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Thirteenth Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, April 17, 2008/Chaitra 28, 1930 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. 361—Shri Jasubhai Dhanabhai Barad—not present.

We have all noticed how media today have highlighted some of the aspects of our functioning.

11.0½ hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 362. Shri S.K. Kharventhan.

Payment of Statutory Dues to CPSU Employees

*362. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:
SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR:

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

(a) whether many of the Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) including HMT have not released statutory dues of salaries and other allowances of their employees;

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

(c) whether the Government has taken steps for the early release of the salaries and allowances of employees;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) CPSEs are expected to pay the wages, salaries and statutory dues to their employees regularly out of their own resources. So far as HMT Ltd. and its subsidiaries are concerned, wages/salary and statutory dues have been paid till March, 2008 in HMT (International) Ltd. and Praga Tools Ltd. in the remaining subsidiaries the pendency as on 31.3.2008 is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Company	Salaries & Wages	Statutory Dues	Total
HMT Limited	—	7.18	7.18
HMT Machine Tools Limited	—	11.45	11.45
HMT Watches Limited	21.83	1.08	22.91
HMT Chinara Watches Limited	6.69	—	6.69
HMT Bearing Limited	0.41	2.42	2.83
Grand Total	28.93	22.13	51.06

(c) to (e) Government sanctioned Rs. 51.84 crore for payment of wages, salaries and statutory dues to the employees of HMT group during 2007-08. In case of CPSEs under Department of Heavy Industry including HMT Ltd., and its subsidiaries, an amount of Rs. 138.75 crore is outstanding of wages, salaries and statutory dues. Government provides financial assistance by way of non-plan loans to certain CPSEs to supplement their efforts for payment of wages and salaries and statutory dues when they are unable to generate required resources. As per information available, Government sanctioned Rs. 2481.21 crore during the last four financial years for payment of wages, salaries and statutory dues to sick and loss making CPSEs.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: There is a much talked about controversy regarding the sale of land owned by HMT in Kerala. May I know the factual position from the hon. Minister?

MR. SPEAKER: Sale of land! The question deals with the release of salaries and allowances. Mr. Minister, are you ready to answer this question?

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: I would like to inform the hon. Member that there was a controversy that this land was sold by HMT, a company under my Ministry, illegally. When this controversy was going on, at that time, the State Government of Kerala gave an affidavit before the High Court saying that this was sold legally, that they have given their permission, and there was nothing wrong in it.

MR. SPEAKER: Will you please come to your supplementary relating to the question?

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: I would like to know whether the Government have taken any steps to release the statutory dues of salaries and wages from 1st October, 2007 till date.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: In respect of seven companies, we have released the dues. We have got the sanction from the Finance Ministry in respect of seven companies, and in case of five other companies, they are still to be cleared. The Finance Ministry asked for certain clarifications, which we have submitted to them. Now, Mr. Chidambaram has come back and I think they will be cleared and the dues will be paid.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, false promises are being continuously made since the present Government came to power. In 2004 news came that the Government have sanctioned Rs. 517 crore for 24 Public Sector Undertakings for the payment of outstanding salaries to the employees and 15 thousand employees will be benefited on account of this. Thereafter, in the year 2007 Rs. 77.25 crore were sanctioned for 13 Public Sector Undertakings under the Ministry of Heavy Industries for making payment of outstanding salaries to PSUs employees. It was said that Shri Chidambaram Saheb has done so out of sympathy under the leadership of hon'ble Prime Minister. Then, on 23 February, 2008 it was published in the newspaper that Rs. 77.48 crores were given for 12 companies by CCA. It contains the names of some of the companies and 24 undertakings. My question is related to several Undertakings of the Central Government including HMT. Now statement that has been made by the hon'ble Minister is related to HMT only.

I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister the year-wise details of the money given to all the undertakings under this head during the last four years. It was said that after release of the funds, the performance of the undertakings will improve and they will become profit making entities. However, I personally know about HMT. Presently, I cannot say even this that the Government should firmly say that this much amount has been paid. I would like to know about the amount paid headwise during the last four years and also the amount of relief provided to the employees. I would especially like to know whether the sickness of the companies have been removed or whether they are again on the verge of closure.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It is a little larger than a supplementary, but I am allowing it.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: There are public sector undertakings under my Ministry as also under other Ministries like the Ministry of Steel and Ministry of Petroleum, etc. Till today we have released Rs. 2,481.21 crore in total. I have got year-wise details here.

MR. SPEAKER: You can send them to him.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Sir, I would like to know whether these undertakings have started earning profit or not. Whether their problems have been resolved or not?

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Not all of them, but 70 per cent of them. All those which are in Kolkata, except one, are earning good profits.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Not only Kolkata but it is a matter concerning the whole country.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, it is a matter concerning the whole country, however, the importance of Kolkata has been enhanced.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, there are a large number of Central public sector undertakings in which employees are not getting their statutory dues. Their

statutory dues include wages for the last several months. There is one public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Steel,

[Translation]

which is under Ram Vilas Paswan ji.

MR. SPEAKER: About that we will ask later on.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sontosh Mohan Devji is the Minister of Heavy Industries as well as Minister of Public Enterprises. So, he has to reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Put the question to him.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: For the last six months the employees of Scot and Sexby have not received their salaries. Two of the employees have died of starvation.

MR. SPEAKER: Let him reply now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Such is the situation in a number of other undertakings. I can give examples.

MR. SPEAKER: Let us finish this question. I must do ten Questions today minimum. OK, Please ask quickly.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: The Government of India is the owner of all these Central public sector undertakings.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is, "Will you pay those salaries?"

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Not only salaries, Sir, even the Provident Fund, Gratuity, Pension and all dues merged together.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, okay, will the Government pay all dues?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: May I know from the hon. Minister whether he will clear all the statutory dues which are lying unpaid for the last five-six months, in some cases for more than one year?

MR. SPEAKER: I will put a limit of 20 seconds for each Supplementary.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Sir, under no circumstances statutory dues can be kept pending. That

is a criminal offence. But with regard to the statutory dues which are due now from December to March, seven plus five cases were sent to the hon. Finance Minister. He has cleared five of them. Seven have not been cleared as he wanted certain clarifications. He has not said that he would not pay those dues. He questioned as to why we have not paid the dues when this was cleared by BICP and Cabinet long before. My problem is that some of these cases are before the BIFR. The BIFR is a quasi judicial body before which we and the even the Unions appear. The BIFR hardly clears one or two cases in three months. They go on asking clarifications one after another and not at one time. We are trying our best to get these cleared. Money is not the problem. We will definitely pay statutory dues of employees of these eleven companies.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Hindustan Steel Construction also.

MR. SPEAKER: No further questions. Do not reply to that.

Shri Gurudas Dasgupta, 20 seconds for a Supplementary.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Sir, I am extremely disappointed with the way the Minister has answered that question. Non-payment of wages is a criminal offence. Parliament passed a law to that effect. Payment has to be made within the first fortnight. However, there are innumerable cases of non-payment.

MR. SPEAKER: Put your question please.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: There are innumerable cases of non-payment. Even when payment is made, it is partially made. Is the Minister aware of the consequences of non-payment of dues to the employees who are working in Central Government public sector undertakings?

If so, what action is taken to clear the entire dues? ... (*Interruptions*) We are not interested to know what transpired between this Minister and the Finance Minister. It is between them. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot dictate to him.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Our Government is working under the Common Minimum Programme. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: It is a laughing stock.

MR. SPEAKER: Then, you should have reacted properly.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Your Party is a party in that Programme. They have given commitment that statutory liabilities and salaries, as you have rightly stated, should be cleared as and when it arises. But unfortunately or fortunately, there are certain areas, which are facing some problems from the quasi-judicial body. I can tell you that once it is passed, Finance Minister will not stand in the way; he passes it. wants that it should be cleared by the BIFR and he will pay it. He assured me. After he came back from the US, I asked him, and he replied that any day it is cleared, he would pay. So, have faith in us. You are with us and we would get it.

MR. SPEAKER: It is good.

Q. 363 – Shri Sarvey Sathyanarayana – not present.

Q. 364 - Shri Dalpat Singh Parste – not present.

Q. 365 - Shri P.C. Thomas.

Projections for Gauge Conversion

*365. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the projections made for gauge conversion during the Eleventh Five Year Plan;

(b) the details of targets fixed and achieved in respect of gauge conversion during the Tenth Plan period, zone-wise; and

(c) the special measures proposed to expedite the work of gauge conversion in future?

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

Statement

(a) Out of about 13600 km of Meter Gauge (MG)/ Narrow Gauge (NG) lines as existing on 1.4.2007, 10000 km of lines are proposed to be converted into Broad Gauge during the XI Five Year Plan period.

(b) Against the original target of gauge conversion of 2365 km, 4289 km were converted during the X Plan period. The targets during the plan period were fixed, yearwise, as per the progress of projects and availability

of resources. Against the upgraded targets, the achievement during the X plan period as under:

Railway Zone	Target	Achievement
Central	122	122
East Central	203	105
Northern	83	83
North Eastern	137	272
Northeast Frontier	397	335
North Central	151	151
North Western	586	586
Southern	923	646
South Central	454	490
South Western	284	223
South East Central	48	48
South Eastern	206	176
Western	816	1052
Total	4410	4289

(c) The funds for gauge conversion projects have been increased and some of the projects are being funded through internal generation.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: It is a fact that we have achieved more than the original target. But regarding the gauge conversion proposed from Quilon to Virudhunagar, at least from Poonalur to Shengottai, the survey is not over. I am told that steps have been taken. But there are questions of a few tunnels, which are said to be quite old and the question is whether new tunnels are necessary.

MR. SPEAKER: Twenty seconds are allowed to put your question.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: My question is whether the survey would be completed at the earliest and the work would be taken up immediately so that the passengers in that area are not denied traffic for quite a long time.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, give a brief answer.

SHRI R. VELU: I would be very brief. That line is fraught with all problems. It is a tough terrain, with five tunnels and more than 100 bridges. But the original

alignment was given up and a new line was thought of. So, the new line goes through the forest land. It is very difficult to get land from Kerala for railway work. That being the case, I undertook inspection and revised the entire project. And in the same old line, we are now trying to do something with the tunnels and without waiting for the new survey, we have prepared an estimate and get it sanctioned and the project would get implemented.

MR. SPEAKER: Next time, when your officers go, let them take him with them.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: You have been pleased to allot an area to Palghat Division, which was originally with the Madurai Division. But that full area is having only a meter gauge. I think, there is a proposal to convert it into a broad gauge. What is the stage of conversion of the area from Dindugal to Pollachi and from Pollachi to Kelathivayal. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: It would become very difficult if you ask specific portions of the whole of the country.

