siltation of important rivers and that it needs to be arrested and dredging needs to be carried out. Dredging is an

important issue. Definitely, periodically National Waterways I & II are being taken up. We will improve the situation further.

For inclusion of Mandovi and Zuari rivers of Goa in National Waterways, I think a proposal has come from Goa Administration. Definitely this will be considered during the course of time.

In his eloquent speech, Shri Adhir Chowdhury has mentioned something that all the three waterways should be fully functional. Till such time, we should not go for declaration of other water basins. There should be more waterways. Then only, comprehensively we should carry on; the system will be workable and viable. That is why, we will also consider it. Simultaneously we will go for new systems to be declared as well as the existing ones should be maintained properly.

A question was asked as to why the Government was not bringing inland vessel under tonnage tax regime. This is under consideration for some time. Inter-Ministerial consultation is going on. I will give a proper reply very shortly. I think it is at the advanced stage of consideration.

A question was asked as to why National Maritime Authority of India is not being formed. Inland Waterways Authority has already been established.

My friend, Shri Anant Geete, said about Maharashtra about Rewas, Deeghi, Jaigarh and Mavlan. This particular system was under the domain of the Maharashtra State. We have already extended Rs. 10.38 crore for the past three or four years. If any assistance is needed, they should send us a proposal.

Prof. Ramadass has raised the issue about urgent requirement of giving priority to the existing ones. I have already replied it. Need for development of Chennai-Telangani waterways, it is under the domain of the State Government. This has to be done by the State Government.

Dr. K.S. Manoj said that adequate measures should be taken during dredging to prevent seepage of saline water. He is correct. This aspect will be fully taken care of. About the issue of shipping near the Nehru Trophy Boat Race, it is a site-specific location. I do not think it will in any way confront with your Nehru Trophy Boat Race. I have also seen that the other day about two weeks back. I do not think it will in any way confront with your Nehru Trophy Boat Race. World over, people are coming and they are appreciating this Race. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, address to the Chair.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: The particular project which you are raising, it is not confronting the existing system of Nehru Trophy.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Inland water should not be polluted. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI T.R. BAALU: We will take care of it. If there is any pollution, we will try for prevention of pollution.

Sir, the last speaker, said something about urgent need for development of Orissa. We have already included it in the last set of this one. We will take care of it. I can only request all the hon. Members. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ram Kripal Yadav ji, you were sleeping in the House when the hon'ble Minister was replying your question.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Reddy, your name was here but you were absent from the discussion.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Kakinada to Elluru, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, this particular canal has formed part of more than 1000 kilometres. It will be considered very shortly and it is in the advanced stage. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY (Visakhapatnam): Sir, it was done by him three years back. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now the discussion is over. Please take your seat. Your name was here but you were absconding. What can I do? You are a senior Member of the House. Please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: No further query is allowed. He has already replied to all the queries.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. CHAIRMAN: The reply has been given. There is no query.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing is going on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

* Not recorded.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are a professor. You please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you going to stage satyagrah there.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Inland Vessels Act, 1917, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 14 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 14 were added to the Bill

*Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long
Title were added to the Bill.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the hon. Minister may move that the Bill be passed.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

16.32 hrs.

**CIGARETTES AND OTHER TOBACCO PRODUCTS
(PROHIBITION OF ADVERTISEMENT AND
REGULATION OF TRADE AND COMMERCE,
PRODUCTION, SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION)
AMENDMENT BILL, 2007**

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall take up item no. 18.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

(DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to amend the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003, be taken into consideration."

The aforesaid Act makes it mandatory for depiction of skull and cross bones and other pictorial warning as may be specified in the packs of cigarette and other tobacco products. The proposed amendment to the Act would make the requirement of depiction of skull and cross bones optional rather than mandatory.

The proposed amendment would facilitate the implementation of the specified health warnings. The early implementation of the provisions relating to specified health warnings is important as it would bring about awareness amongst the youth and children and also illiterate persons, about the serious and adverse health consequences of tobacco consumption.

I move that the Bill may be taken up for consideration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to amend the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003, be taken into consideration."

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a very short Bill. Only one hour is allotted for discussion on this Bill so, the hon'ble Members are requested to express their views in brief so that other agenda may also be taken because the most important discussion is on flood and the reply has also to be given in this regard.

SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH (Kanakpura): It is also important.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would like that it should be passed in an hour time.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is one hour time for discussion on this issue.

SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH: The time should be extended for half an hour more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: BAC has allotted one hour time for this. I am helpless. When the recommendation of BAC was accepted then it should have been discussed. So I would like

to conclude it within an hour. Therefore, hon'ble Members are requested to express their view in brief.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this could be a short Bill, however, its ramifications are far and wide. Not only the consequences but the intention with which this amendment Bill has been introduced itself portends danger. Both the things are of far reaching consequences, so this Bill should not be treated small. It is essential to hold extensive discussion on it. Though I would not like to discuss the Bill in entirety, however, I would like to further elaborate what the hon'ble Minister has himself said while introducing the amendment Bill. He said that today cigarette, tobacco and beedi are adversely affecting the children, women and the entire society.

I would not like to go into the data as to what percentage of people consume beedi and what percent of people are affected with cancer and lung diseases. The hon'ble Minister himself is a doctor and he is well aware of all such things. Therefore, keeping in view the people of India fixing the size of any emblem or printed matter or picture is essential. I would want more stress a proportion as often we find that 'injurious to health' warning is mostly written in one corner of the packet. Similar is the case with the packet containing milk powder. At that time also we had stressed that it should be clearly and boldly written on the packet of milk food that breast feeding is essential for infants upto six months, however, it is so written in one corner of the packet of milk food that it requires a magnifying glass to read it. Most of the consumers of the tobacco products are illiterate labourers and peasants so picture will be required to make them aware about its adverse effect on their health, however we will have to propagate it. The most important thing that I would like to submit in this regard is that the Government is going to give some concessions to this industry, however, it should also be taken into consideration that smoking of tobacco not only affect the persons who consume it rather it also affects the passive smokers as well. The passive smoking is also called second hand tobacco smoke. Along with this I would also like to submit that women are especially affected on account of this. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): Sir, Gutkha is lying here. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is Minister's seat, some Minister might have kept it.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Then it is even more unfortunate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon'ble Minister himself is saying that ministers consume Gutkha.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: But it should be prohibited in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please mention it in your speech.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: I am saying that the adults eat it, but most dangerous thing is that they send children to purchase it. It affects not only the smoker but also the person who inhales it. It has to be seen from this angle also, that it affects not only pregnant woman, but also fetus in her womb. It is very injurious to health, keeping this in view, some kind of provisions should be made in law, but while doing it gravity of impact has to be kept in mind, then only serious thought to it would be given and it would be done properly. Sometimes we make certain provisions in law, but some kind of loopholes are left. As you said today the way would be evolved, as we see liquor advertisements are not allowed, but name is sufficient, everybody knows it is Kingfisher or Mcdonald. The mineral water is advertised, but everybody knows what it means. It is often said if one drinks even milk at toddy shop, people assume that he has consumed toddy, therefore, stringent legislations are required.

I am distressed that religions sentiments have been mentioned. I will take it in the last. I agree that this should not be written anywhere in the law. On one side religious sentiments are being discussed, I would like to ask what kind of religious sentiments. A thing which causes damage to body and soul cannot be good. Just now he said, people spit here and there after eating 'Gutka', not only this, the wrappers of 'Gutka' are found everywhere. Today, the environment of entire Himalayan is being polluted because pouch and packings are non-degradable, heaps of it are found at many places. People put pouch of 'Gutka' in mouth before boarding the bus. I am narrating the experience of a lady like me. We people travel by cycle. I have driven scooter and cycle many times. Whenever I used to pass by the bus or any vehicle, I was afraid that someone may not spit 'Gutka' from window and my saree may not get spoiled. These are same people who consume 'Gutka' and 'Paan'. Sometimes we were afraid that somebody may not throw burning 'beedi' on saree. We were always afraid. I am narrating you my own experience. Such things vitiate the whole atmosphere of society. Not only this, these make places dirty. Juice of chewed bettle, cigarette and beedi butts, and pouches of 'Gutka' are found everywhere. This way these things make life dirty. These make life dirty and costly but death rather cheaper.

The Hon'ble Minister is talking of religious sentiments. What is religion? Welfare of the society is the true religion. Of whose welfare are they referring to, what religious sentiments is there? I say no religion is hurt by any pictorial display rather it is these things that hurt religion the most. Religion is

[Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan]

hurt if life of people is spoiled, if people have bad habits, cultures is ruined, the future of coming generation is ruined—the religion is hurt most by it. Showing a skull and two bones does not hurt anybody's feelings. Therefore, please do not talk about religious sentiments. I get most angry by it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say one more thing. I have read it. Today the views expressed by hon'ble Minister are often reiterated, that livelihood of crores of beedi workers will be snatched. Because beedi manufactures have threatened that if all factories are closed, the beedi workers will not get any kind of employment, these kind of things are discussed. But Acharia ji, please try to understand. I would like to ask whether this issue is related only to livelihood of beedi workers? What is the condition of beedi workers. In what kind of circumstances, thousands of, lakhs of beedi workers are working. What is the condition of the factories? Women make beedis the whole day. This tells upon their health and the way beedis are weighed in the evening. I have seen all these things, because we live among the people, I know that the way they are weighed, half of beedis are weeded out, they are underpaid. How they meet their both ends in meager income. What kind of income we talk about. We are going to protect what kinds of rights of beedi workers that crores of beedi workers will be unemployed. Many kind of threats are given and people say think about them. I have read it in newspapers. Many big people say that we should think about crores of beedi workers, therefore, this kind of emblem should not be brought. When we talk about religious sentiments, these kind of things are often discussed. On electric poles also skull and two bones and 440 watts are depicted. Because it is dangerous. This kind of emblem serves as warning bell in the minds of the people. This is for depicting the danger.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the warning bell for concluding your speech has rung.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, what I am speaking now is not that I am speaking as a Member of Parliament.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have said a good thing.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Someway or the other a mother's heart is crying over what you are saying.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I understand your sentiments, but the time is very short.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: He does not understand this thing. It seems to him that there is pressure, but such a pressure is not from the bidi workers. He is not speaking under the pressure of bidi workers, forgive me. I have the

suspicion that it is some how the pressure of bidi owners under which he is speaking like this. ...*(Interruptions)* That is why I am saying the language used by him and the religious sentiments to which he has alluded—whether the Government are talking of religious sentiments. One Minister has just left the House. Millions of people are touched by the religious sentiments of Ram Setu. He is hurting them and going to blast Setu with dynamite. This is dynamite and for what religious sentiments is he making the use of bidi, cigarette and other chewing tobacco? It is being said that we are not standing in favour of bidi workers and we can't raise the issue of religious sentiment. My first stand is against this very word i.e. religion sentiment. If he has to bring an amendment, let him do, and his saying that there should be some more dreadful picture as a mark of danger in place of skull and bones also does not matter to me. Let him introduce another picture so that the people could smell, danger, but I have strong reservations against the use of religious sentiments made by him. It may be possible, Mr. Chairman, Sir, with the majority. The sword of majority is in your hands. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The sword of majority is not in my hands.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Not in your hand, but it is in Government's hand. Through you I would like to say that if you, by misinterpreting the words, promote betel, chewing tobacco and bidi, you may do ruin the younger generations and compromise the future of this country. Religious sentiments should not be taken as a ground for it. Let him do what he wishes, but I have strong reservations about this very word. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You spoke very well.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today I would like to talk about an Amendment Bill, which has been introduced on cigarette and bidi. I also support what an hon'ble Member has said right now. I would like to say and you all are also aware that in the past Hookah was used for smoking in the country and it is still in use in villages. Hookah is a smoking device having a long flexible pipeline fitted with a container of water below and a pot with chained cap above. A stone is set in a hole in the middle of the pot and, then, tobacco, kept in this pot, is set on fire before smoking. It is used for smoking through such a complex process. When one smokes, they cleanse it after every 15 days by pouring an iron rod into the pipe because a very thick layer of carbon is collected in the inner wall of the pipe and so, it creates complications when inhaling. I would just say when water was clean and stone was also kept into it so that nothing could fall into it, how so much carbon was collected in that pipe? This is what happened in that case, but what about

those who are taking it directly and what is happening to their tracheas, as they cannot be even touched any way?

You may have seen many people taking long breathes in their bed. Why? They have complications in taking breathes. Their tracheas become narrow. So I would like to say there should not be any disease like this. Tobacco, chew, intoxicants etc. are the things which are the evil spirit already. These things should be marked with bigger devils because the persons who are addicted to such an evil substance have lost their lungs. Today a large number of women are widows in India. Why their husbands died? It is all due to bidi, cigarette and tobacco. It is natural that whatever way you use your any part of body, it becomes like that. I would warn my colleagues from Bihar and UP that one day a news will come up that the people of Bihar and UP have got dumb as they do not speak, just mumble. To see their style of talking, it seems they keep on lifting their mouths as if something is falling. What type of habits, you people have taken to! Someone takes it into his nose, another keeps it into teeth or lips while some other uses it for smoking. What a fantastic style is there! To maintain this style, actors have been hired. In a scene, a woman has been shown lying beneath a tree and, then, comes one actor smoking cigarette. The actor keeping a cigarette in his mouth takes a long puff and then, lifts the tree. After that a woman comes out from beneath the tree. I would like to ask who is convinced with such an acting. This is going to affect badly our present and coming generations. He is ruining their youthfulness. Farmers have responsibilities and if you watch any young porter trying to carry a paddy sack with lighted beedi on his lips, it is almost certain that he will not be able to lift it. He is under the influence of cigarettes, tobacco and beedi. Therefore, I would like to tell the Minister of Health that his department is spending lakhs of rupees on eradication of T.B. Had this Rs. One lakh been spent on the poor, it would be more useful. He says that such a ship will cause unemployment and would put families in peril. Such employment and traditions are a matter of shame which are doing damage to the coming generations. Letters are coming out from the office of the Minister, Bill is being amended and it was written here that use it after exercising choice, what choice one will exercise? How can you ask someone his choice when one's offspring is dying of cancer, when there is no cure for it, he is suffering from throat and lung cancer and the Government have set aside the services of the doctors for the treatment of this ailment, huge amount of salaries are spent on them and the medicines and such a huge infrastructure is being engaged for majority of these people. Near is my shirt, nearer is my skin - Health is Wealth - what kind of wealth are you going to create? Is the economy not important for him? When the question of life and death arises, then you can see from the antics of the addicts, you can know

from their plight that they cannot differentiate the time for having food and other things and they do various other things on the bed itself which are not supposed to be done on the bed. Therefore, through you, I would like to know from the Minister as to where all these provisions are going? Whom to ask in this regard? To the Sikh, the Sikh religion does not even maintain a distant connection with cigarettes. This religion does not have any relation with it then who this new found God is? He is not Sikh, not Christian, not Hindu, not Buddhist and not a mendicant. Who is this God who is hurting the sentiments of somebody's religion and destroys the health of the people of the country. ...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my submission to the Minister is that if he infact honestly want the welfare of the people, long queues are found in the schools, I would like to say that it should be banned in the canteens of the schools, colleges and other institutions or in the stores outside the institutions and the Government should taken strict action in this regard. The Government should pay attention towards it because if people sell these materials they will earn money also. In order to earn money, the beedi manufacturers are making a scene by exploiting the workers and cheating them. ...*(Interruptions)* Therefore, my submission is that all the obstacles should be removed and try to build a healthy young India which is free from diseases and help the youth of this country to stay clear from diseases.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I rise to support the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Amendment Bill, 2007. The Health Minister has brought this legislation for amending a specific provision, a specific section.