SHRI R. VELU: We have already sanctioned the project for conversion. This year, we have also allotted about Rs. 65 crore. We have also prepared the estimates; tenders have been invited; work would be taken up; and in the case of all the gauge conversions, I assure the hon. Member that in the course of two to three years, we would complete the works.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: For the past four years now, in every Budget speech, Shri Lalu Prasad has announced that Pilibhit gauge conversion would be done. It has been passed the Cabinet; it has been passed the Planning Commission; and it has been passed the Finance Ministry. It has got money allocated but the first brick has still not been laid. I would like to know when this is going to start.

SHRI R. VELU: Hon. Member would be pleased to know that after this Government has taken over, that project was sanctioned. Hon. Member knows it. There are 51 cases involving about 7500 kms in the country which involve gauge conversion. We have taken up the work analysis and it was decided that in the 11th Plan we will complete all these 51 cases which would mean that the gauge conversion would be over. There is no dearth of finance. We get not only the budgetary support but we are also contributing from our own resources

like capital fund. We are giving sufficient money. I assure the hon. Member that this project will be taken up and will be completed in the course of three to four years.

SHRI KHAGEN DAS: My question will be brief, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question.

SHRI KHAGEN DAS: As a part of the national project the gauge conversion of Lumding-Badarpur railway line, which is the life line of Tripura, Mizoram and Cachar of Assam, was to be completed by 2009. But despite being a national project the gauge conversion work has been delayed.

MR. SPEAKER: All projects are national projects.

SHRI KHAGEN DAS: My question is by when the Lumding-Badarpur-Agartala gauge conversion work would be completed and what are the main constraints being faced by the Ministry of Railways for timely completion of the gauge conversion projects.

MR. SPEAKER: That part will be covered by his reply to the first question.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, the hon. Member might know that this is the most difficult gauge conversion project involving the law and order problem. The hon. Member in this House has also been telling about this. We wanted about thousand ex-Servicemen to be recruited there to safeguard our own people who are getting killed. The State Government has also been asked to provide security. They have given protection only at 48 sites.... (*Interruptions*) Let me complete it.

MR. SPEAKER: I would not allow this. You cannot put a further supplementary.

SHRI R. VELU: At 48 sites security has already been provided and at 17 places security is yet to be provided. We are willing to complete the project. More tunnels are involved. At any rate we are now planning to complete it by 2011.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: In Tamil Nadu most of the trains used to run on meter gauge before the UPA Government came to power. Now, the Government has taken maximum proposal for gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu. I would like to know from the Minister the percentage of gauge-conversion work completed in Tamil Nadu and when would hundred per cent gauge

conversion work will be completed in Tamil Nadu. What steps have been taken to expedite the gauge conversion work?

MR. SPEAKER: You may answer only the first part of his question.

SHRI R. VELU: The gauge conversion work involves about 1956 kms of which about 900 kms have been completed and about 1000 kms are pending which will also be completed in the course of three years.

MR. SPEAKER: Q.366—Shri Ranen Barman—Not present.

Shri Balashowry Vallabhaneni—Not present.

Well, I cannot take any umbrage if it is pointed.

Q.367—Shri Ramji Lal Suman.

[Translation]

Crude Oil Production

+
*367. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether huge public as well as private investments have been made to increase crude oil production in the country during the last few years;

(b) if so, the details of the capital investment made by each of the public sector companies during each year from 2004-05 to 2007-08; and

(c) the estimated annual average expenditure on exploration of new oil reserves in the country during the said period?

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) Yes Sir. A large investments made on exploration and production (E&P) activities during X Plan period 2002-07 were Rs. 45,187.76 crore by Oil & Natural Gas

Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Rs. 4,462.14 crore by Oil India Limited (OIL). Plan investment for the year 2007-08 by ONGC and OIL was estimated to be Rs. 15,602 crore and Rs. 1,096 crore respectively. In addition, Private/JV companies have made an investment of Rs. 17,196 crore during X Plan period. In 2007-08, Private/JV companies have made an investment of Rs. 13,642 crore on E&P activities provisionally.

(b) The capital investments made by ONGC and OIL from 2004-05 to 2007-08 are as under:

	(Rs. crore)			
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08*
ONGC	6612.48	6697.18	8656.15	11298.82
OIL	429.26	443.13	467.62	503.66

(c) The estimated annual expenditure on exploration made by ONGC, OIL and Private/JV companies from 2004-05 to 2007-08 is as under:

	(Rs. crore)			
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08*
ONGC	3277.68	3888.71	4317.17	4175.38
OIL	330.11	549.97	508.27	466.92
Private/JV companies	1884	1788	4384	5012

*provisional

SHRI RAMJILAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, ONGC spent Rs. 45,187.76 crore on exploration and production activities during the Tenth Five Year Plan between 2002-2007. At the end of Ninth Five Year Plan, production was 26 million metric tonnes and for the Tenth Five Year Plan, the target was 27.35 million metric tonnes.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister that despite spending so much amount, production could be increased only by one metric million tonnes. I would also like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to why the pace of production remained very slow against the target despite heavy spending on production and exploration.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, please tell us as to why the pace is low?

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Sir, whatever has been said by the hon'ble Member is correct that ONGC has made huge spendings. Oil wells of ONGC are more than 15 years old. These wells are being exploited for nearly last 30 years and the number of such wells are more than about 5,300. Attempts have been made to continue the production of crude oil from these old wells and for this purpose spending have been made. It is on this account that heavy expenditure were made. Very less expenditure has been incurred on the exploration and extraction of crude oil from the new wells and efforts are also being made by the Government and the department to continue more and more exploitation of these wells for the production of crude oil. In this regard, I would like to submit about the quantum of increase in the production. In the year 2005-06, the total production of crude oil in the country was 32.19 MMT. The expected production for the year 2006-07 was 33.98 MMT where as 33.99 MMT was produced that year. Out of that production by ONGC was 26.051 MMT, by OIL was 3.11 MMT and production by private joint venture companies was 4.83 MMT. During the Eleventh Five Year Plan in the year 2007-08 production was increased to 33.40 MMT. In the year 2006-07 the average cost of production of crude oil of ONGC was Rs. 9335 per metric tonnes. That is why, I submitted that the reason of excess expenditure was due to expenditure on the repair of oil wells.

SHRI RAMJILAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wanted to know as to what measures are being taken by the Government to enhance the pace of slow production of oil.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: The Government are making efforts to increase production and efforts are also being made for the exploration of new oil wells and increase the production in the country through new exploration. Nearly 162 blocks have been identified in the country. Among these 57 new blocks have been identified. The Government are also making efforts to get more oil from these blocks.

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Mr. Speaker, Sir, ONGC was set up to meet the demand of oil in the country from our domestic production. The expenditure is increasing every year and every day whereas the production is not increasing in that ratio. Till today, ONGC has not been able to start commercial production in those areas which were given to ONGC in NELP first, second. The hon'ble Minister has also stated that they have not been able to use advanced technology.

I would like to submit to the hon'ble Minister that exploration work in Krishna Godawari Basin was assigned to ONGC. ONGC said that there is no oil reserve in this area. When the exploration work in Krishna Godawari Basin was assigned to a private operator the biggest oil reserve of the world was found there. I would like to know as to what were the reasons that public sector company could not find the reserve. What were the loopholes and shortcomings on their part?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: He has given you information.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Sir, I would like to know as to why could they not get oil reserve while the private operators got it?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed your supplementary.

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Sir, ONGC has played an important role in the production of crude oil in the country.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You should be proud of ONGC also.

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: ONGC contributes 73 percent in the total production of oil and gas in the country. ONGC is producing 25.9 MMP and 32.4 BCM. ONGC has discovered in NELP. I would like to say for the information of the hon'ble Member, who has asked about it, that we have discovered there as well. Whatever blocks are given in NELP, its result comes after 6-7 years. I have said this earlier also that normally oil and gas cease to be available for exploration in old oil wells after 15 years. However, it is on account of expenditure incurred on these wells that even after 30 years we are getting results. I have already told that ONGC contributes 73 per cent to oil and gas production in the country.

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Mr. Speaker, Sir, I need your protection. I am not getting the reply to my question. It is not good. The hon'ble Minister is not replying to my question. If this is the reply to my question then what should I do?

MR. SPEAKER: There are many provisions in our rules. You should seek protection under these rules.

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Mr. Speaker, Sir, I seek your protection.

MR. SPEAKER: I will give you protection.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot compel him to say anything.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Mr. Speaker, Sir, I seek your protection.

MR. SPEAKER: That is why I am telling you to give notice.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: We can have a full discussion. I will give you that opportunity.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Sir, as regards oil exploration and production activities, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether the Government has identified any specific areas for public-private investment for exploration and production of oil. Do those areas include areas near Sir Creek and Jathau in Kutch district or not?

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Have you made any public-private partnership in this regard?

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Public-private partnership is going on and rectification to deal with this in Kutch is also in the pipeline.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, following an aggressive oil diplomacy by the Government of India, some positive results have been achieved. And the Government through, OVL (ONGC Videsh Limited) has made some progress in Latin American countries, Africa, Nigeria, Central Asia and also Russia.. May I know from the

hon. Minister whether the Government has estimated the progress achieved by OVL or not?

MR. SPEAKER: Have you got information about ONGC Videsh Limited?

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Exploration work by Videsh Limited has been in progress in Russia, Nigeria, Sudan, Vietnam and various other countries and its positive results have been achieved.

[English]

Competition Faced by the Public Sector Steel Plants

*368. SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the public sector steel plants are facing fierce competition from the private sector steel companies in marketing their products in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to increase their capacity and to lower the cost of production?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Steel Sector is deregulated in the country and there is competition between the Public Sector Steel Plants and the Private Sector companies. The two public sector steel companies viz. Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. (RINL) are marketing products through their wide marketing networks.

(c) In order to maintain its predominance in the Indian Steel Sector and to face global competition, the SAIL has drawn up an expansion plan covering its five integrated steel plants and special steel plants. SAIL proposes to increase production of hot metal from the level of 14.6 MT per annum (2006-07) to 26.2 MT per annum by the year 2010-11. Similarly, RINL is also expanding its production capacity of liquid steel from 3.0 MT to 6.3 MT per annum by 2010.

Besides capacity enhancement, the growth plan of these two public sector enterprises envisage the elimination of technological obsolescence, energy savings, improved product mix etc. which will also help in lowering the cost of production. In addition, efforts are being made to enhance/acquire mining leases both for iron ore and coal.

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: Sir, from parts (a) and (b) of the written reply, it is clear that there is competition between the public sector steel plants and the private sector companies; and public sector steel companies are marketing products through their wide marketing networks. I want to know from the hon. Minister about the initiatives taken so far for mega expansion plan for SAIL and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited.

MR. SPEAKER: This supplementary does not arise out of the main Question.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we want to develop SAIL as a big sector. That is why IISCO was merged with the SAIL. This issue had been pending for a long time. We revived the closed unit of Pulti. Merger of BRL with SAIL is at an advanced stage and it is under consideration of the Cabinet. We have said that we will merge it. We have issue on NIL and we are going to merge Nilanchal Ispat Limited for which also action is being taken. As far as the issue of M.E.L. is concerned, we are going to merge it also. In this way we want Steel Authority of India Limited to emerge as a very big company and we have fixed target for its production capacity. We are going to increase its production capacity from 14 MT per annum to 24.5 MT per annum within three years at the cost of Rs. 51 thousand crore.

[English]

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: The focus of National Steel Policy 2005 is to achieve global competitiveness not only in terms of cost, quality and product mix but also in terms of global benchmarks of efficiency and productivity.

I want to know from the hon. Minister the achievements so far.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Sir, as far as the products of the Steel Authority of India Ltd. for R.I.L. are concerned, they are not only globally competitive but they are making best production also.

MD. SALIM: After the deregularisation of the steel there are private players in this sector and consumption of steel in our country is also increasing. Market has also developed and prices are also increasing. So, with regard to the competition faced by Rashtriya Ispat Nigam, I would like to ask whether the consumption of steel will continue to increase as per the pace of our progress in this competition and whether you will give some relief to the customers by using new technology and saving energy which will help in lowering the cost of inputs. Leave aside the market of iron ore. But, at this place in a new competitive environment, are you contemplating to give relief to the customers by lowering cost of inputs and using new technologies? Only then you will be able to compete with the private sector, because you still have the national industry. The hon. Minister may please explain the steps taken by the Government in this regard.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: We are, of course, bringing new technologies, but we are more concerned about coking coal. Coking coal is a matter of big concern for us, because it is not produced in our country. Its prices are constantly rising. One year before its price was \$96, now it has gone upto \$305. In this way we are bringing new technologies and also exploring gas. As far as competitiveness is concerned, we have said that we are running with the target. This is a fact that our production is six per cent while the demand is 13 per cent. But, as on date, both the demand and the supply are equal and by the year 2011-12 this demand will go upto 105 MT and supply will touch the target of 124 MT. Our production target is 124 MT. Similarly by the year 2020 the demand will go up to 350 MT, so we are running with this target for the supply of 350 MT. But this matter relates to decontrol. All these things are fixed on the basis of international market trend. But so far as consumption is concerned, we maintain a balance between demand and supply matching production against consumption.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. 369—Shri Kailash Meghwal—not present.

Q. 370 – Shri N.S.V. Chitthan.

Cold Storages

*370. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any scheme to enhance the capacity of cold storages to promote food processing industries in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total extent of loss incurred due to poor cold storage facilities in the country during the last three years;

(d) the total amount allocated to improve the cold storage facilities during the last three years, State-wise; and

(e) the extent of increase registered in the capacity of cold storages by each State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) had been providing financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid to all implementing agencies @ 25% of the cost of plant & machinery and technical civil works in general areas and 33.33% in difficult areas with a common ceiling of Rs. 75 lakhs, under the Cold Chain component of 10th Plan Scheme. The assistance under the scheme was limited to cold storages for non-Plan Scheme. The assistance under the scheme was limited to cold storages for non-horticulture produces, special type of cold storages with controlled/modified atmosphere technology, cold storages as integral part of processing units or as a common facility in food parks. Besides, other agencies of Government of India like National Horticulture Board (NHB), Agricultural and Processed Food Products Exports Development Authority (APEDA), National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) and State Governments also provide assistance for cold storages under their respective schemes.

Further, MFPI has developed a proposal on Cold Chain Infrastructure Scheme for 11th Five Year Plan for

creating integrated cold chain infrastructure at different levels—farm level primary processing centre-cum-cold chain, collection/aggregation centres and Strategic Distribution Centres to provide complete cold chain facilities without any break from the farm gate to the consumer, including pre-cooling facilities at production sites, reefer vans and mobile cooling units. The initiatives are aimed at filling the gaps in the supply chain, strengthening of cold chain infrastructure, establishing value addition centres with infrastructural facilities like sorting, grading, packaging and processing for horticulture including organic produce, marine, dairy, meat, poultry etc. The scheme envisages financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid @ 50% of the total cost of plant and machinery and technical civil works in general areas and 75% for difficult areas subject to a maximum of Rs. 10.00 crore.

According to studies commissioned by the Ministry, wastage of agricultural food items is estimated to be about Rs. 58,000 crore annually occurring at various stages of handling after harvesting due to fragmented farming, restrictive provisions in Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development & Regulation) Act, lack of adequate post-harvest infrastructure such as lack of cold chain facilities, transportation, proper storage facilities, etc.

The budget allocation utilized by the Ministry on infrastructure development including Cold Storages during 2005-2006, 2006-2007 and 2007-08 was Rs. 15.65 crore, Rs. 13.21 crore and Rs. 14.80 crore respectively. The scheme is project specific.

As per data maintained by Directorate of Marketing & Inspection (DMI), Ministry of Agriculture, the capacity of cold storages have increased from 195.52 Lakh MT (as on 31.12.2004) to 216.94 Lakh MT (as on 31.12.2006). State-wise details are given in the annexure enclosed.

Annexure

Distribution of Cold Storages

Sl.No.	State/UT	As on 31.12.2004		As on 31.12.2006	
		Total No.	Total Capacity in MTs	Total No.	Total Capacity in MTs
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands (UT)	02	210	02	210
2.	Andhra Pradesh	257	662867	276	820808

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	01	5000	01	5000
4.	Assam	24	75916	23	70916
5.	Bihar	238	910582	238	910582
6.	Chandigarh (UT)	06	12216	06	12216
7.	Chhattisgarh	68	361044	55	266022
8.	Delhi	92	126061	93	126091
9.	Gujarat	351	874863	374	973768
10.	Goa	24	5875	28	7105
11.	Haryana	237	380093	253	392121
12.	Himachal Pradesh	17	18375	17	18375
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	19	42869	19	42869
14.	Jharkhand	25	80625	25	80625
15.	Kerala	161	35755	177	47298
16.	Karnataka	123	149250	138	253168
17.	Lakshadweep (UT)	01	15	01	15
18.	Maharashtra	425	447960	437	510854
19.	Madhya Pradesh	167	732712	179	762802
20.	Manipur	00	00	00	00
21.	Meghalaya	03	3200	03	3200
22.	Mizoram	00	00	00	00
23.	Nagaland	02	6150	02	6150
24.	Orissa	104	274175	90	216420
25.	Pondicherry (UT)	03	85	03	85
26.	Punjab	382	1231685	420	1337517
27.	Rajasthan	93	272622	106	312130
28.	Sikkim	00	00	00	00
29.	Tamil Nadu	119	161899	136	227229
30.	Tripura	08	18450	08	18450
31.	U.P. and Uttaranchal	1410	8258813	1567	8931918
32.	West Bengal	386	4402977	434	5340042
Total		4748	19552344	5101	21693986

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the wastage of agricultural food items is estimated at about Rs. 58,000 crore in a year. That is more than 25 per cent of the produces are wasted. The Government extends grant-in-aid of 25 per cent for the cost of plant and machinery in cold storages for storing vegetables and fruits.

In order to encourage post-harvest management and save the farmers from the loss, may I request, through you, the Government to raise the grant-in-aid to fifty per cent as it is extended to cold storages which store organic produces like marine, dairy, meat etc.?

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: In the Eleventh Five Year Plan we have enhanced the grant from 25 per cent or from Rs. 75 lakh to Rs. 10 crore. It is because private investment is not coming in that way in the rural areas. That is why this enhancement has been made. So, it is all in the pipeline and during this month, we will be able to clear it. We are having a complete integrated approach for cold chain to reduce the wastages.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: It takes more than Rs. 5 crore to put up a cold storage plant. So, in order to save the farmers and small vendors may I ask through you, to our hon. Minister, whether he will take steps to put up many cold storages near the market places?

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Yes, Sir. We are having an integrated approach from the farm gate up to the retail outlet with complete backward and forward integration. That is why we have given this grant enhancement to attract more private investment in this sector. Earlier, we were just giving Rs. 75 lakh and now we are giving 50 per cent today and 75 per cent in difficult areas like North-East and other areas. So, I think, this will help increase the number of cold storages.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: The hon. Minister has given a detailed reply and he has also stated that the financial assistance that is being given in the form of grant-in-aid is up to 50 per cent with a total cost of Rs. 10 crore. But despite that, the details which have been provided in the list, the capacity in metric tonnes has only increased from 19552344 in 2004 to 21693986 in 2006. Despite the increase in the grant-in-aid, the capacity increase is not that alluring. At the same time, in the States like Assam, Chattisgarh and even Orissa, the number of cold storages has come down. That clearly

demonstrates that the scheme that is before this country today is not helping in increasing the storage capacity and in increasing the cold storages.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister what more steps the Government is thinking to take to have better cold storages because the technology has changed and that is the main reason. I would like to know whether our Government is considering to take up that issue.

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: This figure is of the Tenth Five Year Plan. What we have proposed in the Eleventh Five Year Plan is yet to come into action. So I hope that this new scheme will help these areas where the private investment is not coming. That is why we have enhanced the grant from 25 per cent to 50 per cent and the quantum of the money from Rs. 75 lakh to Rs. 10 crore. So, it will give a lot of boost. We will hope that it will cover those areas which are not covered earlier.

[Translation]

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries is a very important Ministry from various points of view. In the absence of pressing facilities, every year fruits and vegetables worth more than Rs. 50,000 crore get rotten. This issue relates to cold storage. This time in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, there was such a bumper crop of Potatoes that the existing cold storage facilities have fallen short over there and due to which potatoes are being sold at Rs. 1.50-2 per kg. However, in your reply you have stated that the budget allocation for the construction of cold storages has Rs. 15.65 crore, 13.21 crore and 14.80 crore respectively for the years 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08, which is not sufficient. I do not know what is the reason for it, but, I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether he will make efforts to increase the budget allocations by raising this issue forcefully with the Planning Commission, as it is associated with the destiny of this country. How many cold storages can be constructed with this meager amount? And, secondly
...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: No, no Second Supplementary.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the 'B' part of my question is that you give 25 percent concession to those farmers who construct their cold storage. I would like to know from the Government

whether they will make efforts to provide more concession or subsidy i.e. 50 per cent as incentives to these farmers?