16.56 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

This Act was enacted in 2003, but why has this Amendment been brought? This Amendment has been brought as there was a demand by various Members of this House, when the matter was raised under Calling Attention Motion in the Budget Session of this House. Our concern is not for the industry or the industrialists who are running these beedi industries. Why we are asking that a particular section pertaining to pictorial depiction of skull and cross bones, dead bodies and other pictorial depictions should be amended because this will harm the beedi industry.

There are about 80 lakh beedi workers in our country, and their employment will be at stake. After enacting the Act, a rule was adopted, and in the rule it has been stated that

[Shri Basudeb Acharia]

Initially it was to be enforced from the 1st of March, 2007, and subsequently, it was postponed to 1st of June, 2007. When this matter was raised by various sections of this House, and also by a number of trade unions and by the beedi workers, who came on to the streets, the Government formed a Group of Ministers to look into this.

17.00 hrs.

The Group of Ministers went into all aspects of section 7 of the original Act and a simple amendment has been brought. The amendment is, "in place of the specified warning, including a pictorial depiction of skull and crossbones and such other warning as may be prescribed". It has been clearly stated as to what type of pictorial warning should be there. On cigarette packets, statutory warning is printed on the back. However, a packet of beedies is smaller in size than that of cigarettes. The size of the pictorial warning has been mentioned in the Act. If that size is maintained for a beedi packet, it will take up about 70 per cent of the surface area of the packet. If 70 per cent of the surface space on the packet is taken by the statutory warning, there will be no space left to print the brand name and other things. That is why it was suggested that in place of the skull and crossbones, some other pictorial warning in smaller size should be printed on the packet. But it has not been specified in the Bill.

Here, the purpose will not be served by amending section 7 unless the rules that have been framed under the Act are amended in regard to depiction of the pictorial warning. So, along with the amendment of section 7, the rules pertaining to that section should also be amended.

Why did we demand that there should be an amendment? Why did we demand that it should not be enforced? There are 80 lakh beedi workers in the country who are dependent on the manufacture of beedies. We know that it is a health hazard, but some preventive measures should be taken also. Something should not be done by implementing such provisions if lakhs and lakhs of beedi workers are to be thrown out of employment, or rendered jobless. We know the condition of beedi workers. A large number of beedi workers do not get minimum wages. Where they are organised, they get minimum wages as prescribed by different State Governments. We know that a substantial percentage of workers do not get social security like Provident Fund although the Supreme Court had directed that Provident Fund should be provided to all beedi workers from 1987 when the judgement was given. But we know that a percentage of beedi factory owners are not implementing the Provident Fund Act.

There is a Bidi Workers' Welfare Fund. Rupees eight is deducted as a welfare cess and that money is deposited in

the Fund for their healthcare, for dispensary facilities, medical facilities, and for providing scholarships to the students and to the children of bidi workers. But this Welfare Fund is not properly utilised. We know that. In my district, one hospital was sanctioned two years back but it has not yet come up. We know that it is the problem of not only the bidi workers but also the problem of thousands of farmers who grow tobacco, whose livelihood would be at stake. If the industry is closed down, about 80 lakh bidi workers would be rendered jobless. This would also adversely affect the tobacco growers. Altogether, one crore 50 lakh people are depending on this industry. For that one particular reason only, we demanded it.

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Why religious sentiments?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: I also object to that. In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, what has been stated by the Minister of Health? It is felt that religious sentiments are taken into account. I do not find that there are any religious sentiments in regard to pictorial depiction of skulls and bones. This is the workers demand. It should have been written in the Statements of Objects and Reasons as it has been the demand of large sections of workers. He is bringing this legislation/Bill to amend the Act. It should be correctly stated. The pictorial warning of skulls and bones on packets of tobacco products may be made optional rather than mandatory. But this has not been mentioned in the Bill itself. Now, it is mandatory because the provision was mandatory. From now, as per the rules, which has been framed, from the first of October, it would be enforced and that would be made mandatory. That is why, along with the amendment to section 7 of the Act, the rules which have been framed, particular provision pertaining to the pictorial depiction, that should also be amended and it should be made optional. So, my suggestion is that instead of skulls and cross bones, some other pictures or written warning should be depicted in the packet so that people who chew tobacco or who smoke bidi, they should know that by smoking bidi, they would understand the harm by taking it. Hence, my suggestion is that this optional thing should also be incorporated in the Bill itself.

The sign should not be that of bones and skulls. There should be some other pictures. The size should also be smaller so that 70 per cent of the space on the beedi packet is not consumed for issuing this statutory warning. I demand that along with amendment of the Bill, the rules should also be accordingly amended so that the purpose of the amending section 7 of the Act is fulfilled.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I request the next Member to speak, I would like to make a submission. The time allotted for this Bill was one hour. I have a long list of

speakers with me. So, it would not be possible for me to finish it within the stipulated time if I allow all the people to speak as they like. So, I would like to request them to speak only for four to five minutes.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri): Sir, the time can be extended. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The business advisory Committee had allotted one hour for this Bill. You were also present when we were given one hour for this. The reply to the discussion on floods is to be given today and there are many other items of business to be taken up.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Today we have much business to transact.

SHRI SHYAMA CHARAN GUPTA (Banda): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the views expressed by all hon'ble Members on the cigarettes and other Tobacco products Amendment Bill are very good. I also agree with them, however, I would like to inform the hon'ble Minister and the Government about a thing which I probably missing that the cigarettes are more injurious to health than smoking beedi or chewing tobacco. Tobacco used in the cigarettes is blended tobacco, no blending is done in the tobacco used in beedi. A large number of poor labourers, including the pluckers of tendu leaves, the tobacco farmers, the beedi makers, loaders, packers, printers etc. and as also pointed out, by Shri Achariaji, approximately 80 lakh labourers earn their living from the manufacturing of beedies. If there is any chance of injury or risk to health, the Union Government have imposed cess along with the excise duty in the budget through which a lot of steps are taken to take care of the health problems. Through you, I would like to request the Government is to make amendment in the Bill but exempt beedi from its purview. This manual should not be made mandatory for the beedi industry because as Achariaji has said the bundle of beedi is very small whereas the packet of Cigarettes is big. The hon'ble Minister has moved an amendment to print a warning in the size of the bundle of beedies, if the warning is printed in this size its brand, name or nothing else related to that material can be displayed on it, it will remain in the shelves unsold and nobody will ask for it as there will not be anything displayed on it. Therefore this is my amendment, this is my suggestion that of the warning being printed on it, 20 percent space be allotted for this purpose on the label. Warning be written on this 20 percent space and in the remaining 80 percent space, its name and other things should be displayed. If its production is stopped, employment opportunities will not grow and it is injurious to health,, I acknowledge not smoking people have divergent views regarding smoking someone says that it causes cancer,

somebody else says that it causes some other diseases, I would say that even non smokers are also afflicted by cancer', so there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that of all these problems are caused by smoking, so it is not proper to directly blame this industry for all evils.

Sir, I am feeling a little bit hesitant to say, but I admit that I am a chain smoker, even then I am perfectly fit. I smoke beedi as well as cigarettes. If I do not smoke beedi and cigarettes, even answering the nature's call in the morning becomes difficult for me. Agreed that it causes hardships to some people but some people are benefited from it also. This is also a cure for some people. For many people if they don't smoke beedi, cigarettes, they cannot remain calm, they cannot remain composed. They cannot engage in proper conversations. Such things happen but very rarely.

My request to the hon'ble Minister is that it is a good step to make amendments in this Bill, but give a thought to discourage smoking at a measured pace. The consumption of tobacco be stopped gradually. If we stop it at one go it will cause loss to the Union exchequer by reduction in receipt in the form of Central excise duty. This will augment the problem of unemployment. If they have got any alternate option for the provision of employment, then there is no problem in moving ahead in this direction.

With these words I conclude my speech.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Sir, I support the Bill presented by hon. Minister of Health. In regard to consumption of tobacco being discussed in the House today, I would like to make a particular mention that every year approximately ten lakh people get killed owing to consumption of tobacco. This is the present situation. A large section of our population is affected by it. Consumption of tobacco causes deadly diseases like cancer and TB. There are several such diseases which affect young and old alike.

Sir, hon. Minister would like to change the mark which is hurting religious sentiments of several people. He may change any mark but the consumers would not stop smoking. As the hon. Member stated that he is in perfect health even after smoking a cigarette or bidi. When hon. Member is not realizing it, how the people would realize it?

Sir, I have seen it, although I should not say it, however, I would like to tell that some hon. Members are carrying small paper packet of Zarda. That is hon. Minister's set when hon. Minister is himself consuming zarda and the small paper packet is still lying there, what can happen in such a situation? The situation is really grim. I feel that one may use whatever depiction or label nothing can be regulated. Until the mindset of the consumer is changed no kind of control can be exercised. All the packets of cigarettes bear the warning that

[Shri Ram Kripal Yadav]

it is injurious for health but who cares? Now the warning is also printed in Hindi language. I believe the message does not get conveyed at the grass root level despite the laws. The warning is printed in Hindi and English yet the hon. Minister should pay attention to the fact that India is a vast country in which persons of every caste, creed, culture and religion live so he should compel the companies to sue the regional language of the place where cigarette or tobacco is being sold. I feel it would be more effective.

Many people do not know either Hindi or English. Cigarette, tobacco and bidis are consumed even in villages, until they are made aware the message would not be effective. There is a need to create awareness among people. It is true that this trade is bread and butter of many people belonging to the poor section of society. There are approximately one and a half crore workers who earn their livelihood from this industry. I agree to it. Several hon. Members have expressed their sentiment that this step would result in loss of livelihood for such people. I do not oppose it, but the consumption of tobacco is causing several health related problems. Tobacco consumption causes lung diseases. I feel that trend for tobacco consumption is gradually growing. Today boys aged between 12 and 14 years are also found to be consuming cigarette and tobacco particularly pan parag, pan masala, Zarda etc. These days pan masalas containing Zarda are being sold which is poison. It causes cancer. The Government will have to look for concrete measures to exercise control over its consumption. Approximately Rs. 40 thousand are being spent annually to create awareness in regard to tobacco, which has had a marginal impact. So, I would request the hon. Minister and the Government that it should take concrete measures so as to prevent people from consuming tobacco. Health is wealth. ...*(Interruptions)* Human resource is the greatest force in the world and our country is developing on the basis of that very force and that has begun to rot. The condition of rural farmers and labourers is a proof of it. They may not be able to afford two square meals a day but they consume tobacco, bidi and several other such things which are injurious to health. ...*(Interruptions)* they do not have money for food but they develop bad habits of chewing tobacco. ...*(Interruptions)* Awareness should be created among people and they should exercise control over themselves. Hon. Member should not have said that. They are encouraging people to consume, tobacco and 'Ganja' and stay healthy.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yadav ji, please conclude now.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: You are giving employment to two thousand people by spreading disease among crores of people. It is not a rational approach that crores of people suffer on account of relief to thousands. ...*(Interruptions)* I am not against the poor, I am their supporter. ...*(Interruptions)* I am concluding. Consumption of alcohol and tobacco is a sacrilege in Sikh community. So you would be feeling it strongly that people will have to be kept away from all these things.

We will have to keep a control on all these things if we want the country to develop and the society to remain healthy. You can not force people. You should make people aware and save the country.

With these few words, I support the bill with this hope that we can control our habit if we all make concerted efforts to propagate the message of putting ban on tobacco consumption among the people.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Hon. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I had a point of order. We are ignorant, small and unintelligent people, but can anyone occupy the seat of leader of the House—I had asked you this question in writing? I would like your reply to that.

[English]

If it is proper, I have nothing to say.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, you may please come on the front seat, since this belongs to the Leader of the House.

[English]

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK (Kendrapara): Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Cigarette and other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Amendment Bill, 2007.

The present Act enacted in the year 2003 is intended to discourage the consumption of tobacco. No doubt, it is a pro-people and progressive Act.

In the present Act, Section 7(1) stipulates that "no person shall, directly or indirectly, produce, supply or distribute cigarettes or any other tobacco product unless every package of cigarettes or any other tobacco products produced, supplied or distributed by him bears thereon, or on its label, the specific warning including a pictorial depiction of skull and cross bones and other such warning as may be prescribed."

However, the Government seems to have succumbed to the pressure of the industrial houses by bringing an amendment to the existing Section 7 (1) of the Act. The amendment will make the depiction of skull and bones on the cigarette and tobacco product packets optional rather than mandatory.

The ground reality is that tobacco is the cause for 50 per cent of cancer deaths, 40 per cent of all health-related problems and a majority of cardio-vascular and lung disorders in the country. Moreover, there are studies which show children getting addicted to tobacco at an early age and also of the increase in the percentage of population which consumes tobacco in any form. So, 55,000 children are taking tobacco each day, 44 lakh cases of coronary heart diseases are there due to tobacco consumption. As per the report of the Tobacco Control in India, approximately 8 to 9 lakh persons die annually due to tobacco attributable diseases.

In this context, I am not able to understand the reason behind such a hasty amendment brought forward by the Government. Is the move to protect the interest of the common man or to protect the interest of the industrial houses? A common illiterate person may not be able to understand the warning written in the language but a warning sign like the skull and bones can easily convey the message.

The Government says that the sign of skull and bones hurts the religious sentiments and hence they would like to make the skull and bones sign optional. However, a recent survey designed to have similar representation of the two largest religious groups in India clearly indicates identical views. About 87 per cent of them understand the sign (the bone and skull symbol) on a product as "the product is dangerous to use" and do not hurt their religious sentiments. Hence it is the duty of the Government to convey the message of dangers of tobacco in the most effective manner.

The bidi industry has falsely claimed that 50 per cent of the jobs will be lost after the pictorial fact warnings are introduced. This claim is completely baseless. The loss caused by the use of tobacco products to the humanity will be more dangerous than the jobs created in the tobacco industry.

The women and children are the worst affected groups as passive smokers. There are things which give jobs to certain hands and take out the lives of many. We have to choose whether the welfare of the common man or the interest of the industrial houses is the concern of the Government. The Government must answer this question. I would like to conclude my speech by strongly opposing the amendment to the Act moved by the Government. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY (Nalgonda): Sir, I stand to support the amendment. I understand my friend does not like our support. I do agree that tobacco smoking and tobacco chewing is very dangerous to the health of the people. Sir, there are several strong arguments regarding it. But, everybody agrees that it is dangerous. There is no doubt about it. Sir, in my younger days, I heard a story in one of the masterpieces of Telugu literature in which one gentleman says to his friend when there was a war going on between the demons and devtas for amrit, one drop fell on earth and that became a tobacco tree. Tobacco is such a wonderful thing. But now, it is not only that, Sir. He also wants that if one does not taste tobacco in one life, in the next life he will be born as a buffalo. But, nevertheless I assure that nobody believes in this type of stories. But the problem is that while everybody understands that smoking is dangerous why such an amendment has to be brought in the Parliament removing the depiction of pictorial warning because it is connected directly with the livelihood of several crores of people. Eighteen lakh people are directly working in the bidi factories. Two crore people are working in the bidi, cigarette, cigar and tobacco and this kind of industries. Sixty lakh of farmers are growing this tobacco. This is to be discouraged in every way and I believe that only a pictorial warning which used to be the symbol of the flags of the sea pirates in the middle ages is not going to help to reduce smoking in the country. Sir, today about 25 crores of the people in the country are supposed to be using the tobacco directly or indirectly. Suddenly, such a large section of the people cannot be taken away from this bad habit. We have to warn them in different ways. And, the steps taken by the Government of India, Health Department, are quite good banning the advertisements in the films, banning advertisement in newspapers and banning the smoking in public places. This is all good. But, along with this, there is a necessity that deaddiction centres should be encouraged. Then, there should be films that will be popularized throughout the country and made compulsory even in the TV channels to show how dangerous is smoking. This may take a longer period. And, it should be made a part of the curricula in the schools. The bidi and cigarette companies are trying to catch the people. Let us try to educate these people and help them become anti-smokers.