(English)

MR. SPEAKER: Everybody wants subsidy. The private sector is making a lot of money.

(Translation)

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a fact that the existing capacity of our cold storages is 2.16 lakh MT and we are making efforts to increase it upto 6 lakh MT in the 11th Five Year Plan. From this very point of view I have said that we will do it in the 11th Five year plan. I respect the sentiments of the hon'ble Member because he has been guiding our Ministry in this matter. That is why we are going to increase it upto 50 per cent, but, at the same time, the states should also take initiatives in all these things by framing some policies for friendly investment so that the people could get attracted to make investment in the remote villages, whereas it is not doing so. Even then, our effort is that the benefit of our endeavour could reach them in the 11th Five-Year-Plan.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Secondly, I would like to say that our Ministry has in fact, been a non-entity so far. In the beginning, we had allocation of only Rs. 650 crore, but in 11th Five Year Plan, we have increased it upto Rs. 4-4.25 thousand crore. I hope that we will, be able to fulfill the expectations of the people which they have from the food processing industries.

(English)

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Sujan Chakraborty. Please put a very pointed question.

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY: I will put a very pointed question.

I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for the initiative he is taking for the last few years. But, in spite of that, our wastage in the agricultural food items is more than Rs. 50,000 crore annually while the infrastructural expenditure and the expenditure incurred on establishing cold chains for the last three successive years have been Rs. 15.65 crore, Rs. 13.21 crore and Rs. 14.80 crore respectively which is much less. Additionally, newer technologies have come in the mean time like gamma irradiation, the controlled atmosphere, cold storage, etc. These, in addition to preservation, are

adding value to the product. What is his plan in extending the expenditure on infrastructure items like cold chains? A part of that, obviously, is the newer R&D initiatives which are being taken up. How is the hon. Minister going to integrate those things in the whole process?

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Through cold chains, irradiation centres, the mega food parks, strategic distribution centres linked with retail outlets, providing infrastructure at the farm gate, grading and sorting, the shelf life should be preserved and wastage should be reduced. These are all integrated infrastructure programmes in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. We have given focus to them. As you know, we have gone for the integrated food law so that the quality and standard is maintained. For R&D also, we are providing up to 50 per cent, even to the private partner who comes forward for economic assistance. It is just to give boost to that.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, I am accusing the UPA Government because the Government is neglecting the food processing industry.

MR. SPEAKER: Is that part of your question? You are allotted 20 seconds. 10 second have elapsed.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: No, Sir. All right, I take only twenty second.

According to the studies done by the Ministry, wastage of agricultural food items is to the extent of Rs.58,000 crore annually. What is the amount that you are spending on infrastructure? It is only Rs. 15 crore. Now, the farmer is not happy and even the consumer is not happy.

MR. SPEAKER: Put your question.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Why are you not spending much more money? Infrastructure facilities must be provided from the farmer's gate to the consumer. You have to spend Rs. 2000 crore and then only you can reduce the prices. Presently, the prices of vegetables and food prices have gone up from 50 per cent to 100 per cent.

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry. I will not allow this. Some discipline has to be maintained.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: To meet all these things, to make the farmers and the consumers happy, the Ministry should evolve a new policy. We have adopted the old, long procedures.... (*Interruptions*) Nobody will respond to this Ministry's request.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is disallowed.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I am disallowing this. Some discipline has to be maintained.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Government reduce the long procedure for sanction of this cold storage? Now, my second question is....

MR. SPEAKER: No. No second one. I will not allow this, Mr. Yerrannaidu. You are misusing the opportunity. Now, Mr. Minister, please answer the first part of the question and forget the preface.

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: I must say that for the first time, in the National Common Minimum Programme, the food processing sector is being included by the UPA Government.

MR. SPEAKER: Send him a copy of that. Probably, he has not got it.

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: All right, Sir. So far as the long process is concerned, my Ministry has decentralized everything. If an entrepreneur is applying to a bank for a loan, he is also getting a subsidy from there. He does not have to come to me. This is being implemented from the 1st April. So, we are having a very fast track clearance system and the role of the Ministry is being made almost zero.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Q. 371—Shri Ravi Prakash Verma – Not present.

Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul.

It is dangerous! Too many supplementaries will be there!

New Scheme for Development of Airports

+
*371. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is mandatory for a developer of an airport to use a fixed percentage of the revenue coming from the non-aeronautical projects, especially from the real estate developments, to cross subsidise airport functions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether all airport projects allow developers to use 10-15% of the allocated land for building malls, hotels complexes and other related facilities;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Union Government has finalized the new scheme of development for airport project; and

(f) if so, the details in this regard?

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

Statement

(a) and (b) Guidelines for aeronautical tariff fixation will be prepared by the proposed Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA).

(c) and (d) Land use at airport owned by Airports Authority of India (AAI) is governed by the provisions of AAI Act, 1994 and local laws whereas that at other airports is governed as per the local laws.

(e) and (f) A consolidated & updated policy on Greenfield Airports is under consideration of the Government.

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Part (c) of the Question says whether all airport projects allow developers to use 10 to 15 per cent of the allocated land for building malls, hotels, complexes and other related facilities. There is no specific answer in the reply. I would like to know, first of all, if there is any provision of commercial utilization of 10 to 15 per cent of the land.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: There is no blanket authority for anybody to build on Airports Authority land, especially in the case of private developers. In case of Delhi, we have allowed only 5 per cent development. In the case of Mumbai, it is 10 per cent because the land area is much less in Mumbai as compared to Delhi. Also, it is not that any kind of commercial activity is allowed. It is clearly defined in the Airports Authority of India Act as to what types of activities are allowed for commercial development. About hotels, I say, of course, they relate to passenger convenience and passenger related activities. Broadly, any activity which is confined to passenger related activity is permitted as commercial development, but it is not 10 to 15 per cent. It is

10 per cent specifically in the case of Mumbai and 5 per cent specifically in the case of Delhi. That is the current position. All other airports which are with the Airports Authority of India are free to develop. This commercial development, they have been doing from time to time, on their land, which is again related to passenger activities.

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL: Whatever is the percentage, good revenue will be collected by this. So, will it be diverted to the passengers by way of subsidies?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Actually, the objective behind allowing this is that these projects are very large capital expenditure projects and since there is no element of subsidy from the Government, there is no contribution of the Government in terms of capital expenditure; of course, we have an equity share to the extent of 26 per cent in Mumbai and Delhi. In case of Hyderabad and Bengaluru, the Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka respectively hold 13 per cent and we hold 13 per cent. But the real estate activity as such related to passenger related activity is basically to fund the capital expenditure of these projects.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: As the hon. Minister has replied in (e) and (f), the consolidated and updated policy of green field airports is under the consideration of the Government. I think this is an important policy which is pending with the Government for the last so many months and years. I want to know from the hon. Minister, through you, by what time this policy is going to be finalized?

MR. SPEAKER: That is a very pointed question.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, it is not pending as long as the hon. Member thinks it is, certainly not. In fact, it is this Government which has initiated this New Greenfield Policy.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: It was done four years ago.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: No, I am sorry; it is not four years ago. We are not even four years old.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: It is more than three-and-a-half years ago.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: All right. Nonetheless, we are actively pursuing it. It has to go through a lot of consultation process. It is not restricted just to the

Ministry of Civil Aviation. We have to consult the Defence Ministry, Home Ministry, Finance Ministry, and Planning Commission and, of course, finally we have to get the approval of the Union Cabinet. I am sure it will certainly be out before the time we all go to elections.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe on this you will get support from everywhere. It seems everybody wants new airports.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I understand that the Government has finalized the Greenfield Airport Policy and the Minister has mentioned that in his answer also. Some works are going on in Trivandrum Airport now causing so much inconvenience to passengers. What will be the result when this Greenfield Policy is implemented and how will it cover the development of Trivandrum Airport?

MR. SPEAKER: Trivandrum Airport is not a Greenfield Airport.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, Trivandrum Airport is an existing airport and its development is taking place now. He was kind enough to be present when we did the foundation stone laying ceremony also and he passes through that airport almost virtually every week. This morning also he was telling me that he was happy with his direct flight.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: The airport is very old.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: That is like you!

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: It is very risky to travel from that airport. The aircraft are very old.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, Varkalaji was telling me to remove all the old aircraft. Sometimes 'old is gold' like in his case.

MR. SPEAKER: No, no, I take exception. You cannot call him 'old'.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: But I also called him 'gold' Sir. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Till now it has performed well in Mumbai.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Airport Authority has ample land in Mumbai and slums have cropped up on a large area there. Praful Patel ji tried to hold meeting there a number of times. There are around 67 thousand slum dwellers and the Airport Authority has ample land over there as well. So, my suggesting is that. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You please do not give suggestions, ask question.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this issue pertains to the land of Airport. There is land areas in and around the Airport. So, the Airport is earning a lot of money and the revenue is also being earned by way of privatization. So, there is a need to chalk out a scheme for development of slum areas. My demand is that the said land should be reclaimed for Mumbai Airport. Thus, the Airport will get land and slum dwellers will also be benefited by way of this scheme. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This is a suggestion for action.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is an issue pertaining to land.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is a suggestion for action.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, since this is an issue of slum development, I can assure the hon. Member that it is being done purely under the overall policy framework of the Maharashtra Government in respect of slum rehabilitation as per the SRA Act. There is a nodal agency of the Maharashtra Government which is monitoring the entire project and each and every slum dweller will be given alternative housing as per the policy of the Maharashtra Government. Then only they will be moved out from that site.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government's policy is under formulation for Greenfield and private airports. In view of the difficulties being faced by passengers in Bangalore and Hyderabad Airports, the

Karnataka High Court had given a judgement yesterday recommending reopening of the discussion with the private party so as to come to certain conclusions. The Government is saying that they cannot reopen the discussion. But in the context of the judgement of the Karnataka High Court, I would like to know whether the Government will reopen the discussion keeping in mind the passenger amenities and other things.

MR. SPEAKER: Courts are concerned with the running of airports also.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, yesterday evening only the court has delivered the judgement. In the fitness of things, I would not be able to comment about any judgement of the High Court without having read it and understood what the implications are.

MR. SPEAKER: This is subject to appeal also.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: So, I do not wish to make any categorical statement on the floor of the House.

[Translation]

Crude Oil Imports

*372. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the value and quantum of crude oil imported by the public sector oil refining companies and by the private sector oil refining companies separately in each of the last three years; and

(b) the steps taken to reduce the quantum of import and to increase refinery margins?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The quantum and value of crude oil imported by Public Sector Oil Refining Companies and Private Oil Refining Companies during last three years are given below:

Year	Imports by PSUs		Private Companies	
	Qty. (MMT)	Value Rs. crore	Qty. (MMT)	Value Rs. crore
2005-06	69.0	123530	30.4	48172
2006-07	77.5	157689	34.0	61340
2007-08 (Apr.'07-Feb.'08)	76.4	170824	34.6	72382

MMT: Million Metric Tonnes

(b) Various measures are being taken to reduce quantum of import of crude oil, which are as follows:

- (i) Carving out more and more areas for exploration for offer under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).
- (ii) Quicker development of discovered oil and gas reserves for enabling early commencement of production.
- (iii) Use of stimulation techniques for increasing production from existing fields.
- (iv) Application of Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) techniques for increasing recovery factor from existing fields.
- (v) Arresting decline of production from ageing fields.
- (vi) Acquisition of exploration averages and oil producing properties overseas to bring in Equity Oil.
- (vii) Substitution of oil in the transport sector through use of alternative fuels such as Bio-diesel, Ethanol-blended petrol, etc.
- (viii) Evolving suitable production technology for extraction of gas from gas hydrates under National Gas Hydrates Programmes (NGHP).

To increase the refinery margins various steps are being taken by Oil Marketing Companies, which are as under:

- Reducing in the transportation cost of crude oil.
- Widening the basket of crude oil for procurement, by tapping different oil-producing countries.
- Increasing the ratio of heavy grade/high sulphur crude in the Indian basket of crude oil.
- periodic technical audit for control of chemicals and catalysts consumption.
- Thrust on energy conservation by adopting energy efficiency strategies and reduction in energy losses of the Refineries.
- Adherence to Preventive and Predictive Maintenance Schedules in the Refineries to achieve the optimum operating costs.
- Rationalising the manpower planning in the refineries through re-deployment.

SHRI THARCHAND GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through may question I sought information on two points from the hon'ble Minister. The first is regarding the measures to bring down the import of crude oil as there has been a continuous increase in the import of crude oil. The second is regarding the measures taken to cut down the cost of refineries as the cost of extraction and refinement of crude oil is getting costlier. The hon'ble Minister has suggested some measures. I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister straightway as to what action plans have been prepared to find an alternative to the crude oil, to ease the availability of crude oil. The hon'ble Minister has given some information in this regard e.g. bio-diesel, ethanol blended petrol etc. I would like to ask you as to what type of action plan has been formulated and the time by which it is likely to be implemented.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the information of the hon'ble Member, I would like to submit that ethanol blended petrol is already in use and its use will be further enhanced from next year. Presently, 5 per cent ethanol is blended in petrol and used as fuel. Efforts are being made to blend upto 10 per cent ethanol in petrol which is in use.

Sir, as far as the bio-diesel is concerned, I would like to tell the hon'ble Member that we are also contemplating to use bio-diesel. However, it is very difficult to get bio-diesel. He has referred to Jatropha plant in connection with production of Bio-diesel. In this context, I would like to say that Jatropha plants are cultivated on waste land and this work is related to agriculture department. A Jatropha plant produces 500 grams of seeds in a period of three years and nearly 2.5 to 3 kg. seeds after 10 years. This plant continues to produce seeds upto a period of 40 years. However, Jatropha plants are not found in abundance. Efforts are being made to increase its production. For this purpose, centers have also been set up. However, nothing has been achieved in this regard so far. Efforts are also being made regarding the suggestions given by the hon'ble Member and we are progressing in this direction.

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the exploration of crude oil has been carried out and crude oil reserves have been found at many places in the country. Crude oil reserves have been found in Jaisalmer and Jodhpur region along Pakistan border, Jammu and Kashmir region and also at several places in North-Eastern States. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister about the places which have been identified as having oil reserves by the Government during the last three years, and action plan prepared for the extraction of oil and I would also like to know whether approval has been accorded in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: No. It is not the part of your question.

[English]

If you are ready to answer, then it is all right. Otherwise, send him written information.

[Translation]

SHRI THAWARCHAND GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a mention in the reply about identification of the areas. He has seen it.

MR. SPEAKER: All right.

[English]

You are a very responsible Member.

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Sir, it is not directly related to this question. I will give him whatever information I have in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a good question.

[English]

But it does not relate to this question.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister has informed that crude oil amounting to Rs. 1,70,824 crore has been imported from April, 2007 till February 2008. Just now the hon'ble Minister has said about the Jatropha plant. Through you, I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to why the farmers are not encouraged to cultivate Jatropha plant as it will generate employment leading to decrease in import of crude oil and increase in production of the same in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: The State Government also have to do something in this regard.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to bring it to the notice of the hon'ble Member that it is the job of the agriculture department.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the country will get petroleum.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL: Mr. Speaker, sir, it is the responsibility of the agriculture department to promote the cultivation of Jatropha.

Supply of Underweight Gas Cylinders

*373. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received complaints regarding supply of underweight gas cylinders by LPG distributors to the consumers;

(b) if so, the State-wise details thereof during the last three years;

(c) whether the licenses of LPG distributors have been cancelled on the basis of these complaints;

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

Statement

The possibility of diversion of subsidized domestic LPG cylinders by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to the wide gap between the retail price of LPG for domestic use and the market price for commercial LPG.

Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that based on the established complaints of supply of underweight cylinders/pilfering product by LPG distributors action has been taken in 56 cases during 2005-06, 29 cases during 2006-07 and 55 cases in April, 2007-February, 2008 as per provisions of Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG)/Distributorship Agreements. The State-wise details of complaints received is available with the Directors (Marketing) of OMCs.

OMCs have further reported that they have terminated 38 LPG distributorships during the period April, 2005 to February, 2008. The State-wise details of terminated LPG distributorships is given in the enclosed Annexure.

Whenever OMCs receive complaints, these are investigated and if the complaint is established, suitable action is taken against the LPG distributor(s) in accordance with the provisions of the MDG. MDG provides for following action against the distribution:

- Fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 1st offence.
- Fine of Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG diverted at commercial rates for 2nd offence.
- Termination of the distributorship for 3rd offence.

In addition to the action taken by the OMCs, State Governments are empowered under the LPG (Regulation of Supply & Distribution) Order, 2000 promulgated under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to take action against blackmarketing of domestic LPG. Similarly, the Weights and Measure Departments of the States/UTs initiate legal action against those LPG distributors found supplying under-weight LPG cylinders. The State Governments have been alerted from time to time to take steps against the black-marketing of domestic cylinders for unauthorised usage.

Government have issued advertisements cautioning the public that use of domestic LPG for non-domestic purposes is illegal, dangerous and against national interest. Through these advertisements, cooperation of the general public is also sought to report any irregularity/malpractice to the OMCs.

The officials of OMCs carry out checks at distributors' godowns, delivery points, as well as en-route to ensure that no pilferage takes place. The distributors of OMCs are under strict instructions to check the weight of cylinders at their godowns before delivery, and only cylinders with the specified weight are to be delivered to the customers. The distributors have also been instructed to ensure that the seals are verified & shown to the customers at the time of delivery. In case any under-weight cylinder is received by the customer, such cylinders are replaced free of charge by the OMCs.

Annexure

State-wise details of terminated LPG Distributorships

Name of State	No. of LPG Distributorships Terminated
1	2
Andhra Pradesh	3
Bihar	1
Gujarat	2
Haryana	4
Himachal Pradesh	1
Jharkhand	1

1	2
Karnataka	2
Kerala	1
Madhya Pradesh	1
Maharashtra	5
Punjab	3
Rajasthan	6
Tamil Nadu	3
Uttar Pradesh	5
Total	38

12.00 hrs.

SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are long queues for LPG at various places. However, despite this it is not being made available. There is a shortage of Gas all over the country. Through you, I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to what provisions have been made by the Government to ensure availability of gas in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: You please send reply thereof to him.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

*361. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the allocation for modernisation of railway stations during the Eleventh Five Year Plan;

(b) the steps taken to have world-class railway stations in selected cities in the country; and

(c) the name of the cities where these world-class railway stations are proposed to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Modernization of railway stations is

covered under passenger and other users amenity works for which an outlay of Rs. 3500 crore has been projected during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. No separate outlay is projected for modernization of railway stations.

(b) and (c) 24 stations located in metropolitan cities and important centres have been identified for redevelopment as world-class stations through PPP by leveraging the real-estate potential of the land around and the air space above the stations. These are: Nagpur, Pune, Carnac Bunder (Mumbai), Howrah, Lucknow, Anand Vihar (Delhi), Bijwasan (Delhi), Amritsar, Chandigarh, New Delhi, Varanasi, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Secunderabad, Tirupati, Ahmedabad, Patna, Bhubaneshwar, Mathura, Bangalore, Gaya, Jaipur, Agra and Bhopal (Habibganj).

Action to take up the development of above named stations in staggered phases has been initiated. In the first instance four stations namely; New Delhi, Patna, Mumbai (Carnac Bunder CST) and Secunderabad have been taken up. The Architect and Technical Consultant, Financial Consultant and Legal Adviser have been appointed for New Delhi Station. Pre-qualification of bidders have also been initiated. Architect and Technical Consultant has been appointed for Patna Station. The process for appointment of Architect and Technical Consultant for Mumbai (Carnac Bunder CST) Station and Secunderabad Station has been initiated.

Tax Holiday for Hotels

*363. SHRI SARVEY SATHYANARAYANA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is giving five year income tax holiday to some star hotels as well as convention centres in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the present status of construction of hotels to accommodate the visitors for Commonwealth Games?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. At the request of Ministry of Tourism, the Finance Minister had in the budget 2007-08, announced a Tax Holiday for 5 years under Section 80-ID (1) of the Income Tax Act 1961 for undertakings engaged in the business of building hotels in the two, three and four star

categories constructed and have started or start functioning at any time during the period beginning on the 1st day of April 2007 and ending on the 31st day of March 2010, and for the undertakings engaged in building, owning and operating Convention Centres constructed at any time during the period on the first day of April, 2007 and ending on 31st day of March, 2010. This incentive is available in the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the districts of Faridabad, Gurgaon, Gautam Budh Nagar and Ghaziabad.

The Finance Minister in his Budget speech 2008-09, proposed to grant a five year Tax Holiday for two, three or four star hotels that are established in specified districts which have UNESCO-declared 'World Heritage Sites'. The hotel should be constructed and start functioning during the period April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2013.

(c) The progress of construction of hotels for the Commonwealth Games is monitored regularly in the Task Force meetings of the Ministry of Tourism with the concerned Land Owning Agencies and at other forums.