This type of a campaign may need a lot of money. The Government of India is earning Rs. 3,000 crore every year through excise duty on tobacco products and it is earning Rs. 650 crore as foreign exchange by way of export earnings. There should be a surcharge or the Government should spare some amount of this money for the health of the people because this is nothing but consuming poison. But we have to convince the people that consumption of tobacco products is dangerous to the health. I would like to submit that this type of pictorial warning is not going to help.

[Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy]

Sir, I come from Andhra Pradesh where several lakhs of workers came to the streets to fight against this stipulation of depicting pictorial warnings on tobacco products. I am sure that this would have helped some people to quit smoking, but this has certainly scared the proprietors of beedi factories and beedi workers that the beedi industry is going to be closed. So, this kind of pictorial warning has suddenly put the livelihood of several millions of people in a serious crisis. Though I understand that consumption of tobacco products is hazardous for the health of the people, unfortunately this kind of pictorial warning cannot be accepted as there is no alternative profession available to beedi workers immediately. In my State of Andhra Pradesh, all the political parties, namely, CPI, CPI (M), Congress Party, TRS, TOP and BJP came to the streets demanding that this pictorial warning should be removed because this is going to create a very sudden and serious crisis for the livelihood of a large number of people.

On the question of gutka, I would like to say that the Government of India has to move more seriously as gutka is more dangerous than all other tobacco products and also because it is available at cheaper rates. Almost 40 per cent of the people who consume tobacco products are eating gutka. So, we will agree to remove this pictorial symbol from beedi and other tobacco products, but the Government can keep it on gutka packets if the Government is prepared for it.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: I am objecting to this pictorial warning on the basis of religious sentiments.

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY: I would like to state that certainly it is not a religious sentiment. About 40 per cent of tobacco users are smokers and a large number of people working in the beedi industry are affected by this pictorial warning and this could scare the beedi workers as it is affecting their daily livelihood which is the most unfortunate thing. So, I believe that for the time being this type of an amendment is necessary. But in the amendment nowhere it is written that this symbol is optional. It is stated that instead of this symbol of skull and cross bones, some symbol which will be given by the Government should be put on the packets of tobacco products. So, I do not understand how it becomes optional as it is stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of this Bill.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): In the Bill, they mentioned it like this, but in the Statement of Objects and Reasons it is stated that it is optional.

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY: If this is the objective, then this should be reflected in the Bill. So, I would like the hon. Minister to clarify this point. While I support the Bill, I would like the Government to spend more amount of

money for carrying out different types of campaigns on the ill-effects of smoking in this country.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to have your permission to speak from here.

[English]

Sir, I do agree with the sentiments expressed by my colleagues from different parts of this House. If at all I am supporting this Bill from the Ruling Benches, it is because of my concern towards tobacco growers in the States like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, but certainly not on the basis of any religious sentiments. Let me make it very clear.

Definitely, we are concerned about the 80 lakh beedi workers and also lakhs of people who are involved in the tobacco producing industry. But unless we make alternative means of livelihood to that community, we cannot implement this type of advertisement which will cause the decline in the marketing of the tobacco produces. At the same time, we have to know who are involved in these industries. In the beedi industry more than 50 per cent and up to 80 per cent in one sector women, youngsters and even child labourers are involved.

Definitely, the tobacco producing is causing a lot of health hazards like oral cancer due to chewing of tobacco and lung cancer due to long term inhaling. For years together, these children, the youngsters and the women inhale that tobacco. It causes lung cancer and also abnormal physical growth. It has even been proved that smoking causes the nervous weakness and it affects the reproductive system of the human body. There is a saying that only a healthy body will have a healthy mind. That is why, it is our duty to ensure today to look at a strong India, young India, energetic India and vibrant India and for that we have to guard our youngsters of rural India. Due to poverty they are addicted towards this type of cheap hazardous tobacco produces. So, we must discourage that type of tobacco smoking and chewing.

The sign of skull and bone definitely communicates that death is certain, death is ultimate and that sign shows that hazard is the danger of the death. As Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan has said that if we touch the live electricity wire, there is no alternative and death is certain. So, if we use this tobacco, death is certain. If it is so, why are we afraid of this sign? If we are spending crores of rupees to create awareness, what is wrong in using the skull and bone sign? It is to communicate to people because 35 per cent of people in India are illiterate. They cannot read. When these industry

people want to promote their product, they print their advertisements broadly. Why are these people using beautiful women to promote their products? It is a shame on their part. I am objecting to it and utilising this opportunity to oppose that. If these people have any respect towards the women of this country, then they must stop using them in such advertisements because no women, whether she is a mother or a sister or a wife is supporting tobacco use or drinking of alcohol because after all they have to bear the burden of the family. So, definitely no women in this country is supporting these kinds of bad habits.

Sir, please look at the scenario in India. I will cite the example of United States of America. Its tobacco use has declined from 52 per cent to 24 per cent but here in India, the intake of tobacco has increased from 15 per cent to 26 per cent. That means, 300 million people, even today, are addicted to the tobacco use. We must discourage this by very stringent and very effective law.

Sir, lastly I would like to say that today the cigarette consumption is 15 per cent and beedi consumption is 40 per cent and rest of the people are in the habit of eating these products. I would like to inform the House that in India, about five lakh people die due to tobacco intake and 40 per cent of country's health problems are due to tobacco intake. It is a very considerable percent. Every year, in India, one million new cancer patients are reported and out of the new cancer patients, 60 per cent cases are due to the tobacco intake.

That is why, I think, Indian tobacco industry is today worth Rs. 35,000 crore. All of us know how much money we are spending - including individuals and Government - to cure, to create awareness. We are spending Rs. 38,000 crore. That means we are spending Rs. 3,000 crore more to create awareness. On the one hand, we are encouraging them and on the other hand we are spending public money to create awareness. It is ridiculous. That is why, pictorial advertisements like skull and cross bone, is effective communicating among the illiterate people, among the rural people. Until you make alternative arrangements, it should be a temporary step to stop this. It is not a permanent solution. All senior and learned people are here from every Party. They must come with the alternative suggestions. Till then, I support this Bill only to support the working class - not on a religious point - who is depending on this. I would like to support the amendment to this Bill.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, I have a submission to the House through you that the hon. Health Minister is preoccupied in Rajya Sabha to respond some important matters. Therefore, my submission would be that the reply of

the Health Minister could be done tomorrow. Since the flood debate is going on for the last two or three occasions, there will be two interventions, one is by the Water Resources Minister and final reply by Shivrāj Patilji. The Minister of Water Resources is here. You may kindly allow the Minister of Water Resources also to give a chance to intervene in the flood debate. It is because last speaker was Shivrāj Patil. If the Health Minister reaches before 6 o'clock, I do not mind the Health Minister be called today. Otherwise, I would request that the reply will be tomorrow. Meanwhile the intervention of the Minister of Water Resources can be done followed by the reply of the Home Minister who will reply the final debate on flood. That is the only request. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Whether Cigarette and other Tobacco Products Bill will be discussed again after that?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, many a Member has spoken on this Bill and remaining Members can speak tomorrow. ...*(Interruptions)* I am saying this because discussion on floods has to be finished today only. ...*(Interruptions)* This can also be done that discussion on flood is finished today only and two-three Hon'ble Members will speak on Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Bill tomorrow and then, Hon'ble Minister will reply, I have to submit this much. I cannot force, I can just appeal. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All right, I would like to know whether other Members are ready to discuss Cigarette and other Tobacco Products Bill tomorrow?

[English]

SHRI KINJARUPU YERRANNAIDU: Let the debate be closed today. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Naiduji, will you not come in the House tomorrow?

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Tomorrow this debate will continue.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Tomorrow, Private Members Business is also there. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now we will take up the flood discussion.

17.50 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Situation arising out of floods in various parts of the Country – contd.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the hon. Minister, Prof. Soz.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the discussion on floods is not yet completed, according to me. ...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, I respectfully report that the allotted time for the Discussion on Floods was six hours but the Discussion on Floods, I think, has already taken more than eight and a half hours. If you want to continue the discussion now, then there is no end for this discussion.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members of almost all the parties have spoken on this issue.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, may I make a request to the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs? Members from some political parties have not been given a chance to participate in this discussion.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: If any political party is left out, then the hon. Deputy-Speaker will certainly decide.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Only Shri K. Yerrannaaidu is there.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Khannaji, whatever you like to say, give it writing.

[English]

That will form part of the records.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please sit down: I will give you some time.

[Translation]

Eachone of you will get a time of one minute.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, Shri K. Yerrannaaidu.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, every year and in every Session we are discussing floods, drought and other natural calamities. The Government of India has not taken permanent measures in this regard.

We are not thinking as to how to avoid floods. Whenever floods come, then we discuss floods on the floor of the House. Now, you take any river. If there is a heavy rain, then we have floods. There is no bund on any river. Every State is making a request to the Government of India to provide money for constructing river bunds to avoid floods but the Government of India is not supporting them financially. With a meagre amount of money, they could not do anything. That is why, we are facing floods every year. Take certain rivers – Krishna, Ganga, Mahanadhi, Vamsadhara and Nagavali. The last two rivers are flowing in my district. My humble request to the Government of India is to have a permanent solution. The Government of India can have a five-year plan in this regard. We have to construct river bunds in the whole country. The Central Government must prepare a plan as to how much money is required for this purpose and how much money they can provide to the State Governments. Take the case of the Calamity Relief Fund, where the Central Government is providing 75 per cent and the State Government is providing 25 per cent. In a similar way, the Central Government can prepare one Scheme for the construction of river bunds. If they do it, then we can avoid floods.

The second point is inter-linking of rivers. By inter-linking of rivers, we can avoid floods, we can avoid drought and we can provide employment to many people in the country. Under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, every year the Central Government is providing Rs. 12,000 crore, and in five years the Central Government is providing Rs. 60,000 crore. For inter-linking of rivers, the Central Government can provide Rs. 1 lakh crore in ten years. If that is done, then we can provide employment, we can avoid floods, and we can provide safe drinking water to the people of this country. These are the advantages of inter-linking of rivers. Already the Task Force has given its Report to the Government of India. Even the Supreme Court also gave a direction to the Government of India to go ahead with inter-linking of rivers. Money is not the criterion. Now, the Indian economy is growing. We are achieving 10 per cent GDP. Money is not at all a problem. Where there is a will, there is a way.

Everybody was laughing at the time of starting of the

Golden Quadrilateral project and now everybody is feeling very happy about it. Now, we are connected from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from Porbandar to Silchar. That is why, the Central Government has to think about the permanent solution in this regard.

This is the Indian Parliament. We are discussing about floods and droughts. Since this Government came into power, Andhra Pradesh witnessed four times floods, one time Tsunami, and three times drought. In last July, Andhra Pradesh witnessed floods. So, Andhra Pradesh witnessed floods and drought for eight times in the last three years and two months. The Government of India is sending the Central team. For what purpose they are sending the Central team when the Report has been submitted to them? I am posing this question to the Government of India. Is there any validity? After submitting the Report, they are immediately releasing the money to the State Government. Why are they sending the Central teams? According to me, there is no use of sending the Central team after submitting the Report to the Government of India. The Government of India has to do something from the National Contingency Fund and the National Calamity Relief Fund. But they are giving only Rs. 700 crore for the entire country under the National Calamity Relief Fund. Even the 10th, 11th and 12th Finance Commissions have successively said about the National Calamity Fund that if the situation is very serious, then we have to provide funds to the concerned State Governments. But in the Budget they are not creating anything. In that case, how can they provide money out of this National Contingency Fund?

Sir, there is a Committee under the chairmanship of the hon. Home Minister where hon. Agriculture Minister is also there. What is the use of having such a Committee when there is no money earmarked for this purpose? Without money what can they do? They are only convening meetings and not providing money to the affected State Governments.

Sir, I would give one example. In the last three years and three months, the Government of Andhra Pradesh, on seven occasions, had requested the Government of India for providing Rs. 13,300 crore. This was the damage assessed by the Central teams. But what we got was only Rs. 400 crore; and 5 lakh metric tonne of rice. But what is the real position?

These are all shortfalls and short gaps. Therefore, I would request the Government of India to systematically plan. There are mainly two-three issues where they should concentrate more. In the case of severe droughts, serious floods, cyclone and super cyclone, the Government should provide money to the affected States from the National Contingency Fund. Fund from the CRF is minimal. Even the

Finance Commission has earmarked such funds for each State. Secondly, in the situation of floods, the Union Government should think of permanent remedies, viz., interlinking of rivers, construction of flood banks to the major rivers, etc. Then, they should also provide more money under the National Calamity Relief Fund. This way, they may choose two-three most important areas and find solutions to such problems.

Sir, these are some of my suggestions to the Government of India. Otherwise, we would not reach anywhere. By mere discussion, we would not be able to solve these problems.

With these few words, I conclude.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would make a request that those hon. Members who want to lay their written speeches on the Table of the House, they may do so. Their speeches would form part of the proceedings.

Secondly, Mr. Soz, you have already spoken for 10 minutes on the earlier occasion.

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): Sir, I would take just five minutes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As a special case, I invite you to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): My constituency has suffered a great loss. Despite that I am not given an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): Sir, if he starts, then others would also start.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. You may give your speech, in writing.

Now I have called the Minister.