Complaints regarding Loss of Parcels and Goods

*364. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints that have been lodged to Railways about the lost parcels and goods carried by the goods trains involved in accidents;

(b) the details of the value of parcels and goods lost during the last three years, year-wise and zone-wise; and

(c) the details of the final disposal of such complaints?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) to (c) In the case of accidents, claims/complaints are filed for the compensation for the loss of parcels and goods carried by goods trains involved in accidents. The statement indicating number of such claims, their value and final disposal is enclosed.

Statement

Claims/complaints regarding loss of parcels and goods involved in goods train accidents

Railway	Year	No of Claims/ Complaints	Value/claim of loss (in Rs.)	Disposal	
				Amount paid (in Rs.)	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6
Central	2005-06	24	47,66,554		Repudiated as time-barred.
	2006-07	1	51,537		Closed for want of documents.
	2007-08	2	3,23,617	63,847	One case closed for want of documents from the party
	Total	27	51,41,708	63,847	
Eastern	2005-06	nil	nil		
	2006-07	3	1,98,000		Under process
	2007-08	nil	nil		
	Total	3	1,98,000		
East Central	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			

1	2	3	4	5	6
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			
East Coast	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			
Northern	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	2	20,36,936		Pending for want of documents from the party
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	2	20,36,936		
North Central	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			
North Eastern	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	7	12,94,815	3,61,539	2 claims paid; rest
		2	nil	(3,28,840+32699)	5 are pending
		1	17,63,558		Goods delivered to party.
					No claim due.
					Under process
	2007-08	nil	nil		
	Total	10	30,58,373	3,61,539	
North East Frontier	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			
North Western	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			

1	2	3	4	5	6
Southern	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	1	20,78,676	11,26,007	
		1	12,57,500		Pending for want of documents from the party
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	2	33,36,176	11,26,007	
South Central	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			
South Eastern	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			
South East Central	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			
South Western	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	1	36,05,077	23,06,437	
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	1	36,05,077	23,06,437	
Western	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	1	26,63,776		Settlement at final stage
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	1	26,63,776		
West Central	2005-06	nil			
	2006-07	nil			
	2007-08	nil			
	Total	nil			
Grand total		46	2,00,40,046	38,57,830	

Incidents of Theft at Metro Airports

*366. SHR RANEN BARMAN:
SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of incidents of theft registered at the airports in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai during the last one year;

(b) the total value of losses to the passengers due to the theft;

(c) whether inquiries have been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to stop the incidents of theft at the airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Airport-wise details of number of theft cases registered and consequential loss suffered by passengers during the last one year are as under:-

Delhi—79 cases, Rs. 57.80 lakhs

Mumbai—37 cases, Rs. 481.25 lakhs

Kolkata—4 cases, Rs. 0.47 lakhs

Chennai—18 cases, Rs. 8.48 lakhs

(c) and (d) Investigation has been undertaken in all the cases. In some cases charge-sheets have been filed whereas in the remaining cases the investigation is still in progress.

(e) To curb incidents of theft at the airports all loaders are frisked thoroughly before and after the loading. Vigilance has been enhanced. Loading/unloading of checked-in baggage is done under the supervision of security. Automated In-line Baggage X-ray Screening System is being installed at major airports. Close Circuit TVs (CCTVs) are being extensively used at airports. In house vigilance teams have been positioned by the airlines at major airports. In addition, the scheduled domestic airlines have issued advisories to the

passengers not to carry jewellery or cash in their checked-in-baggage.

[Translation]

Farmers to Folks Programme

*369. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has launched a public awareness programme named 'Farmers to Folks' to publicize importance of food processing industries at a large scale;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof alongwith the present status of the industry; and

(c) the details of the proposed programmes and schemes for making the food processing industries more effective and employment oriented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) and (b) With a view to create awareness among the general public about the various aspects of processed foods, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, under its Plan Scheme of Promotional Activities regularly carries out various public awareness activities. These are done in the form of media advertisements about the various Plan schemes and programmes implemented by the Ministry, consumer awareness of the advantages and conveniences of processed food and also various safety regulations governing food products. The Ministry also organizes/ participates in Workshops, Seminars, Exhibitions/Fairs and provides financial support to eligible organizations to organize such events which are a very useful platform to spread awareness, exchange and share new ideas and new developments in the food processing sector as well as attract Domestic & Foreign Direct investments. These events also serve as an important source of information for prospective entrepreneurs.

The Ministry has spent Rs. 7.50 crores in 2006-07 & Rs. 6.92 crores in 2007-08 on the Scheme of Promotional Activities. The Parliamentary Standing Committee for Demand for Grant has strongly recommended enhancing the budget allocation for this Scheme.

With increasing awareness, food processing sector has shown significant growth during the recent past. The processing sector has grown @13.14% in 2006-07 against @7% in 2002-03. Micro, Small and Medium (MSME) Food Processing Units have gone up from 16.5 lakhs by end of 11th five Year Plan. Large and Medium scale food processing units approved for setting up were 241 in 2003-04. This number has grown upto 270 units in 2005-06 (growth of 9.31%). Vision document prepared by the Ministry envisages to increase the level of processing of perishable food from 6% to 20%, value addition from 20% to 35% and share in global food trade from 1.5% to 3% by 2015. Foreign Direct Investment in FPI sector also increased from Rs. 177 crores in 2002-03 to Rs. 441 crores in 2006-07. FPI sector provides employment to 13 million people directly and 35 million indirectly. Large and medium scale employment in FPI is growing at 25% per annum. The Budgetary allocation of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries has been increased from Rs. 650 crores during the 10th Plan to Rs. 4031 crores for the 11th Plan.

(c) The Ministry under its Plan Scheme for Technology Upgradation/Modernization/Establishment of Food Processing Industries extends financial assistance in the form of grant in aid for setting up/modernization/upgradation of food processing industries. The Ministry also extends financial assistance for setting up Food Testing Labs, implementation of quality systems such as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), ISO 9000, Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), promotion of Research and Development, Capacity building for Human Resource Development.

The Ministry also proposes to implement a revamped scheme in the 11th Plan for Infrastructure Development under which, it envisages giving enhanced financial assistance for setting up Mega Food Parks upto Rs. 50 crores, cold chain infrastructure, value added centres, packaging centres upto Rs. 10 crores & modernization of abattoirs upto Rs. 15 crores. The scheme will provide backward and forward linkages as well as a reliable and sustainable supply chain.

The Ministry got the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 enacted in August 2006. The Act will enable in removing multiplicity of food laws and regulatory agencies and will provide single window to food processing sector.

All these initiatives are expected to further boost the growth of food processing industries, which is one of the highest labour intensive industries of our economy.

[English]

Functioning of BRPSE and BIFR

*374. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:
SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

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

(a) the functions of the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) and the difference between BRPSE and Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR);

(b) the manner in which BRPSE and BIFR take decision for revival or disposal of any units;

(c) the details of the cases referred to BRPSE so far during the last five years; and

(d) the action taken by BRPSE on these cases?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) was constituted by Central Government in December 2004 as a part-time advisory body to advise inter alia on the revival and restructuring of sick Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) was set up as a statutory body by the Central Government in 1987 under section 4 of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act to look into the cases of sick industrial companies with a view to either sanction rehabilitation schemes for them or recommend winding up where their revival is not feasible. While the jurisdiction of BIFR extends to public and private sector sick industrial companies, BRPSE deals with industrial as well as other Central Public Sector Enterprises.

(b) The concerned administrative ministries/departments, after due consultations with all the stake holders, prepare and submit BRPSE a comprehensive proposal duly appraised/vetted by independent consultants/operating agencies in the format prescribed by BRPSE. The proposals are discussed in the meeting of the Board wherein the representatives of the

concerned administrative ministry, the Chief Executive of the concerned CPSE and the representative of the consultants/operating agencies also attend and explain all aspects of the proposal including justifications for the concessions sought from Government and sustainability of the revival of the CPSE. The Board discusses the proposals in detail in the meeting and thereafter makes its recommendations to the Government either for revival or for closure of the concerned CPSE.

BIFR after registering the admissible references received from sick industrial companies allocates to different Benches which initiate the process of inquiry. During the process of inquiry, series of hearings are held to decide on (a) maintainability of the reference, and (b) to explore the possibilities of revival/rehabilitation. Operating Agencies are also appointed to prepare a Draft Rehabilitation Scheme (DRS) in consultation with concerned parties for the revival of the company. Based on the consent of all concerned, a Rehabilitation Scheme for revival of the company is sanctioned by BIFR. If BIFR is of the opinion that the sick industrial company is not likely to make its net worth positive within a reasonable time while meeting all its financial obligations and not likely to become viable in future, it may recommend to the concerned High Court for its winding up.

(c) and (d) 61 proposals of CPSEs have so far been referred to BRPSE for its consideration. The Board has given its final recommendations in respect of 51 cases of CPSEs (revival of 49 CPSEs and closure of 2 CPSEs). In addition, BRPSE has also recommended to the Government to accord 'in principle' approval for reversal of its earlier decision to close the units of Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. and Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. so as to explore various options for their revival.

Charging of users Development Fee from Outbound Passengers

*375. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to charge user development fee from the passengers using new airports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for charging user development fee when the Government has been already charging airport tax from the passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) An airport operator is entitled to collect User Development Fee (UDF) at such rate as the Central Government may specify. This has been mandated in the Aircraft Rules, 1937.

(c) Passenger Service Fee (PSF) @ 200/- per passenger is being charged at all the airports. PSF is towards provision of security and passenger facilitation whereas UDF is a fee leviable to meet cost and recovery gaps, if any.

Introduction of New Superfast Trains

*376. SHRI G. M. SIDDESWARA:
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new trains including superfast trains announced in the Railway Budget during the last three years;

(b) whether the Railways have introduced all such trains that have been announced in the Budgets;

(c) if so, the details thereof, year-wise;

(d) if not, the reasons for not fulfilling the Budget announcements; and

(e) the steps being taken/programme prepared to introduce the remaining trains?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) to (c) Out of a total of 154 pairs of new trains had been announced in the last three year Railway Budget Speeches, 147 pairs have been introduced. The year-wise position is as under:-

(Trains in pairs)

Year	Announced in Budget	Implemented	Remaining
2005-06	54	51	3
2006-07	55	53	2
2007-08	45	43	2
Total	154	147	7

(d) The details of the trains not introduced so far are as under:-

Sl.No.	From	To	Nature	Reasons for non-Introduction
Year 2005-06				
1.	Rupsa	Bangri Posi	Diesel Multiple Units	Introduced between Rupsa and Baripada. Gauge Conversion work between Baripada-Bangriposi is under progress.
2.	Mangalore	Shravan Belgola	Passenger	Introduced between Mangalore & Hassan. Commissioner of Railway's Safety sanction for Hassan-Shravanbelagola is under process as land slips in cuttings are being attended to.
3.	Yesvantpur	Mangalore	Express (via Arsikere)	The introduction is getting delayed primarily to observe the behaviour of ghat section during the coming monsoon and for completion of capacity enhancement works including strengthening of land slip prone areas and boulder fall areas.
Year 2006-07				
4.	Kumarghat	Agratala	Express	Due to non-completion of construction work of new line between Ambasa and Agratala.
5.	Jogbani	Kolkata	Express	Sanction of Commissioner of Railway Safety is to be obtained for Jogbani-Katihar converted line.
Year 2007-08				
6.	Chennai Egmore	Nagore	Express	Due to non-completion of Gauge Conversion works between Villupuram and Mayiladuthurai.
7.	Bhubaneswar	Rameshwaram	Express	Due to non-completion of Gauge Conversion works between Villupuram and Mayiladuthurai.