[Translation]

*SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Sir, one or the other part of the country faces floods every year and great loss of lives and property has to be suffered. Eastern Uttar Pradesh and North Bihar face the fury of floods almost every year. National level schemes are formulated to check floods but are not implemented. Heavy rainfall is not the only reason, if a permanent solution is to be found, we have to find out its root

*The Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Harikewal Prasad]

causes. The sand gets deposited in the river bed of the most rivers in the country, as a result, they have become shallow and their capacity to hold water has been reduced. A little rain makes them overflow, and this affects the surrounding areas. Long back a scheme was formulated to deepen the rivers, but it has never been implemented. Similarly, the project of interlinking rivers has also collapsed. The reason for frequent floods in the places of eastern Uttar Pradesh is not heavy rainfall only. Most of the rivers of this area originate from the Himalayas. For this reason, the plains always face floods when it rains over hills. It does not matter, whether plains have rains or not. Crores of people of the Poorvanchal face the calamity due to negligence and indifference of the Governments at the Centre. As a permanent measure to check the flood in Poorvanchal first time in 1954 it was planned to construct dams at Pancheshwar, Kamali and Bhalu Nakak to collect the water into a reservoir and then let it flow into rivers in a controlled way. By this way, under this scheme, floods in the river Ghaghra by Kamali dam, in the river Sharada by Panchmeshwar and in the river Rapti by Bhalu dam would have been checked. Along with it, there was a proposal of 12,000 megawatt power generation was also there. The Government of India did not get the work started despite the consent of the then Government of Nepal. Then the cost of the project was Rs.34 crore only. Again, Water Commission set up in 1974 under the Chairmanship of Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi expressed its dismay as to why an important project like this was not completed. After going through the report of the Commission, the Government twice initiated negotiations with the Government of Nepal. By then the cost of the project had increased Rs.2 thousand crores. Considering the heavy cost the project was put into cold storage. If the Government sincerely wants to end the problem of Poorvanchal forever, it should get the project completed. This will also solve the power crisis. Ready crops in the districts like Barasanki, Gonda, Basti, Siddharthnagar, Maharajganj, Gorakhpur, Kurshinagar, Deoria, Balliya etc. have perished in the devastating flood faced by Poorvanchal along with other parts of the country. Thousands of people have lost their lives in these districts, either due to drowning in ponds wells due to House collapse and thousands of families have been washed away due to erosion of the rivers like the Chhoti Gandak, Narayani, Ghaghra, Rapti Ganga, Kurna etc. owing to heavy rainfall. Hundreds of people have drowned while crossing the rivers. Even today, people can be seen living lives under the open sky. The Government provided neither for boats nor for cattle fodder. Voluntary Organizations are providing food to people organizing langars at various places. A sense of resentment has been prevailing among the families living in floodhit areas for having been neglected by the Government.

The condition of my Lok Sabha constituency and Ruprapur and Barhaj Tehsil of district Deoria is extremely pitiable and sad. The condition of Parsia Devar Parsia Kurh, Vishunpura, Ragarganj etc. villages in Barhaj tehsil is very bad. Demands for taking measures to construct ring dam from Kaparwar to Parsia Kurh, to check erosion from Katailva to Barhaj, divert the mainstream of Guagura near Ragarganj, to protect Ram Janki Marg, send a technical team for checking erosion at Teliya, Bhagalpur, Pindi, Chudiya Nadauli via Mehiyava to Paina and to conduct a survey at the banks of Chhoti Gandak from Mehrauva to Patna, Ratanpura, Salempur, Bharaha Chauraha, Malhatola Bhatni, from there to Sathyanv and to check erosion have been made. I would like to request the Government through you that permanent arrangement should be made to provide relief to flood victims and to check flood by providing special package to the Government of Uttar Pradesh.

[English]

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all, I must thank the hon. Members of this august House because cutting across party lines, they showed concern for this gigantic problem of floods.

So many suggestions were made and I made copious notes of them. I stand here to reply to the points that have been raised by the hon. Members that pertain to my Ministry. I would be very brief because I know that we do not have that much time.

After thanking the hon. Members, and rather congratulating them for debating this issue, let me be frank that I was here in the Lok Sabha for four terms, and I have never seen a marathon debate like this, because this debate started on 14th August, 2007 and all the time I was wanting to speak something and responding to the suggestions of the hon. Members.

From Shri Ananth Kumar right up to my friend Shri Yerrannaidu, I found that some Members, at least, made suggestions, which are common to all the 45 Members, who participated in the debate. Therefore, I would explain those six to seven points for the whole House.

18.00 hrs.

First is interlinking of rivers. There is a misconception that this Government has not taken up interlinking of rivers vigorously. That impression is wrong. I want to inform the House that the Task Force on Interlinking of Rivers instituted by the earlier Government completed its job in 2004, and since then their recommendations are being implemented. Interlinking of rivers has not been relegated to the background.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Soz, please give me one minute.

[Translation]

If hon'ble Members agree I will increase the time of the House for one hour.

SEVERAL HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): Let the House be extended till the reply is given.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All right.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: My only appeal to my colleagues, hon. Members, here is this. Maybe, I generate hope for the whole nation as a citizen through my intervention. But I would request you to hear from me the entire statement and then if there are any questions, I will answer those questions. I have studied the problem minutely.

About interlinking of rivers, I want to make an assertion that interlinking of rivers is just on the front burner and not on the back burner. We must realize that it is a State subject. The States have to agree with each other. The earlier Task Force proposed DPR. The Terms of Reference for that have been accepted by us. In the Peninsular situation, that is, in the Southern situation, out of 16 feasibility reports, 14 are ready and two are in the process. We shall be having feasibility reports on the entire Peninsular situation.

Five links are in very sharp focus. First is, you know, Ken-Betwa, and we have proceeded on that further. Now, the DPR is being prepared. It was said that it would take three years. I told engineers and experts, for God's sake, prepare it in two years. ...*(Interruptions)*

I have requested you to listen. Yes, I will answer. I will not run away. I will answer every point that will be raised.

So, DPR is a very difficult situation, and they are working very hard. It will take three years or less time as I am telling them. But it is a situation of hope that Ken-Betwa will come up.

On four more links, we are vigorously following with the State Governments. The second link is, Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal between Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. An MoU has been provided to them, and I am in touch with the Chief Ministers. Any time the nation will hear this good news that Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have agreed. They have

accepted the MoU. They are having discussions. Our Central Water Commission is in between them helping them. This will, I hope, come up very shortly.

Third is Narmada Par-Tapi link between Gujarat and Maharashtra. We have sent the MoU as recently as 17th of April 2007. We provided the MoU to them, and we are in touch with the Chief Ministers. Then, fourth is Daman-Ganga-Painjal link between Gujarat and Maharashtra. We have provided to them on 17th April, 2007 an MoU, and they are discussing amongst them. Then, the fifth link is Godavari, which is known as the link between Pollavaram and Krishna. It is connecting Orissa, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Chhattisgarh. We are in touch with the hon. Chief Ministers.

Since it is a State subject, the States have to agree. We are only coordinating the effort. We are taking it very seriously. I can tell you that some of us may not be working but most of the Indians are working and I can tell this House that I found to my surprise that the Task Force instituted by the hon. Prime Minister for flood management has done a commendable work in the Central Water Commission. I express my thanks to them.

I want to tell you that some institutions in India have become very strong. In the Central Ground Water Board, The Central Ground Water Authority, the Central Water Commission people have been working very hard. Therefore, inter-linking of rivers is in the forefront and it is receiving great attention from the Ministry. There will be a day when these five links will come up. The other links will also come in the course.

I was referring to the common points raised by the hon. Members. The second point raised was that advance action was not taken. Please allow me to say that advance action is to be taken by the State Governments and should they require assistance and help from the Central Government, we are ready to do that. Advance action in the States to stop the fury of floods or control the floods cannot be taken by the Central Government.

Then the question of linking of rivers in Bihar was discussed here threadbare and almost all hon. Members from Bihar have spoken on that. I want to inform this august House that Kohra-Chandrawat, Bhuri-Gandak, Norm-Bayaganga, Bagmati, Berugandak, Kosi-Gandak, Ganga-Kosi-Gandak, Kosi-Mechi, Kum-Kamancha and Sola are the links in Bihar which they wanted should be undertaken. They took up the matter with us. But, in between, they said one thing. I asked my agency, the National Water Development Agency, to help Bihar. They went there. They sat with their engineers and then later Bihar Government said that they would like to do it

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themselves. So, we cannot interfere. They told us: "We shall call you to help us when needed." So, I am waiting for that opportunity.

Many hon. Members said that we must pursue matters of mutual advantage with Nepal. That was a very valid intervention by hon. Members. I want to tell them that we are conscious of the mutual advantage that can flow both to Nepal and to this country. It is a great advantage to build high dams, to generate electricity, to save this country from floods that are caused by the rivers flowing from Nepal to this country.

So, keeping this in view, a number of joint technical Committees are already formed by the two countries to discuss the technical issues that are involved. A Joint Committee on Water Resources headed by the Water Resources Secretaries of India and Nepal oversees the work of these technical Committees. The seven projects on which dialogue has been going on between the two countries are as follows: Pancheshwar Multipurpose project, Saptkosi High Dam project, Sankosi Diversion Scheme, Kamla Multipurpose project, Bagmati Multipurpose project, Karnali Multipurpose project and Nemori storage-cum-hydel project.

The Mahakali Treaty is already signed between the two countries. It was signed as back as in 1996 for implementation of Pancheshwar project. A joint project office, JPO, has already been set up in Nepal. It was set up in August, 2004 by the UPA Government for field investigations of Saptkosi High Dam project and other projects on the rivers flowing from Nepal to North Bihar, for preparation of detailed project report. As recently as in January, 2007 our officers visited Nepal. I could say that the Secretary-level talks are scheduled any time in October this year.

Sir, Nepal was in a very bad situation. There was a turmoil inside that country. Now, hopefully, not only our relations have improved but we are dealing with a democratic setup in that country and the hon. Prime Minister of Nepal visited here along with so many Ministers. I was present in some discussions. I found that they are also wanting that we must take up these joint projects. We shall not miss any opportunity to come forward with an agreement with Nepal and now I can say that it is easier today to deal with Nepal than it was earlier.

Then, some hon. Members said about China. I can make a very brief comment on that. Even on that front we are doing something. China provides flood information from 1st June to 15th October every year since 2002 because of a Memorandum of Understanding which had been signed between the two countries in respect of three stations on the river Siang in China.

An MoU for provision of similar information of one station in China on River Sutlej was signed on 11.4.05. The Chinese side has started providing this information from the monsoon of 2007. During the visit of the hon. President of People's Republic of China during 20-23 November, 2006, it was agreed to set up an expert-level mechanism to discuss interaction and co-operation on the provision of flood season hydrological data, emergency management and other issues regarding trans-border rivers as agreed between them. The expert groups have been formed. The first meeting of the Joint Expert Group for Indo-China Co-operation on Water Resources is scheduled to take place during 19-21 September in China. I had to say this much about China.

As far as Bhutan is concerned, I visited Bhutan last year. Bhutan provides information to us from 35 stations and we are doing quite a lot for them. We have very friendly relations with Bhutan, as you know. We want that country to develop itself to optimum level and we have lent a helping hand in their hydro-electric projects Chukha, Tala etc. When I visited there, His Majesty and his ministerial colleagues expressed gratitude to India for the helping hand India is providing to Bhutan.

As far as Bangladesh is concerned, I visited Bangladesh also. We had paid visits to Ichamati, Feni and Moori. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we were close to an agreement, but the political atmosphere in that country was very fragile around that time, but the present Government of Bangladesh is wanting the discussions to go on. Last month, Bangladeshi team was here and Secretary-level meetings took place. That delegation also called on me and I found that it is possible that a Joint-Rivers Commission will meet very shortly. These are the points that the hon. Members have raised commonly.

Now, I would very briefly go to the National Common Minimum Programme of this Government. I can say it on the basis of my information and on the basis of facts that this Government is doing quietly many good things, not seeking publicity, but the publicity is incidental to that. Pursuant to the National Common Minimum Programme, a taskforce was set up by the hon. Prime Minister in August 2004 on flood management. At that time, Bihar and West Bengal had suffered a great loss of lives and property due to floods. So, the focus was that. The focus was the entire country, but particularly for Bihar and West Bengal, some recommendations were made and my Ministry took pains to implement those recommendations. Based on the recommendations, the Task Force at that time recommended 49 schemes of flood management for Bihar and 21 schemes were identified for Tenth Plan under the Centrally-sponsored schemes under which 75 per cent is provided by the Centre and 25 per cent by the States. Out of these 21 schemes, 13 have been taken

up in the Tenth Plan and 8 schemes will be taken up in the Eleventh Plan. In the mean-time, Bihar Government said that they would be sending us more schemes, but those schemes have not been sent to us.

I would like to take this august House into confidence that we went out of our way to help Bihar. We were interested that Baghmati and Mahananda should be taken up by the Central Government for funding. We sent officers, and the MOS went there twice. The Secretary and other officers of the Ministry took pains to help Bihar to prepare the project reports and then they sent us these proposals. Now, these proposals for providing embankments to Baghmati and Mahananda are available with us for appraisal. We are going to take them in the Eleventh Plan.

I am sure that Bagmati and Mahananda embankments will be provided and it can generate great hope in Bihar. This is what the Ministry did for Bihar. I am requesting my colleagues here that they should get back to us because ultimately the Members of Parliament are very responsible people, they are the leaders, they can go back to their Government in the light of this debate and they can raise a debate with the Governments so that State Governments come to us for any kind of help they need. Much more than the Bihar Government itself, we are eager to help Bihar because it should not suffer through floods anymore.

Recently a request came from Bihar. There was a request from the Principal Secretary, Government of Bihar in August itself to the Ministry of Water Resources for sending an expert team of CWC and officers from Ganga Flood Control Management for advising the State Government in flood management measures. Bihar was suffering from unprecedented floods. Prompt action was taken by the Ministry. An expert team comprising Chief Engineers of CWC and Ganga Flood Control Commission have been sent to Bihar to sit with the Bihar Government officers and help them.

As for West Bengal, I am referring to the Common Minimum Programme and the Task Force that was constituted for responding to the situation. That Task Force had also responded to the situation in West Bengal. Ten schemes pertaining to West Bengal were included in the Tenth Plan. The Central share was Rs. 51 crore, and we provided Rs. 51 crore. The West Bengal Government did not spend the entire amount; only Rs. 41 crore was spent. I do not understand this. They could have asked for more money. But instead of spending the entire money, they spent only Rs. 41 crore.

Besides these, anti-erosion works along River Ganga and Padma have been entrusted to Farakka Barrage Project in 2005 – forty kilometers upstream, and 80 kilometers downstream in Farakka were taken up. A total of Rs. 90 crore

was released in the Tenth Plan. Against the Eleventh Plan, knowing that they need it, we have already released Rs. 33 crore.

Now, there are two schemes relating to drainage - Keliaghayee-Tapteshwar-Baghai, and the second is Ghatal Master Plan. The Task Force recommended these schemes for Eleventh Plan.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): What about Subamarekha Barrage?

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: I will come to that. West Bengal Government is in the process of preparing DPR. They may request our Corporation known as WAPCOS to do that. So, WAPCOS is taking up that DPR. In the meantime, for Subamarekha, in 2001-03, we had provided Rs. 13.23 crore. That money was not spent by the West Bengal Government, and they had diverted that money to Teesta Barrage. Now, they want to send us a proposal for funding under AIBP. I am waiting for that. We shall certainly consider that, and we shall provide assistance for that. But I am telling you that that money was diverted and that was not spent.

Now, a new scheme for improvement of drainage of River Saraswati has been cleared by the Ganga Flood Control Commission at an estimated cost of Rs. 30 crore, but the West Bengal Finance Department has not yet cleared it. The Members of Parliament from West Bengal are here. They can take up this issue with their Government, and the response from the Ministry will be positive.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you will not stop, then hon'ble Minister won't get time to speak.

[English]

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: I will deal with only the points which are pertaining to my Ministry. The Task Force had recommended so many things for Bihar and West Bengal, but there has to be a response to the whole country. Therefore, we studied the recommendations properly, and the Prime Minister had proposed NEWRA. But NEWRA is not coming up very successfully, I want to report to you. We are trying very hard to convince Arunachal Pradesh and others that NEWRA will create a situation of hope in the North East, but the process is sluggish, not because of us, but because of lack of agreement of States, we are persuading them. It will generate a lot of electricity. It will save Assam and other places from floods and it will have irrigation potential.

In fact that region can provide electricity to many parts of the country, and those parts can pay money to the North-East which will generate a situation of hope. The process is

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sluggish because there has to be a consensus. We cannot issue orders to State Governments: we have to go by consensus. That is the policy that is adopted by us.

In the meantime, since NEWRA was not coming up in commensurate with the desire of the hon. Prime Minister and the desire of this UPA Government, we are proposing to revamp and restructure the Brahmaputra Board. Very shortly, I will be before the Cabinet. The restructure Brahmaputra Board will be enormously different. It will have four offices — at Guwahati, Itanagar, Aizawl and Shillong. It will necessarily have the component where the Central Government can take up projects itself. So, it is good news for the North-East particularly because Brahmaputra Board will be restructured for the benefit of the region.

In the meantime, we responded to the situation in Majuli island. Now Majuli is different. People had left that island but they are returning now. During this flood I sent two teams to Majuli and Majuli is receiving tremendous attention now.

As for the country as a whole, I would refer to Pranabji's letters. More than the State Government of West Bengal, it was Pranabda who wrote four letters during this flood. I responded to Dasmunsiji also Mr. Arun Kumar, and Mr. Anwar Hussain. To the best of my ability, I responded to their suggestions.

For the nation as a whole, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are proposing a National Flood Management Commission, Mr. Yerrannaidu was proposing here. He just made the speech and has left the House. He said that the Government was not doing anything as a long-term measure. I wish he was here so that I could tell him what the Government is doing. I hope his colleagues would convey to him what I am going to say now. The Government of India has responded to the situation in the country. There will now be a National Flood Management Commission and it will examine throughout the country the needs in respect of drainage and embankments and whatever is needed.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): It has been there since 1980s.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ: There has been an idea. This is now in the process of action. I am going to the Cabinet after some time with this. This proposal has already been circulated for comments. I inform this House that there will be a National Flood Management Commission. We have approached the Planning Commission for funding. Through this Commission, wherever Central Government wants to intervene for construction programme of drainage and embankments, it will be possible to do so. It will help the State Governments in

preparation of master plans, preparation of DPRs. Wherever necessary, funding will be made available. We are now setting up four regional centres in the country in various regions so that we reach the entire country. The National Flood Management Commission will generate a situation of hope for the entire country.

Members said that year after year we give relief. I agree with the hon. Members that instead of giving relief, instead of waiting for the floods, we must stop floods from coming. It is possible to do that. I know the genius of Indians and I believe that we shall succeed in this.

I would like to say one word about Members from other States like Orissa. I would request them to get back to their State Governments, sit with the Administration there, and send the proposals. This Ministry will consider all proposals very sympathetically and very positively.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Sir, I want to seek a clarification.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister of Water Resources was just intervening.

After the reply of the Home Minister, you can seek your clarifications.

*SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA (Mavelikara): The present flood in India has been described by the United Nations as one of the worst flood, the mankind had seen in the recent past. This observation of the United Nations has been found absolutely correct in Kerala where we experienced an unprecedented calamity of flood.

Continuous and Torrential rain and flash flood played havoc. 234 valuable human lives lost. Almost 50,000 houses fully or partially damaged vehicles; large scale destruction of crops of infrastructure took place. The total estimated loss is of 1500 crores.

The State has been witnessing such calamities continuously for the last couple of years. The people had to bear the brunt of the Tsunami. The rehabilitation work is still underway. The present Situations added to the woes. The State is also grappling with the situations of continuous recurrence of contagious diseases like chikengunia.

My district Alappuzha is one of the worst hit by the present natural calamity. Almost 80% of the area remained inundated for 14 days continuously. Kuttanad in the District is known as the rice bowl of Kerala.

Thousands of hectares of paddy fields remained under water destroying the crops completely. Upper Kuttanad and

*The speech was laid on the Table.

Onattukara were also hit badly. 12 lakhs man days lost. 800 Relief Camps had to be opened in the district alone. The situation was by and large same in other districts of the state also. The present allocation of central assistance for relief work is insufficient to undertake the relief work in the state.

There is an urgent need for immediate Amendment of Disaster Management Act to include Land slide and sea erosion in the list of disaster. I request the central Government to take note of this and do the needful.

I urge upon the government to sanction sufficient amount to tide over the present tragic situations.

[Translation]

*SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): Sir, thank you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards my area Sri Anandpursahib, where fury of floods have affected nearly 16-17 villages. It has damaged link roads and railway lines. Electricity and water supply has been stopped. A Minister of Government of Punjab, honourable Chief Minister and myself visited that area. I am grateful to the local people as they do not let the flood affected people starve and provided them with food. They distributed lunger to all of them. The Government of Punjab has also made various efforts but these are not enough. It has ruined crops also. Houses have been damaged. It has swept away the money and foodgrains of the migrant labourers who do not deposit their earnings in banks. All are looking towards the Government for help.

Sir, I would like to urge that Sri Anandpur Sahib is a place of glory for the country. All the people of the country are worried by this huge loss. I would like to request the union Government to sanction a package of rupees five hundred crore towards the help of these people.

*SHRI ANIRUDH PRASAD ALIAS SADHU YADAV (Gopalganj): Sir, like every year flood has ruined Bihar this year also. As per the united Nations, the losses occurred this year due to the floods are maximum. It has affected 20 states of the country and among them the most affected states are Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Orissa, Utter Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat etc. and according to the Governments estimate it has inflicted losses to the tune of 1460 crore rupees and has affected 330.99 lakh people. Nearly 1500 people have lost their lives and cattles have been swept away. The number of such cattles is 69842. Moreover 4.6 lakh houses are destroyed in Bihar alone to which I belong. 124 lakh people living in 19 districts have been affected by it; 115 people have lost their lives, Rupees 45222 crore have been lost.

The Government has so far announced Rupees 1292 crore as relief so far. This amount is 1460 crore rupees less than the Government's own estimate of the losses. A provision of 21333 crore rupees was made in natural calamity relief fund for the year 2005-2010 and 4259 crore rupees has been earmarked for the current year but I am unable to understand that why relief is not reaching the victims despite having adequate funds.

The rivers in Bihar has got 300 lakh cubic meter additional water from the rivers flowing from Nepal which has affected districts like Begusarai, Siutamani, Muzzafarpur, Gopalganj, Saharsa, Eastern Champaran, Darbhanga, Supol, Katihar, Madhuvani, Samastipur etc. According to the report of center water Commission, the water level in almost all the rivers like Kosi, Budi Gandak, Gandhak, Bagmati, Mahananda is above danger line.

Union Government have decided to built barrages on these rivers of Nepal which will incur rupees 75 thousand crore. Kosi, Bagmati, Gandhak rivers are selected for this purpose. A proposal for interlinking the river is also on the anvil. I would like the Government to expedite their construction projects and complete them within next 5 years so that Bihar State could became free from floods. Besides this I would also like to suggest the Government to construct small barrages on all small rivers and to prepare a plan to install projects which will generate 5 to 10 m.w. electricity and supply it to local areas only. It will increase the availability of electricity in Bihar State and decrease the rate of electricity also.

Floods have become a regular feature. But this year's flood has a devastating effect not only on Bihar but on the national level also. We have to take two type of measures to tackle this calamity. First one is immediate measures and another is long term measures.

Immediate Measures: To solve the immediate problems like making arrangement for the houses damaged, and providing food and cloths to the victims.

Long Term Measures: To stop the occurrence of floods. I would like to request the Government to help them generously. My special request to the Government is that it should provide assistance to the flood victims to enable them to fulfil their present needs and run their occupation properly. If Government would not pay attention towards their aspect now the flood victims will become helpless and poor for all times to come. It is necessary to interlink rivers under long term measures so that additional water in rivers could be diverted in the rivers having less water. Small barrages should be constructed on these rivers so that small projects for generating electricity could be started there which will help

[Shri Anirudh Prasad alias Sadhu Yadav]

in completing the projects early benefit the people and will be completed with less amount.

My suggestion in this regard is that the electricity generated from these projects should be distributed among the local population it will eradicate the scarcity of electricity and decrease its prices.

In the end, I would like to suggest that the funds provided by the centre to the State for running various schemes is misused by the State Government. I am happy that the Minister Shri Aiyar ji of Panchayati Raj has draw the attention of the country towards this aspect. I would like to request that flood relief should be allocated at Panchayati Raj level, by which relief will be provided to the people immediately and the irregularities will be checked.

*SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA (Barh): Flood is a regular feature in Bihar. Immediate relief is provided but the Government of Bihar has not provided adequate relief this year. People are affected from flood.

To save Northern Bihar from flood necessary action should be taken by Nepal and India. Government are making efforts in this regard. Government should speed up these efforts. Government should constitute a development board for Diyasaye and propose a plan for all round development of Tal area and should provide funds for this purpose. Patna, Nalanda are facing the problem of water logging. Effective steps should be taken to free Barh, Mohana, Khargadia, Phatuha, Tal area which is spread in an area of 1200 square kilometer from water logging.

*SHRI V.K. THUMMAR (Amreli): Sir, I would like to say about flood situation that similar situation prevails throughout the country but State Government of Gujarat is solely responsible for the present situation of the State. The Government has completely failed to tide over the flood situation in the State. Although Gujarat is No. 1 State of the country, the Disaster Management has failed miserably there. When flood occurred in Surat in the year 2006 due to the Ufa dam, there was loss of life and property to the tune crores of rupees. The State Government was responsible for that situation also. The Government did not take appropriate action. The Union Government had provided Rs. 500 crore towards relief works but the same was not fully utilized.

There is flood situation prevailing in Gujarat this year also and I am a Member of Parliament from Amreli Parliamentary constituency where fertile land of farmers in Babra, Amreli, Liliya, Kandinal, Utward, Machiyala, Chapathal, Sahhara, Nava Liliya, Gakharwala, Shedumar,

Gohil-ni-khan has become infertile. The farmers are forced to commit suicide due to this. The Union Government provided Rs. 48 crore to the State Government for farmers but the same could not reach to the farmers. The Government had constituted a Committee for interlinking of rivers but nothing concrete has been done in this regard so far. 500 cattle of farmers have died in Gohil-ni-Khan. The 'Ambuja Cement' is carrying out its activities through the JCB machines there causing large scale damage even though State Government is supporting the 'Ambuja Cement Company'. The Cement Company is indulging in digging activities. Compensation should be provided for the same and licence of the company may be cancelled because that has caused losses to the farmers.

The fertile land of farmers has been damaged. The Union Government should provide interest free loan and the farmers should be duly compensated for the deaths of their cattle.

* SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun): Sir, flood is not related to any caste, community or religion. It has been seen in my Parliamentary constituency during flood that over zealous youth lost their life while saving others. It is my suggestion to the Union Government that life saving Jackets and Boats may be purchased from relief fund provided to the State and the same may be provided at district level before occurrence of flood so that all these items could be utilized during flood.

Sir, Kuccha house of poor people gets damaged in flood. Rs. 2000/- are provided for purchasing clothes and vessels but only Rs. 1500/- are provided for partial damage of Kuccha house, If the house is collapsed, Rs. 10,000/- are provided as assistance. It is my suggestion to the hon'ble Minister that if we really want to help the poor who lived in hut, the minimum amount should be increased to Rs. 20,000/- so that he may construct atleast Kuccha House to live and buy some clothes because poor people lose everything in flood. The Rich people deposit their money in Banks but poor people keep their earnings in their House only. It is seen that assistance is provided to only one Member of the family whereas they live as separate unit. In these circumstances separate assistance should be provided to each individual.

* SHRI SURESH WAGHMARE (Wardha): Sir, I am grateful to you for allowing me to speak, large scale damage is caused every year by flood in the country, several houses are washed away and farmers are the worst affected. Interlinking of rivers should be initiated to control flood in view of the large scale damage caused by flood so that water may be provided to drought hit areas and it will be beneficial

**The speech was laid on the Table*

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for farmers. Road, water and electricity are major problems of the country. Construction of road is being initiated and if the same is implemented properly, each village will be connected with roads by the year 2009. Similarly, in view of interlinking of rivers and expenditure incurred on flood control may be utilized in developmental schemes, it will be vital for the economic development of country and will also generate employment opportunities. But all this will happen only after interlinking of rivers. Various schemes are being formulated for irrigation sector in the country today. But we are still way behind in irrigation sector due to various reasons. I hope that interlinking of rivers should be initiated alongwith the flood control schemes and in this way we can march forward on the path of prosperity of our country.

[English]

*DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Honourable Dy. Speaker Sir, Thank you very much for allowing me to participate in discussion on the situation arising out of flood situation in the country.

Sir, I come from Alappazha, a district in the state of Kerala. Our district was recently affected by the torrential rain and also the sea erosion due to tidal waves of monsoon.

Sir, Due to flood, thousands of hectares of Agriculture land was damaged. Several houses were damaged and due to soil erosion, the entire coast of Kerala was affected and families were rehabilitated to rehabilitation centres.

It is highly objectionable that Sea erosion is not included under CRF/ NCCF guidelines. I request the honourable Minister that steps should be taken to include Sea erosion and Landslide under CRF and NCCF guidelines. In Kuttanad, paddy fields act as a reservoir to contain the flood water but due to agrarian crises, people leave away from agriculture. This will, inturn, aggravate the flood situation. So it is mandatory to take steps to ensure agriculture which will minimize the damages due to flood. Dr. M.S. Swaminathan Committee has put forth so many recommendations for the eco-preservations of Kuttanad. I would request the government to implement these recommendations.

I also request the honourable minister that the compensation amount fixed may be reviewed and new states should be formulated constructing the present cost living.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Home Minister is going to reply now. After he completes, you can ask clarifications and the Minister can reply.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): Sir, discussions have been very good. I would like to

compliment all the hon. Members who participated in the debate for having made very good suggestions. This year, the flood situation was very grim and serious. I had the opportunity of flying over the areas which were inundated with the Chairman of the UPA, the Railway Minister, with Shri Paswan and other Ministers and the Chief Ministers of Bihar and Assam. For hours together, we were flying over those areas. We could see only water and water, nothing but water. It was looking like an ocean. So, the situation was definitely very grave and very serious. It was necessary and it is necessary for us to help the people who have been affected by the floods. What is the kind of relief that has been given? It would not be possible for me to give the details of the relief given to the people in different States in the available time today. That is why, we have prepared a booklet on the flood situation in the country and it has been circulated to all the hon. Members. This booklet gives the information about the situation in different States in our country, about the funding which has been done; about the steps which have been taken to give the relief; and about the steps which can be taken to give more relief to the people who are suffering. That is why it will not be necessary for me to deal with each of the States differently and separately and give the information. This booklet itself would give the information very briefly. This booklet has given the information about all the States. This will be very useful. The only request as I did yesterday to the hon. Members here, please glance through these pages and it would give you the information. It would give you an idea as to what is being done because the charge leveled is that every year we discuss the flood situation in the House, and then the next year also we have to discuss the flood situation. That is not so. You would come to know as to what has been done and what can be done in this respect. That is why, my request to you is that these are only a few pages. This is a booklet of 48 pages. It will not take even 20 minutes to read this booklet. I would request you to read this booklet.