(e) Works are being expedited for Gauge conversion of the above mentioned sections to introduce the train services.

Setting up of Regulatory Authority for Steel

*377. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up a regulatory authority to contain steel prices in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the outcome of the consultations made in this regard;

(c) whether the Indian steel alliance have objected to the said move of the Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the likely impact of setting up of the regulatory mechanism on the investment proposals which are in the pipeline and on the rising prices of steel?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS

PASWAN): (a) At present, Government has no formal proposal for setting up of a regulatory authority to contain the steel prices in the country.

(b) Does not arise in view (a) above.

(c) and (d) Based on media reports about a proposal to set up an independent regulator to monitor and regulate steel prices, the Indian Steel Alliance (ISA) has written to the Government that it is perturbed by such reports and any such attempt would be retrograde and will adversely impact on the growth and development of steel industry in India.

(e) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Global Conference on 'Responsible Tourism'

*378. SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether India hosted a Global Conference on 'Responsible Tourism' alongwith Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala in Kochi recently;

(b) if so, the main theme of the conference and the decision arrived at in promoting sustainable tourism;

(c) whether the Government has taken any steps to implement the 'Cape Town Declaration' of 2002 for adopting good practices in the tourism industry; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The main theme of the conference was responsible

tourism which focusses on sustainable local, social and economic development and environmental sustainability. The conference came up with recommendations and action plans for ensuring the same.

Through the National Tourism Policy, 2002, the Ministry of Tourism has adopted good practices for ensuring responsible and sustainable tourism, such as development of a community oriented approach, community involvement, sustainable use of resources etc., which are also the guiding principles of the Cape Town Declaration 2002.

Rail Projects to connect Ports to Hinterlands

*379. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the progress so far made on the port/hinterland rail connectivity projects in various parts of the country, particularly in Haridaspur-Paradeep, Daitari-Banspani sections of Orissa;

(b) the details of funds allocated for each of such projects during 2006-07 and 2007-08;

(c) the details of the expenditure incurred and the progress made in the projects till date; and

(d) the time by which these projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) to (d) Under National Rail Vikas Yojna (NRVY), Railways have taken up projects of New Line, Gauge Conversion and Doubling for strengthening connectivity to various ports/hinterland in the country. The details of these projects are given as under:

Port Connectivity Works (Sanctioned)

(Rs. in crore)

S.No.	Project	Plan head	Length (in Kms)	Cost	Outlay 06-07	Outlay 07-08	Ant. Exp. as on 31.03.08	Status and Targets wherever fixed
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Obulavaripalle-Krishnapatnam	New Line	113	697.52	10	10	70	Work in progress. 23 km to be commissioned in 2008-09. Balance 90 km to be commissioned in 2010-11.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2.	Panvel-Karjat	New Line	28	137.44	1	0.01	136.62	Completed.
3.	Daitari-Banspani	New Line	155	850.69	155.85	15	761.45	Completed.
4.	Haridaspur-Paradeep	New Line	82	594.34	44	20	113.50	Land acquisition, earthwork and construction of bridges in progress. Target 2009-10
5.	Angul-Sukinda	New Line	98	344	20	12	32.87	Final Location Survey in progress. Plans and estimates have been taken up. Target 2009-10
6.	Bharuch-Samni-Dahej	Gauge Conversion	62.36	156.66	10	2.6	0.97	Final Location Survey completed. The project is to be implemented through a Special Purpose Vehicle. Target 2009-10.
7.	Delhi-Rewari 2nd line	Gauge Conversion	83	143.88	40	10	134	Completed.
8.	Mansi-Saharsa and Saharsa-Dauram Madhepur-Purnia	Gauge Conversion	142	330.51	20	40.15	151	Mansi-Saharsa completed. Balance targeted for 2008-09.
9.	Gonda-Gorakhpur loop with Anandnagar-Nautanwa	Gauge Conversion	260	381.17	5	25	151	Earthwork, bridgeworks, ballasting, are in progress.
10.	Rangia-Murkongselek alongwith linked fingers	Gauge Conversion	510.3	915.7	10	22	24	The project has been declared as "National Project". Work has been taken up.
11.	Gandhidham-Palanpur	Gauge Conversion	313	451.52	65	0.40	440	Completed.
12.	Surendranagar-Bhavnagar-Rajula-Mahuwa with the extn. upto Pipavav & Sihor-Palitana	Gauge Conversion	385	463.53	5	30	446.04	Completed.
13.	Arasikere-Hassan-Mangalore	Gauge Conversion	236	347.44	0.01		326	Completed
14.	Bhildi-Samdari	Gauge Conversion	223	337.4	115	110	199.66	Earthwork, bridgeworks, ballasting, track linking are in progress. Target 2008-09.
15.	Ajmer-Phulera-Ringus-Rewari	Gauge Conversion	294.97	716.64	270	125	395.01	Earthwork, Bridgeworks, ballasting, track linking are in progress. Target 2008-09.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16.	Cuddalore-Salem via Vriddhachalam	Gauge Conversion	191	337.17	80	30	311.07	Completed
17.	Thanjavur-Villupuram	Gauge Conversion	192	362.43	100	75	342.62	Earthwork, bridgeworks, ballasting, track linking are in progress. Target 2008-09.
18.	Panvel-Jasai-JNPT	Doubling	28.5	53.25	8	2	88.54	Completed.
19.	Nergundi-Cuttack-Raghunathpur	Doubling	43	180.2	10	2.16	180	Completed.
20.	Rahama-Paradeep	Doubling	23	79.41	5	5.25	77.20	Completed.
21.	Rajatgarh-Nergundi	Doubling	28	84.99	0.2	0.1	83.34	Completed
22.	Panskura-Haldia PH-I	Doubling	14	35.02	0.5		30.42	Completed.
23.	Barauni-Tilrath by-pass	Doubling	14	15.37	2.39	0	12.1	Completed.
24.	Hospet-Guntakal	Doubling	115.4	268.23	60	8	246	Completed.

Port Connectivity Works (Unsanctioned)

1.	Surat-Hazira	New Line	36.36	138.4				Issue of Final Alignment pending with Govt. of Gujarat. The project is to be implemented through a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).
2.	Chattarpur-Gopalpur	New Line	—	50				Planning for the line will depend the port concession to be awarded by Govt. of Orissa.

'means project being done by RVNL.

Infrastructure Facilities for Tourism

*380. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has recently decided in principle that the infrastructure facilities at Tourist Spots need to be upgraded to give a boost to tourism;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reaction of the State Governments thereon;

(c) whether smaller tourist spots have been identified where infrastructure facilities would be provided; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the amount likely to be invested thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) Upgradation of infrastructure facilities at tourist spots is primarily the responsibility of State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. Ministry of Tourism, however, provides financial assistance to States/Union Territories on the basis of project proposals received from them under the scheme of 'Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits' in accordance with scheme guidelines subject to availability of funds and inter-se priority. During the 10th Five Year Plan, 1160 projects for Rs. 2011.67 crore were sanctioned to different States/ Union Territories in the country for development and promotion of tourism. During 2007-08, 277 projects for Rs. 845.13 crore including for projects of infrastructure development of destinations and circuits have been sanctioned.

Seaplane Services for Islands

3552. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is planning to introduce special Seaplane services for Lakshadweep Islands on the line of the Maldives Air Taxi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes same facility for the people of Andaman and Nicobar Islands;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the facility proposed to be introduced among the Islands?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd (PHHL) is examining the option to operate seaplane services in Lakshadweep Islands.

(b) Modalities are being examined in consultation with Lakshadweep Administration. Government has also relaxed the Foreign Direct investment norms recently for Seaplane services to 100% in order to encourage investment in this sector.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Durgapur Steel Project Hospital

3553. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Durgapur Steel Project main hospital has full-fledged Intensive Care Unit, Radiology Unit and NCU Unit;

(b) if so, the reasons for non-availability of machines, equipments and facilities which are necessary for the treatment;

(c) whether there is shortage of doctors and staff in the said hospital;

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

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) DSP Hospital has 130 doctors and more than 600 staff which includes Nursing, Paramedical and other supporting staff. In order to improve the overall services to the patients, human resource requirements are periodically assessed and gaps if any, are met through selective recruitment, redeployment, outsourcing etc. Some of the actions initiated are:

- 18 Doctors have already been recruited in the last financial year.
- Action for recruitment of 28 paramedical staff is in progress.
- The entire housekeeping and cleaning activities of the hospital have been outsourced to M/s. Sulabh International, an organization of international repute.

Concurrently, concerted efforts are being made to induct specialists like cardiologist, urologist and neurologist etc. but the same have not yielded desired results. Further, in such cases where specialist attention is required in these areas, after preliminary investigation, patients are referred to specialty hospitals outside Durgapur also.

[Translation]

Misuse of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act

3554. SHRI RAGHUVVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the local court in Delhi and any other court has warned of strict action against misusing Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any legal provision to prevent the misuse of above said Act; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No such direction has been given by a Court in Delhi.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The objective of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 is to prevent the Commission of offences of atrocities against the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The cases registered under the Act and put to trial in the Courts are subject to judicial process ending in either conviction or acquittal.

[English]

Oil Extraction

3555. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:-

(a) whether there is plenty of oil trapped in shale of coal in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has any plan to extract shale oil from these places; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The question presumably relates to Oil Shale. There is no report of Oil Shale deposit in the state of Karnataka.

(b) and (c) In view of the above, question does not arise.

(d) There are reported occurrences of Oil Shale associated with coal in Assam. No assessment has been made about oil reserves in Shale/Coal. Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) has initiated action to take up studies on resource estimated of Oil Shale deposits and Syncrude potential in north eastern part of India.