One thing which has come out very clearly in this debate is that it is necessary for us to take long-term measures to deal with the flood situation in the country. We have been taking short-term measures. We have been taking compensation, food grains, cloths, utensils, medicines, shelters to the people who are suffering but that is not enough. Long-term measures should be taken. That is the point which was made by almost all the Members, who spoke in this debate and very good suggestions have been given by them. What are those suggestions? The suggestions given by them are: build dams wherever possible, construct embankments, link the rivers flowing through different States, de-silt dams, de-silt rivers, plant trees, recharge the underground sub-terranean storage, move the houses to higher levels, store the food grains and the medicines in the areas which are likely to be

*The speech was laid on the Table

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affected by flood and other calamities, have the policies and plans made in order to see that measures are taken to counter these kind of calamities, speak to the neighbouring countries and solve the dispute between the States, use the modern technologies, have better forecast of the climatic conditions, change the forces, have the standing forces which can be used and protect the environment.

These are some of the very important suggestions made by the hon. Members. My colleague, the Minister of Water Resources has at length dealt with many of these points made by the hon. Members. He has spoken at length as to what is being done by the Government of India and the Irrigation Ministry in constructing the dams and things like that. He has also spoken about the kind of dialogue India is having with the neighbouring nations that is, Nepal, Bhutan and other States also put together. These are the things which are really very important. These are the things on which we shall have to really depend upon in order to see that the floods do not affect the people in the future. I am sure, after a comprehensive speech made by my colleague, it is not necessary for me to go into all these details in order to explain as to what is being done in order to control flood in flood-affected areas.

I can now come to the point which relates to CRF, NCCF and the plan assistance which can be given. There appears to be a misunderstanding in the minds of many of the hon. Members as to what kind of assistance can be given under CRF or NCCF. I would like to inform the hon. House that the Government of India sets aside Rs.21,000 crore for providing Calamity Relief Fund to the States in five years time. It means nearly Rs.4000 crore is available to the Home Ministry to give the Calamity Relief Fund every year. What is the Calamity Relief Fund? It is an immediate relief. Supposing, the flooding is there or the earthquake has taken place or the cyclone has affected the country, then immediate relief has to be given. What is the immediate relief that has to be given? The food grains have to be provided. Medicines and things like that have to be given. That is immediate relief. You cannot wait even for a day. You shall have to immediately reach the people and give the relief. This amount of money is available for giving immediate relief. This amount of money is not retained by the Government of India with itself. In two instalments this fund is given to the State Governments. The Government of India has decided which State can receive what amount of money and that money is given to each of the States in first and second instalments. In whatever fashion they want to use this money, they can use it. It is not necessary for them to come to the Government of India asking for any kind of sanction or permission to use that money. This should be in clear terms understood by the hon. Members.

But they shall have to understand that this is a relief. This is not a compensation. This is not rebuilding or rehabilitating the people. This is simply to give the relief at the initial stages. This has to be understood in clear terms. When this booklet gives information as to what kind of money has been given to each of the State, some States have said that this amount is a pittance and that it is nothing. It cannot help. But that money is not for constructing the houses, the roads, the bridges, and the dams. This amount of money is for giving relief. This is to be understood in clear terms.

When initially this Fund was made available to the Government of India and to the State Governments, in the House and outside the House also, the discussions took place and it was decided that this amount of money is not sufficient and more money should be given. That is why, the National Contingency Calamity Fund was brought into existence. Now if some more money is required, it can be given. What is the procedure to be followed for giving this money? The procedure followed is this. Supposing Bihar has been affected by floods. The Government of Bihar will find out as to how many houses have been damaged; what length of roads has been damaged; what power station has been damaged; how many schools have been damaged; how many hospitals have been damaged; and then they can take the information from each of the village, each of the taluka, each of the district and that information is sent by the State Government to the Government of India and Government of India constitutes a Committee of the Officers of the Ministries of Agriculture, Finance, Home Affairs and other relevant Ministries. Those officers go for a look at the things over there. They come back and they then inform the high level Committee consisting of the Minister of Agriculture, the Home Minister, the Finance Minister, the Minister of Planning and the Chairman of NDC as to what amount of money has to be given to them. If they come to the conclusion that more food is to be given and more funds have to be given, that amount of money is made available to them. When the Finance Minister is sitting in the Committee, he says that this money will be made available. The Minister of Agriculture is also sitting there and he can say that the food grains are available and that will be given. The Minister of Health can say that this kind of medical help can be extended. This is the second step which has to be followed in helping the people.

Then comes rehabilitation and reconstruction which is a very huge thing to do. When Tsunami occurred, we went through these three phases. The first step was giving relief; the second step was giving some more relief which can help them to cope up with the difficulties arising between the period of construction and the rehabilitation and the calamity which had occurred.

The third stage is that each Government is expected to find out what is the kind of money that Government would require for reconstructing the houses, for reconstructing the roads, for reconstructing the water supply system, for reconstructing the power generating stations, etc. That amount goes into thousands of crores of rupees. For Tsunami, we paid nearly Rs. 10,000 crore to the States. That kind of money is not given by the Home Ministry or the Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of Planning or the Ministry of Finance. But when they prepare the plan for reconstruction of the houses, the roads and many other things, that plan is sent to the Government of India and that plan is examined by the Ministry of Planning. At present because we have created the National Disaster Management Authority, that also examines it and thousands of crores of rupees are given. But we cannot give thousands of crores of rupees on receipt of a letter from the Chief Minister or from some other person saying that we need Rs. 1000 crore so please give us this money. We are accountable to this House. The C&AG is there to look into all these things. If they give a plan and if that plan is examined and approved by the Ministry of Planning, the matter goes to the Cabinet and the money is given.

Now, we shall have to understand this mechanism which we have created for helping the people affected by disaster—floods or scarcity or cyclone or earthquake or any other kind of calamity which can occur. This has to be understood in clear terms. Unfortunately my colleagues in Parliament have not paid their attention to this kind of a procedure which has to be followed and that is why difficulties arise. I am sorry that there are only a very few Members who had spoken on this issue and who are not present in the House today. If I had explained these things and if they had heard what I am saying today, then probably there would not have been again an occasion for them to raise the same point in the next debate. It is because they have not paid attention to the procedure which has to be followed, there is some misunderstanding. If that misunderstanding is cleared, then there shall be no difficulty in seeing that we extend help in disaster management.

Sir, we have been speaking about so many things. Now one of the most important things which has happened in the last three years time, it has to be understood in clear terms, is that we have passed the Disaster Management Act. The Parliament has passed the Disaster Management Act. This Act deals with floods; deals with cyclone; deals with earthquake; deals with many other kinds of calamities. This Disaster Management Act says that there shall be a National Disaster Management Authority at the national level. The former Chief of the Army has been appointed as the Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority. This National Disaster Management Authority is expected to make policies

and plans and frame the rules and prepare schemes for dealing with floods, for dealing with cyclones, for dealing with earthquakes and things like that. If States like Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar are affected by floods, then they have prepared the maps to show which areas are likely to be affected by flood every year; which areas are earthquake prone areas and which areas are cyclone prone areas. They have prepared the plans and maps and they have suggested the steps to be taken with respect to that. They have been given the authority.

Sir, my colleague is sitting here. If he is constructing a dam, say, on Brahmaputra in Arunachal Pradesh, it will be expected of the Ministry of Irrigation that that dam should be so strong as to take any quantity of water which may flow into the river and will not cause flood in West Bengal and other areas and cause deflection. This National Disaster Management Authority is given the authority to suggest to the Irrigation Ministry that the plans prepared for constructing the dams should be such as to be able to withstand the flood that is likely to occur. It is a kind of co-ordination. They are not a superior body to the Irrigation Ministry. They are a body which could be consulted. The National Disaster Management Authority has been given the powers to speak to the Planning Ministry and the Finance Ministry and say that the Irrigation Ministry should get money for this purpose. This is what they are doing. They have been brought into existence. They are working. Probably, they shall have to work with greater speed. The Members are very enthusiastic, but we have to establish the administrative machinery and it is taking some time. We have to get the sanction and we have to appoint the officers. We have to do it.

Sir, we are not stopping here. This has to be clearly understood. The National Disaster Management Act provides for establishment of a State Disaster Management Authority and that Authority is under the Chairmanship of, I think, the Chief Minister of the State. They shall have to prepare the plans for their own States, plans to see that floods are not there; earthquake affected people are supported; cyclone affected people are supported and things like that. I am sorry to say that some States have not yet constituted the State Disaster Management Authority. Some States have constituted it and some States have not done it. This Act does not stop us over there. It provides that at the district level also, there should be a District Disaster Management Authority under the chairmanship of the District Collector and others. This has also not been done by most of the States. And then, at the fourth level, there is a Local Disaster Management Authority. For a mega city or for a town or for a village, there shall be a Local Disaster Management Authority. This law provides that there shall be a fund at the national level; there shall be a fund at the State level and there shall be a fund given to the

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District Level Authority in order to cope up with these things.

Fortunately, the Parliament has been able to pass this law and authorise the State Governments and the district bodies to create these Authorities but unfortunately, this is not being done. May I request the hon. Members of this House to see that, in their districts and States, these authorities are created? They will have the funds, many other equipments and wherewithal required for this purpose and they will be able to do it.

It is also suggested that there should be a Force created for this purpose. Whenever a disaster occurs, our Defence Forces bravely come out and they are psychologically prepared to face any danger to their own lives. They go and help the people. Under this Act, it is provided that there shall be a Force specially created for helping the people affected by disasters.

Eight battalions of paramilitary forces are set aside for this purpose. That means 8000 people are specially trained for this purpose and they are flown from place to place where they are required. In Bihar and Assam, the paramilitary forces did help the people there. What they did in Bihar, Assam, Maharashtra and other places last year is commendable. They risk their lives; they throw themselves into the rivers and save people. The task done by them should be made known and we should make use of it.

Whose responsibility is it for helping the country? You may allow me to say that, under our Constitution, we have the Union Government and the State Governments. Now, under our Constitution, the district bodies and the panchayati raj institutions are also recognised. We all know that there is a Union List and the State List. All the subjects which are mentioned in the Union List are exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Union Government. All the subjects which are mentioned in the State List are exclusively within the jurisdiction of the States. In the Concurrent List, there are subjects on which the Union Government and the State Governments can take action.

Here, there is a little bit of confusion. My colleague was very right when he said that the Government of India does not construct dams. The Government of India gives permission to construct mega dams or major dams. Medium dams and the minor dams do not come to the Government of India for permission. Only the big dams; come to the Government of India. There is a Committee appointed under the CWC for this purpose. It examines whether water is available, whether the plan prepared is correct or not and then permission is given. But construction of the dam is done by the State Government and not by the Union Government.

This point is not understood. If the dam is not constructed, we cannot ask my colleagues there as to why they have not constructed the dam. It is for the State Government to prepare the plan, send it to the Union Government for it to examine it and when the approval is given by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning, the dam has to be constructed by the State Government.

The same is the case with the law and order situation also. For anything happening in the State, are the Union Government and the Union Home Ministry responsible? It is not so, Sir. I cannot send even one policeman to any State without their permission. And when I have sent him there, I cannot deploy him; I cannot say that go to this place or that place. That has to be done because that is exclusively with the State Government. Unless we understand this kind of division of work, it will be very difficult to bring about the cooperation and coordination in the activities which have to be done for these purposes between ourselves. This is not understood, and every time the Members of Parliament would say that the Government of India is responsible and the MLAs of the State Government would say that the State Government is responsible. There is some kind of confusion which has to be avoided. But, at the same time, I would like to say that a very good suggestion was given by some hon. Members. Now they said that the Bihar Government would like to link the rivers. By all means, do it. There shall be no difficulty in allowing them to do it and if they prepare the plan, the Ministry of Irrigation will definitely look into it and if they want to link the rivers in their States without affecting other States, the permission can be given. Supposing, the rivers between two States have to be linked and the rivers between Bihar, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh have to be linked, now, that would be the responsibility of the Government of India because it is Inter-State matter and it is not a matter for the State Government. This has to be understood in clear terms. Supposing, we have to talk to the Nepal Government or Bhutan Government or Governments of China or Pakistan for that matter, it is the Government of India which will be speaking and not the Minister of Irrigation, not the Minister of Home Affairs. The Minister of External Affairs and the Minister of Irrigation together will be talking to them. Now, this responsibility has to be borne by the Union Government. That means the point I am making is, Sir, that the Union Government cannot shirk the responsibility of helping the people. The Union Government has a responsibility, but in what area responsibility lies has to be understood in clear terms. If it is not understood in clear terms under our Constitution, we would misunderstand things and we will unnecessarily quarrel with each other by saying that you have not done this, I have not done this and I have done this and you have done that thing. Now, that kind of thing has to

be understood. It is more important in the Parliament to understand this division which is provided, not by us but by the framers of the Constitution, not by any law, but it is in the Constitution itself and if we understand this mechanism which is available for us to help ourselves, it will be easier for us to do it.

But one thing which I would like to make clear at the end, Sir, is that we shall work with the State Governments in a cooperative manner. We shall overcome these difficulties. Fortunately for us, India is strong enough to cope up with these kinds of difficulties. What is required is a clear understanding and, fortunately, we have that kind of a clear understanding. With every State, the Government of India is talking and every State is talking to the Government of India. We have absolutely no difficulty. If they have committed mistakes, we have told them and if we have committed mistakes, they have brought it to our notice and it has been possible for us to correct them. This kind of cooperative effort is required; cooperation between the Union, the States and the people is required. I am sure that the cooperation between the Parliament and the State Legislature, the Union Government and the State Government and the people will help us and we will be able to overcome these differences and difficulties. So after a comprehensive speech made by my colleague and after a brief statement made by me, I do not think it is necessary for me to say anything more than this.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me time for tendering my clarification.

Sir, I listened to the hon. Minister of Home Affairs and hon'ble Minister of Water Resources with patience. The constitution of disaster management authority under constitutional provision or provisions under Disaster Management Act is concern of the State governments on technical grounds. They will plan for it and consult the Government about it.

But I would like to talk about big dams in which both India and Nepal are involved. The Governments of India and Nepal agreed to build a high dam in the negotiations held in the year 2001. It was decided in the said negotiations that joint project offices will be opened at seven places in Nepal and DPR will be prepared with co-operation of engineers of both the countries. At first, allocation was Rs. 30 crore and later another Rs. 34 crore were allocated. So all in all Rs. 64 crore have been allocated for it during the tenth five year plan, in which conducting survey, preparing DPR and payment of salaries to employees are included.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please ask the questions only.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: The hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs mentioned about the allocated funds under C.R.F. and NCCF. We approve of the fact that Rs. 21000 crore have been allocated for National Disaster Fund and Rs. 25,000 crore have been allocated for another fund. I think when floods hit a particular region, the government have to pay cash to provide relief to the people affected by flood. Most of the casualties in flood are due to snake bites and drowning in water. A booklet regarding natural calamities has been provided to us by the department, it is a good attempt. We support it. It is about providing relief, but it is not a permanent remedy. Providing medicines and food etc are measures to be adopted in such times to save lives. It deadens the will to work hard.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please ask what you want to know.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Priority should be given to long-term measures to check flood. Multi purpose high dams need to be constructed for the purpose. The JPOs opened at seven places in Nepal with the mutual consent of both the countries should prepare DPR under a time bound programme. If high dams are constructed it will generate electricity by which not only Bihar but other states will be also benefited. Bihar has been hit by devastating floods for the third time. We do not have words to say how crucial this matter is. I specifically want to know from the government that by when the JPOs will prepare DPR and by when will it be implemented. If the government is preparing DPR as per a time-bound programme what the progress has been made in this regard? It is a very serious matter.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is being discussed for the last 10-12 hours. It is a serious matter.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, both the concerned Ministers are present here. Shri Soz and Shri Patil are sitting here. There is a river named Ujja in our state. It causes much damage every year. There is no water treaty about it. There was a scheme to construct a dam on it. I would like to know from the government whether they are taking up the said scheme. If that scheme is implemented, it will check floods and facilitate irrigation of about 14000 hectares of land and generate 200-megawatt electricity.

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South): Sir, I thank you very much for giving this chance. I just want to seek a clarification from the hon. Minister. This time, the floods have been described by the UN also as the worst ever floods in the living memory. Last time, when the floods occurred in various parts of the country, the Government of India had given

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extraordinary relief other than the relief from CRF and NCCF to the tune of thousands of crores of rupees - you have very well said — to Tsunami and to Mumbai in Maharashtra and various other places. Therefore, I want to seek a clarification. Considering the worst-ever floods in the country, I would like to know whether the Government of India is proposing to give extraordinary relief packages to the worst-affected States like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, etc.

Regarding interlinking of river waters, in the Task Force Report of Shri Suresh Prabhu, it has been mentioned that by interlinking of waters, there will be flood mitigation to the extent of 30 per cent. It has also said about 8 crore acres of land can be irrigated and 44,000 MW of electricity can be generated. ...*(Interruptions)* Therefore, what is the time-frame for implementing this?

19.00 hrs.

SHRI M. SHIVANNA (Chamrajnagar): I associate myself with Shri Ananth Kumar.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur): Sir, I want to ask two specific questions. Sir, it is estimated by the Government of Kerala with all statistics and everything that Rs. 1500 crores of loss has occurred in that State and we requested from NCCF Rs. 562 crores. With all the details, as per norms, this sum has been requested. Task force visited our area and it has been taken to various places. You could please tell us whether this money would be given or by when it would be given. This is one thing.

Secondly, Sir, we have been faced with the problem of sea erosion. The total coast of Kerala is sea coast, and sea erosion is a big problem for us. Secondly, in the hilly areas, it is land slide. Both these things are not included in the list of national calamities in Disaster Management Bill. These are not considered as disasters in the Bill. I conclude by requesting him whether the Ministry will bring an amendment to the Act to include sea erosion and land slide as disasters.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. K.S. Manoj, Shrimati C.S. Sujatha and Shrimati P. Sathidevi are allowed to associate on the matter raised by Shri Chandrappan.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, floods hit one part or the other of the country every year and it is discussed in the House every year. My region is Doaba and when the floods hit this area, it damages houses of fishermen and poor people, their crops of sesamum, sweet potato and groundnut. I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister whether he will make provision for providing assistance from MPLAD fund since it is a natural calamity.

SHRI SHANKHLAL MAJHI (Akbarpur): I associate myself with Shailendra Kumarji.

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA (Hamirpur, U.P.): Mr. Deputy Speakers, Sir, I also associate myself with Shailendra Kumarji.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, both of you are associated with Shailendra Kumarji.

[English]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): This year, during the time of very severe flood in my area, I had one new experience. The Government of Orissa through its SURJ fund has only constructed concrete roads. It may be that the length of the road is less, but it only constructed the concrete roads. During the time of flood, the concrete roads became the only sustainable place where the people could live in those times, they could cook, they could put their cattle there, they could stay. So, can the Government of India make a national policy that only in these flood affected areas, with whatever the money that is available, only the concrete roads must be constructed and no other roads must be constructed. Can it be possible, Sir?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): The hon. Home Minister was detailing the duties and obligations provided to each institution under the Constitution. In doing so, I take this opportunity to draw his attention to some factors in this House. The whole thing is that the nature is playing the role of the terrorist. Like a terrorist attack, nature is causing loss of properties to all human beings by doing disaster. The losses sustained by the people are very heavy and terrible.

Now I understand that there is a disaster management mechanism. This must be made a permanent arrangement to meet any eventuality in the event of natural calamities like landslides, floods etc.

Then, there are several complaints from different States about discrimination shown in helping the States with relief measures. The resources are with the Centre. Admittedly the States do not have enough resources to deal with such an eventuality. So, in this matter, the Centre should take a very lenient attitude and on no account there should be any complaint from any State Government regarding discrimination. As far as my State of Kerala is concerned, even the Central Investigation Team came very late. They did not come immediately after the flood occurred. So, there must be some arrangement that whenever there is a disaster immediate relief measures should be provided by the Centre.

Then, the bureaucracy is not performing its duty properly when such a calamity occurs. The District Collectors and other officials do not rise to the occasion and only the affected

people will have to rise to the occasion. So, I would request the Central Government to train the bureaucracy properly so that they treat the matter seriously and deal with the situation effectively whenever such an eventuality occurs.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to seek only two clarifications from the hon. Minister.

First of all, it is reported that not less than 22 States are affected by floods and the agricultural sector and the farmers are the worst hit. So, I would like to know whether the Government is considering writing off the agricultural loans taken by farmers in the flood affected areas.

Secondly, in many places the National Highways and the Golden Quadrilateral also have become the cause of floods in different States. So, I would like to know whether the Ministry of National Highways will take this matter seriously.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister has given it in details particularly about Bihar.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please ask your question. Shri D.P. Yadav also spoke, what is your question?

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am coming to the question only. Hon'ble Minister himself said that efforts are being made for this recurring problem in Bihar. We have to talk with the government of Nepal, three departments have to play an important role in it. Hon'ble Minister himself has to lead the Ministry of External Affairs in talks in this regard. A way one will be found to construct a dam by holding dialogues with the government of Nepal, only when the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Water Resources cooperate with each other. Funds have been allocated for this and the Ministry of Water Resources is doing its job.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ram Kripal ji, please ask your question.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I am not delivering a speech and coming to the question. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister through you, whether will the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Water Resources constitute a co-ordination committee to evaluate the progress from time to time, regarding the negotiations going on with the government of Nepal about the dam by convening meetings and take action in this regard. There should be a nodal Ministry to pay attention to this work time to time.

Sir, I have one more question. Hon'ble Minister himself

went there and said about the site of flood that it was like Sea. I would like to submit that property worth crores and billions of rupees have been damaged and I know that funds have been allocated by the hon. Minister immediately. I would like to know the amount which has been allocated so far to provide relief to the people of Bihar under CRF, and NCF?

[English]

SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH: Sir, Greater Bangalore is suffering from lack of sufficient drinking water. I would like to know from the hon. Minister of Water Resources whether there is any proposal to provide sufficient drinking water to that area. Last time, I raised this demand in the House and suggested to construct a barrage in my constituency Satnur on the Cauvery river near Sangam. It will also connect Coimbatore and it, will benefit both the States, especially, the people of Bangalore.

Secondly, I would like to know whether I can contribute through my MPLAD fund to build houses for the people who have lost their houses due to floods Sir, I would also like to draw the attention of the hon. Home Minister that in my State of Karnataka, in Chikmangalur, naxalism is increasing and a lot of such incidents have taken place mere. Is there any specific help from the Centre to address this problem effectively?

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, much relief was provided when floods hit Maharashtra last year. But Hon'ble Prime Minister said in a meeting that rehabilitation works will be taken up as in the case of Tsunami. Houses were damaged in floods in my district and not a single house has been built there so far.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your demand?

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Houses have yet not been built there. People are sharing for temporarily shelters for the last year with the hope that the Government will do something. Will the hon'ble Minister help those people and build houses there.

[English]

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI (Badagara): Sir, whenever any damages occur after these calamities as in the case of agricultural crops, the revenue officials calculate or assess the damages on the basis of norms prescribed by the Government. These norms are prescribed so many years back. Take, for example, the case of coconut garden. For one hectare of a coconut garden a sum of Rs.6,000 is provided. In the case of Kerala, in one hectare of land only 70 coconut trees can be planted and for one coconut tree only a sum of

[Shrimati P. Sathidevi]

Rs.35 is provided. I would like to know whether the Government will make changes in these norms, which were prescribed long back, considering the actual loss occurred.

In the case of banana plantation, one banana sapling costs Rs.5 and the product cost is Rs.65. So, as per the norms, it has no comparison to the actual loss. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether these prescribed norms will be changed considering the production cost, especially, in the agricultural sector.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperumbudur): Sir, from the hon. Minister's reply, I have come to know that for the past four years a sum of Rs.21,000 crore has been spent for the national calamity relief. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that instead of spending this much amount after the calamities, whether the Government would consider giving funds to the State Government to take some preventive steps, like for desiltation of lakes, rivers and for clearing the river channels. Whether there is any proposal to assist the States accordingly?

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first question is about Nepal. We are negotiating with Nepal and it has been going on for quite some time. It has been seen that the government of Nepal is willing to give its approval but the people protest against it which creates hindrances. It is a matter between two sovereign countries. You know well how difficult it is to solve a water related issue between two states. Similarly it is not easy to settle down any issue concerning two sovereign states. So it is difficult to give any time frame in this regard. We will try to sort out the issue so that people of both the countries are benefited. The rivers of Nepal affect Bihar particularly the people of Bihar also want a solution to their problem so it is our attempt to do this as soon as possible. It has been said that some special package will be given for the calamities. I was talking about what is there in CRF, NCCF and in special package. The amount settled under CRF for each state has been fixed for five years. It is given irrespective of the fact whether calamity has occurred or not, they can utilize this fund. If more money is required then a special team is sent and money is allocated from NCCF. As far as the question of package similar to the one we give for Tsunami, it is always given. We gave packages for Kashmir and Tsunami and in the last year we gave it to the southern states where there were heavy rains in the current year Bihar and other states have suffered huge losses. I have seen it myself. The State government has to particularly come forward to sort out this issue of package.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Our demand is that Karnataka should be given a package like Mumbai and Bihar.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: It was given last year during Bangalore visit. It will be given this year also as per the need. Same agreement was there last year in Karnataka, it was given a package. It has been given to Gujarat keeping in view the interest of the people irrespective of the fact who is in power there. In this case also we will keep in view the basis for providing package. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, the worst affected State is Karnataka. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do not disturb the House.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I am going to each and every State. I am saying that this is applicable to each and every State. There will be no discrimination done. We will take into account the suffering of the people. Somebody asked whether 21 States are affected. May I tell you that in 21 States, at some places, floods have affected the people. But, if you say 21 States are affected, means the entire State is affected; that is not the case. Fortunately or unfortunately, we have States in which people are affected because of heavy rains in some districts, and people are suffering because of the drought conditions in other districts. We have districts, not States in which some parts are affected by heavy flood and rains and some parts are not affected. They are affected because of the drought conditions. These things will be taken into consideration.

As far as Kerala is concerned, let me tell you that I had a discussion with your Chief Minister. A delegation had come. I had assured them that whatever funds are there - CRF - they are given. We have sent the team to examine their demand for funds from NCCF. That team has come back. That matter is before the High Level Committee. We are going to give them. It will be a substantially big amount of money. Over and above that, as some hon. Members from Kerala have rightly said that even that amount of money is not going to be sufficient. And we realize that. We are not saying that that amount of money is going to be sufficient. Please understand that amount of money under CRF and NCCF is the amount of money not for rehabilitation; it is for relief. For rehabilitation, you need a lot of money; you need thousands of crores of rupees. For that, you will have to prepare a plan; submit to us, and we will definitely take it to the Cabinet and the Cabinet will approve. CRF money is given by Home Ministry. NCCF money is given by High Level Committee; and money for rehabilitation is given by the Cabinet.

We will definitely take a sympathetic view. That is the view which the Government has been taking. You know that, last year, for Tsunami the Government was quite liberal in giving the fund, and we will not be stingy this year in giving the help for relief as well as rehabilitation.

For rehabilitation, the State Government has to come with a plan. For relief, we will give you the money which is available with us. We shall have to be careful in spending that amount of money also. It is people's money. It should not be misused, the State Governments are definitely going to be very careful and we have no doubt about that.

As far as sea erosion is concerned, it is a big issue. The Government of Kerala has to come with a plan as to how they would like to do it, what is the amount of money required, and how much time it is going to take. For rehabilitation, one big thing is that huge amount of money is required but one good thing is that money is not required in one year and it is required in two years or three years. If you ask for, say Rs. 2,000 crore in three years' time, then Rs. 500 crore or Rs. 600 crore can be given each year and that reduces the burden of the Union Government also. We will take care of that. But on sea erosion issue, we will consider only when a proper plan is prepared and sent to us. We will get that plan examined by the Planning Commission and if it is found feasible, we will definitely like to do something but that has to come with a proper plan along with the opinion from experts and all those things because huge amount of money is required for this. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA: So, we will not get the benefit from the Disaster Management Fund. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: This is not disaster management. You please understand that this cannot come from the Disaster Management Fund. I told you how small the Disaster Management Fund is. It is only Rs. 4,000 crore each year for all the States. This amount is not going to be sufficient. Some more amount of money is going to be given to us and even that is also not sufficient. This is going to require a huge amount of money. If the State Government comes with a plan, we will be sympathetic towards that. Instead of spending the money every year, if you prepare a plan, it will be helpful, and we will do that. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: What about the permanent solution of inter-linking of rivers? You were saying something about it. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I will come to that.

[Translation]

As far as the use of MPLADS is concerned, some Hon. Members have asked, you have asked and some hon. Members from Karnataka have also asked. I would like to tell you that when earthquake occurred in Gujarat, we too paid rupees one crore each from our fund. ...*(Interruptions)* also gave rupees ten lakh for relief works after Tsunami occurred. But this decision is not taken by the Home Ministry. This is

decided by the Hon. Speaker, you all kindly speak to the Hon. Speaker. It has happened earlier also and if needed. You will also get permission specially permission will be granted in such States where problem has crept in. But this permission is not granted by the Irrigation Ministry or Home Ministry. Only Hon. Speaker has power to grant permission for that. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI KHARBELA SWAIN: Actually she was talking about building the individual houses. It is not permissible under MPLADS. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Yes, we have given that money. I know it very well that for building of the houses affected by natural calamities, we have permitted. But let this be looked into by the hon. Speaker, and he will decide about this. You please meet the hon. Speaker and he will take into consideration your suggestion. We had done it. I had contributed from my Fund, and many hon. Members had contributed from their Fund. I contributed for constructing a hospital building. Housing is also allowed but this has to be decided by the hon. Speaker.

As far as National Highway and all those things are concerned, please do not worry about the National Highway. The Government of India will take care of it. ...*(Interruptions)*

We are giving relief in agriculture. Some hon. Members have said that the norms were prescribed many years back. This is not true. We have changed the norms only two months back.

Before that, one year back, we had changed the norms. We have given the money. Please understand, what is given under the CRF is relief; it is not rehabilitation. It is relief. You have to distinguish between relief and rehabilitation. You should not take relief for rehabilitation. For rehabilitation, you shall have to come differently.

Now, whether the loans can be waived, the interests can be waived, that is a matter which has to be considered by the Cabinet. I am not in a position to say yes or no on this point without consulting my Government, the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister, the Agriculture Minister and others. But the situation is that we shall have to take a considerate view; and we will definitely like to take a considerate view as to how it can be taken, and whether it is possible or not, would ultimately be decided.

Now, as far as training the bureaucracy is concerned — Mr. Varkala Radhakrishnan had suggested it — yes, of course, we shall have to train all of us, bureaucracy and everybody. We have a system of training the bureaucracy under the Disaster Management Act, and we have the institute also. We are sending them there.

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

As far as 22 States are concerned, please do not think that all areas of the 22 States are affected. Unfortunately, last year, the Southern States were affected. Generally, the North-Eastern States specially Arunachal Pradesh; and West Bengal and Bihar are affected by floods. Fortunately, last year, they were not affected. But this year, unfortunately, they are affected and the flood situation is very, very bad there. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: On the issue of rehabilitation, you leave it to the concerned State Governments. We will give you the assistance. This is the matter concerning the State Governments.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: If you had heard attentively to what I have said this question would not have arisen. The States have to prepare plans for rehabilitation and send them to the Government of India. It is considered by the Planning Ministry and approved by the Cabinet. It is not approved by the Home Ministry. You cannot ask for thousands of crores of rupees.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: It will take years.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Radhakrishnan, please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: It is not done in months. Relief is given in months. Rehabilitation takes two to three years. As regards Tsunami, we are still constructing houses and roads.

Please do not think that we have not changed the norms. Unfortunately, I have been repeating it. It is in this booklet. The last pages relate to the change of norms. What were the norms we had accepted in the past and what are the changed norms? We were paying Rs. 50,000 to the surviving members of the family of the deceased; we have increased it to Rs. 1 lakh. We were giving only Rs. 5,000 earlier for repairing the permanent houses; we have increased it to Rs. 25,000. But it is relief. Please do not mistake it for rehabilitation. On rehabilitation, we will help. But it has to be done through a different method; and rehabilitation is not something done in months. In Latur, my Constituency, an earthquake took place and we took nearly five years to rehabilitate the people there. A large amount of money was given by the Union Government, by the foreign countries and others. But then, that amount of money was not spent in one year's time and that also helped us. We were spending Rs. 2,000 crore to Rs. 3,000 crore a year.

The same thing happens to rehabilitation. Unfortunately, when the floods take place, earthquakes take place, or cyclones take place, it takes time for rehabilitation; and it will take time.

Sir, I think I have been able to cover all points. Thank you. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, we will take up Special Mentions. Shri M. Shivanna.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Sir, I have a small question. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South): Sir, what about interlinking of rivers? ...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, he is ready to speak on this issue. It is a very important issue. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: As far as the linking of rivers is concerned, let me tell you that this is a very, very old scheme. This scheme was given by Shri K.L. Rao during Mrs. Gandhi's time, and in order to implement this scheme, the agreement between the States is most important. If you do not have agreement between the States, it becomes very, very difficult to link the rivers between the States. If we are successful in bringing about the agreement between the States, it would be possible to link the rivers between the States. But as far as the linking of rivers in the State is concerned, it is an easier proposal as it would be possible for the State Governments to prepare a plan and give it to the Irrigation Ministry. The job of the Irrigation Ministry is to find out what quantity of water is there in the area, in the watershed area and all those things. Then, they come to the conclusion whether the scheme is feasible or not. But if any State is willing to interlink the rivers without affecting other States, it would be a very good idea but they shall have to prepare a plan and convince the States and the Union.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: The Task Force Report is in front of you. It gave its recommendation, and the Supreme Court has also ordered that interlinking of river waters shall be completed within a timeframe.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: That is a different thing. Your Government tried to do it but they could not do it. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: We have initiated this. When are you going to complete Mr. Vajpayee's dream project? Thirty per cent of floods can be mitigated by interlinking of river waters. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Ananth Kumar, please sit down.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: You did not initiate this. Please do not take credit for it. Your Government did not initiate this. Mrs. Gandhi had initiated it.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the barrage mentioned by me. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN-SOZ): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Chaudhary Lal Singh has written a brief letter to me in this regard. I have understood that this barrage will be very useful. I have informed Hon. Badal Ji in this regard briefly. ...*(Interruptions)*

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: How Badal Ji's name has come in between?

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN-SOZ: First response of Badal Ji is good. I feel that it has a link with Punjab too. It cannot be made at this time.

...*(Interruptions)*

19.33 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri C.K. Chandrappan and some other hon. Members left the House.)

19.33¼ hrs.

(At this stage, Shrimati C.S. Sujatha and some other hon. Members left the House.)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the House will take up Special Mention. Shri Shivanna. Please complete it within one minute.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except Mr. Shivanna's speech.

...*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

**SHRI. M. SHIVANNA (Chamarajnagar): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Railway Ministry towards problems faced by the passengers of trains running between Bangalore and Mysore.

Sir, Bangalore the capital city of Karnataka, is known as

* Not recorded.

** English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.3

I.T. city, and also Garden city of India. Mysore, the cultural capital of Karnataka, is known as city of palace. Mysore is world famous for its Dussera celebration. It attracts people from all over the world. Mysore is 150 K.M. away from Bangalore. It will take 3 hours to travel from Bangalore to Mysore. Thousands of commuters including office goers, school and college students, business people covering this route are increasing gradually. Nearly 2,000 daily-wage workers, ladies and children are traveling in this route everyday. Adequate number of trains to meet the needs of passengers are not there. Due to heavy rush in all the trains, passengers are facing lot of difficulties. At present only 3 trains are running in this route. Passengers are sitting on the roof of the trains. Therefore, Railway Ministry should take all the necessary steps to increase the number of trains and must add more compartments to the existing trains. I would also like to mention that all the trains should have more stoppage time at Bidadi, Ramanagar, Channapattana, Maddur, Mandya and Pandava Pura. It would be a great help to the passengers. Railway Minister should give necessary instruction to the concerned authorities to provide extended stoppages.

At present there is only one train at 6 AM. There are no trains between 7 AM and 10 AM. In the same way there should be more trains between 4 PM and 7 PM. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to increase the frequency of the trains while introducing more trains. If possible special trains should be introduced in these route. With these I conclude my speech. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY (Nalgonda): Hon. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government through you regarding the problem of a salt manufacturing unit in Andhra Pradesh. Some 565 acres were given to one Snow-white Company for salt-making in coastal village of Chinna Ganjaam of Prakasam district in Andhra Pradesh. This issue is raking up once again. Earlier, in the year 1999, this company got licence during the period of NDA Government, from the office of Salt Commissioner for the preparation of salt. A large number of small peasants and small salt manufactures lost their lands. The Government took over even the patta land.

Salt-making involves filling up of fields up to two feet with seawater which causes increase in salination of groundwater and that will be useless for agricultural and drinking purpose. This negative effect expands to several kilometers around. Some 11 surrounding villages are badly affected. Sir, people from these villages are agitating against salt-making and demanding for the distribution of this land for the poor. Two agitators were killed in the police firing in

February, 2000. This resulted the salt-making project to be temporarily shelved.

Again, last month, the Snow-white Company managed to get the licence renewed for twelve more years which is creating panic among the people.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY: Now a new agitation has again started. Sir, I would request the Government to cancel the renewal of the licence and help the people.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRAKUMAR (Sagar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Cantonment elections have not been held for quite a long time at Cantonment Board places at my constituency due to which, there is no elected representative from that area, and as a result, people are facing a lot of difficulties there. A lot of irregularities are taking place in construction works since there is no monitoring by public representatives. Sagar's Cantonment Board has no Cantonment Executive Officer for the last one and a half years. An officer from Bhopal has been deputed there, who visits the area only once or twice a month. Due to this work is suffering there. A one and a half km long road from Siddheshwar temple to Collector House Square has been constructed there with the cost of Rs. 78 lakh. In less than four months time it has been damaged and develops pot holes. Four public toilets have been constructed by the Cantonment Board with the cost of Rs. 12 lakh each. In less than a year they have been damaged and causing lots of problems for the people living there. It has become very difficult for them to live there. Hence, through you, I request that in Indore, Mhow, Jabalpur and Sagar Cantonment Boards all construction works which have been done during the period since elections have not been held there should be examined and arrangements also made to hold elections as early as possible in the Cantonment Boards of country where they have not been held so far.

SHRI ANIRUDH PRASAD ALIAS SADHU YADAV (Gopalganj): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my parliamentary constituency Gopalganj, Bihar has an ancient temple of Goddess Bhawani. Thousands of pilgrims visit this place. People have full faith in Goddess Amba. Government can develop this place as a tourist place owing to ancient Goddess Amba Bhawani temple. Here a development Board can also be made on the lines of Vaishno Devi Board. This will help in developing this extremely backward area and people can be provided better facilities. This will also help the Government earn revenue. This is a long pending demand of the people living here.

[English]

SHRI HITEN BARMAN (Cooch Behar): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the common man of Delhi in general are facing harassment. They are losing their hard earned money due to non-allotment of the CGHS flats in Dwarka. I know of the typical case of the Ashoka Enclave CGHS in which employees of Lok Sabha are also members. I, therefore, urge upon the Government to ensure that the process of allotment should not be further delayed in any case by mixing the cases of genuine members with a handful of members who had violated the rules.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Sir, the marine fishery resources of the country are available offshore and in deep sea. There is depletion of resources in the coastal sector, resulting from unsustainable fishing pressure. The National Fisheries Policy emphasise the need for promoting exploitation in the deep sea and oceanic waters to reduce the fishing pressure in the traditional fishing areas. The traditional fishing craft is not suitable for deep sea fishing. In order to promote deep sea fishing by the traditional fishermen, Central assistance may be given to the traditional fishermen to diversify their fishing crafts suitable for deep sea fishing and multi-day fishing in the deep sea. I would request that the NABARD, NSIC, NCDC etc. may be directed to give credit facilities at low interest rate to traditional fishermen for the diversification of their fishing crafts.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK (Kendrapara): Sir, child sexual abuse is a matter of great concern and is steadily increasing in our country. There have been reports that some clinics conduct studies on school children by examining their private parts to further their visits abroad. There has also been a shocking report that one North-West Delhi school student was sodomised by a teacher for a year till the authorities took action. A recent survey conducted by the Government shows that out of 12,500 children interviewed, 53.22 per cent had faced at least one form of sexual abuse or the other. Of these, 49.92 per cent children stated that they had faced sexual abuse in schools.

In view of the above, I urge upon the Government to take urgent necessary action to set up a Children's Committee where children can express themselves freely. Law should also be made to direct the school managements to conduct police verifications of their staff and monitor visitors to the school.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Sir, I draw attention of this House to an urgent matter of public importance. As the Minister concerned is also present here in this House, I draw his attention also.

Countless ordinary Indians sacrificed much for Independence without a thought for reward. As the nation celebrates 60th anniversary of her Independence, much of that generation has died out. The number of freedom fighters is rapidly dwindling. Most of them are very old and several are ailing or are otherwise in distress. Lakshmi Indra Panda is one of the countless rural Indians who fought for the country's freedom as ordinary people who did not go on to become famous as leaders, as Ministers or as Governors. She is one amongst many, just as people who sacrificed a great deal and then went back to their everyday life after Independence. Most of that generation has died out. The few who remain are in their late 80s or 90s.

Orissa State Government has recognised Lakshmi Indra Panda as a freedom fighter which entitles her to a meagre monthly pension of Rs. 700 and another Rs. 300 have been added from last year. However, Freedom Fighter Samman status has been denied to her by the Government of India despite several Indian National Army veterans/legendaries having recommended her case to the Government.

Lakshmi Indra Panda's parents were killed in Burma by the British bombing. She joined INA when Netaji arrived there. She joined the struggle and was a companion of Lt. Janaki and Lakshmi Sehgal, Gouri and other famous INA fighters.

The tragedy is since 1951, she has worked variously as a store labourer, labourer, as a domestic servant, always for a pittance. She has never asked for State help. It was only recently when the media brought the pitiable condition of Lakshmi Panda to light, only then, the State Government acted. Her application was forwarded by the State Government to the Centre, and two years have already passed. I would request the Government to take a decision in this regard because she has already said that she would again come to Delhi with the slogan 'Delhi Chalo'. Before she arrives and knocks at the doors of the hon. Minister, I would request him to take suitable action.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun): Mr. Deputy Speaker, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Railways towards Railway Recruitment Board, Mumbai and to state that in response to the advertisement under Employment Notice No. 2/80-81 and Code No.25 under non-technical general category, Sh. Mithlesh Kumar Awasthi R/o Ward No.6, Nehru Nagar, Akbarpur District, Kanpur Dehat, Uttar Pradesh appeared for the written test on Sunday, 21st June, 1981 at P.N. High School, Lalitpur with Roll No.045722. After clearing written test he appeared for interview on 30th December, 1981 at Agra Cantt. and cleared psychological test with high marks, with Roll No.40059. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is an individual case. Nothing will go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please sit down.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, though you, I would like to raise an important matter pertaining to the interests of the poor in the House. A number of schemes are made for the poor in the country. These schemes are made specially for those who are living below poverty line are not getting its benefits. Still there are crores of people in the country who are not covered under it. The policy of our Government is wrong in this regard.

Sir, day before yesterday, hon. Minister was stating that only Planning Commission decides the number of B.P.L. card holders in a State.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please tell, what do you want?

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to state that the present policy of the Union Government is not correct. According to the present policy, the number of BPL card holders should not exceed 4 lakh, 3 lakh and 3.5 lakhs in the State of Maharashtra, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh respectively. In this way, different numbers are fixed for different States. When the definition of people living below poverty line has been decided then it should include all the people who come under it as BPL beneficiary.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, please sit down.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Sir, secondly, a survey is conducted to decide as to who are B.P.L. This survey does not include number of poor people living below poverty line and they are not treated as B.P.L. whereas a number of such people are included who are not poor. When we go to our constituency and want to know from the poor people whether they have BPL card, they say 'that they don't have it. I request the Government as they provide Ration Card, similarly a procedure should be made for giving BPL Card under which person living BPL should himself come to the Government and State that I am living below poverty line, hence issue me a BPL Card. The Government should consider my suggestion and decide on it. The present practice is wrong. A procedure should be made for that and the process of issuing BPL Cards should be streamlined.

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA (Hamirpur, UP): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the

**Not recorded.*

attention of the House towards a serious matter. At present, due to political grudge, in every district of Uttar Pradesh under special counter. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is a State matter.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, please tell me as where should I raise this matter?

Sir, the number of false cases being levelled without conducting any inquiry against political leaders and workers of all parties by Uttar Pradesh Government is increasing day by day. One to ten false cases are being registered against each of those people who either played an active role in Legislative Assembly elections or contested elections but lost. In my constituency, Hamirpur-Mahoba, false cases are being registered by the people of ruling party or at the instance of

them against innocent people and they are being sent to jails and they are being subjected to atrocities in jails.

Hence, through House I request that steps be taken to prevent the false cases being registered just because of political grudge against common man, active workers and leaders of opposition parties. Thank you.

SHRI SHAILENDER KUMAR (Chail): I associate myself with Shri Budholia Ji.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 am.

19.50 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, August 31, 2007/Bhadra 9, 1929 (Saka).

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