[Translation]

Stoppage of Trains

3556. DR. SATYANARAYANA JATIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the action taken on the demand made for providing stoppages of 9303/9304 Ratlam-Bhopal Intercity Express at Khuchard in Ratlam Railway Division stoppage and of 2465/2466 Indore-Ranthumbore Express at Vikramgarh Alot in Kota railway divisions and to extend the 193A/194A Jaipur-Kota-Shamgarh passenger train upto Ratlam; and

(b) the details of the facilities provided at Shamgarh-Ratlam and Ratlam-Ujjain railway sections under the above mentioned railway divisions in Railway Budget for 2008-09 with a view to increase the passenger facilities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Stoppages of 9303/9304 Ratlam-Bhopal Intercity Express at Khachrod & 2465/2466 Indore-Jodhpur Ranthambhore Express at Vikramgarh Alot have been examined but not found commercially justified.

Extension of 193/193A/194 Shamgarh-Kota-Jaipur Express upto Ratlam has not been found operationally feasible at present.

(b) Following train facilities serving Shamgarh-Ratlam and Ratlam-Ujjain sections have been announced in Railway Budget 2008-2009:

New Trains:

1. Surat-Muzaffarpur Express (weekly)
2. Indore-Udaipur Express via Ratlam (Tri-weekly)

Increase in Frequency: 2947/2948 Ahmedabad-Patna Azimabad Express-from weekly to bi-weekly.

All minimum essential amenities have already been provided as per norms at railway stations on Shamgarh-Ratlam section and Ratlam-Ujjain section. Further, augmentation of passenger amenities at railway stations is a continuous process and is undertaken through Annual Works Programme depending upon availability of funds, other relative priorities and increase in passenger traffic. Moreover, following enhancement of passenger amenities is planned:

- (i) Upgradation of all low and medium level platforms at "B" category stations;
- (ii) Upgradation of existing low level platforms to medium level and existing medium level platforms to high level at "D" category stations;
- (iii) Provision of some platform shelter at all "D" category stations;
- (iv) Provision of platform shelter (size 250 sqm to 500 sqm) as per requirement at "B" category stations and
- (v) Provision of foot over bridge at all "B" and "D" category stations having high level platforms.

[English]

Irregularities in Allotment of Petrol Pumps by BPCL

3557. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Petroleum Ministry had conducted a vigilance inquiry in August 2007 about irregularities in allotment of petrol pumps by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) After enquiry, it was established that there is a violation of multiple dealership norms in awarding retail outlets in Ludhiana to M/s. Salasar Power Point and M/s. Balaji Power Point.

(c) The process of issuing show cause notices to the defaulting officers by BPCL is in progress.

[Translation]

Quota in the Government Loans for Minorities

3558. SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken a decision to reserve 15 per cent in all kinds of Government loans and grants for making compulsory allocation for minorities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the provision for the same in the Eleventh five year plan?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c) There is no decision to reserve 15 per cent of all kinds of government loans and grants for the minorities. However, it is proposed to step up priority sector lending to the minorities, by public sector banks, to 15 per cent by 31st March, 2010, under the Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities.

New Rail Line from Harpalpur to Hamirpur

3559. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether representations have been received from the people's representatives to lay down a new rail from Harpalpur railway station to Hamirpur railway station;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Railway thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A request has been received regarding new railway line between Harpalpur station and Hamirpur Road. No survey has been done for Harpalpur-Hamirpur Road. In the past, based on demands, a survey for new line from Hamirpur to Hamirpur Road (6 kms.) was conducted in 2000-01. As per the survey report, cost of construction of new line was assessed as Rs. 15 crore with a negative rate of return. The project could not be taken up due to its unremunerative nature and constraint of resources.

[English]

Increase in the Oil Production by OPEC

3560. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any request has been made by India to OPEC for increasing its oil production so as to contain the price of crude in the international market;

(b) if so, the details thereon;

(c) whether the issue of reducing the price or increasing the production of crude oil has come up in the last OPEC international seminar held in Vienna; and

(d) if so, the response of OPEC in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) No, Sir. However, while addressing the OPEC international Seminar held in September, 2006 at Vienna, Austria, Union Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas had raised the issue of soaring oil prices. He had stated that Oil security is not just oil supply security. Even with the secure oil supply source, a developing country may not be in a position to procure adequate oil unless price is affordable. So the price stability has become an important constituent of oil security. Given the vital role of energy prices in the economic and social well being of the common man, it is imperative to provide oil at affordable prices and this is becoming increasingly difficult given the present oil price scenario.

[Translation]

Facilities for Rail Officers

3561. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the rules and criteria for providing carriage and saloon for officers in Superfast passenger trains;

(b) whether such coaches can be attached in cases of long waiting list;

(c) if so, whether such facilities can be provided to the officers even by causing inconvenience to the passengers; and

(d) the action taken by the Railways in such cases if taken place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Carriages/saloons are attached in trains including superfast trains, except some prohibited trains like Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Janshatabdi etc. subject to operational feasibility, to facilitate inspections by railway officials.

(b) To clear waiting list, priority is given to attach extra coaches taking into account the operational feasibility and stock availability. However, in some cases carriages are also attached at times for inspection purposes which is an essential aspect of railway working.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Prices of Medicines

3562. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has no policy to stop the threat of low prices to Indian active pharmaceutical ingredient manufacturers (API's) in our country and abroad;

(b) if so, whether medicines from China are being offered at Cheap rates in comparison to Indian medicines in focus countries of Africa; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The Government of India has been giving some protection by levying Anti-dumping and other related duties. The Directorate General Anti Dumping under Ministry of Commerce and Industry, initiates proceedings wherever complaints are received by them of such dumping and may levy anti-dumping duties. Besides this, registration for all imports of bulk drugs is compulsory with Drug Controller General (India) under the Foreign Trade Policy.

Phone Battery Charging Facilities

3563. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether mobile phone battery charging facilities are available in the train compartments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Railways have any plan to install plug points for the purpose in the sleeper coaches also, especially in the long running trains;

(d) if so, the details along with the time schedule for complete installation of the facility in all such coaches; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. These are being provided progressively on reserved accommodation coaches. A statement on the approved scale of provision is placed below:

Class	No. of charging points
1st AC	2 points per 4 berth & 1 point in the coupe
2nd AC	1 point in each cubicle (for 6 passengers)
3rd AC	2 points both together inside each cubicle (for 8 passengers)
Executive Chair Car	1 point on either side for each row
AC Chair Car	1 point each on either side of alternate rows.
Sleeper Class	2 points at a common location near toilet area at one end of the coach.

About 5487 coaches have been provided with mobile charging points.

(d) The provision of mobile charging points in coaches is being progressively carried out depending upon availability of funds.

(e) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

CNG Facility for Maharashtra

3564. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the name of the districts of Maharashtra where CNG link and supply facility has been provided;

(b) the details of the places where such facility is available and related industry could be established;

(c) whether the Government of Maharashtra has forwarded the name of any specific industrial area in this regard to the Union Government; 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) Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL), a Joint Venture of GAIL (India) Limited with British Gas, is currently supplying Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) to automobile consumers in Mumbai, Thane and Mira-Bhayandar. MGL is currently operating 128 CNG stations catering to 1,84,684 vehicles.

Further, Maharashtra Natural Gas Limited (MNGL), a JV of GAIL with BPCL, is implementing the City Gas Distribution project for supply of PNG to domestic, commercial, industrial sectors and CNG to automobile consumers in Pune.

(c) and (d) No such proposal has been received from the Government of Maharashtra.

Hostels for Students of Backward Classes

3565. SHRI RAKESH SINGH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has provided its share of amount to States for construction of hostel having 100 seats for students of backward classes;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government is considering to release its share soon keeping in view the increase in the cost and its impact on the construction; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (e) Under the scheme of hostels for OBC boys and girls, 50% central assistance is provided to the States and 100% to the

UTs & Central Govt. Institutions for construction of a maximum 100 stated hostels. The details of funds provided to the States for construction of hostels having 100 seats for OBC students during last 3 years are given in the Statement enclosed.

Statement

Hostels for Students of Backward Classes

State-wise Hostels sanctioned during the last 3 years having 100 seats for OBC students

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl.No.	State/UTs	Hostels for OBC Boys and Girls					
		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
		Amount released	No. of Hostel	Amount released	No. of Hostel	Amount released	No. of Hostel
1.	Andhra Pradesh	440.00	40	—	—	275.00	22
2.	Bihar	—	—	207.79	4	—	—
3.	Gujarat	—	—	—	—	107.50	3
4.	Kerala	48.50	1	—	—	—	—
5.	Orissa	—	—	37.52	1	—	—
6.	Tripura	38.84	1	—	—	—	—
Total		527.34	42	245.31	5	382.50	25

LPG Connections in Punjab and Gujarat

3566. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA:
SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:
SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:

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

(a) the district-wise number of gas connections provided in Gujarat and Punjab at present;

(b) the district-wise number of applications in the waiting list for gas connections; and

(c) the number of gas connections allotted in Punjab and Gujarat, year-wise, company-wise, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that as on 1.4.2008, they were serving 5344103 and 7412515 domestic LPG customers in the States of Gujarat and Punjab respectively. The district-wise details are available with the Directors (Marketing) of the concerned OMCs.

(b) At present, new LPG connections are available across the counter for genuine domestic customers and there is no waiting list pending with the OMCs for release of new LPG connections in the States of Gujarat and Punjab.

(c) OMCs have reported that they have released 189524, 206458 & 276707 and 171970, 269931 new LPG connections during the years 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 in the States of Gujarat and Punjab respectively. The district-wise details are available with the Directions (Marketing) of the concerned OMCs.

Food Processing Industries In Bihar

3567. SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of food processing industries running in Bihar presently;

(b) the industry-wise, quantum-wise and item-wise export during the last three years and the amount of forex earned; and

(c) the steps taken to enable these industries to face competition in the international market and also to provide financial assistance to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) 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 on food processing units in the country, including that of Bihar, is not centrally maintained. However, since 1999-2000 upto 2007-08, 22 applications claiming grant for Setting Up/Expansion/Modernization of Food Processing Industries in Bihar have been received in the Ministry.

(b) The exports of various processed food items industry/item-wise for the last three years namely 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 is given in the Statement enclosed.

(c) In order to promote exports of processed food items and to assist the industries to face competition in the international market, the Government has been providing support to exporters through various financial assistance schemes. These include scheme for Infrastructure Development, Scheme for Market Development, Scheme for Quality Development, Scheme for Research and Development and Scheme for Transport Assistance implemented by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). In addition, through Agri Export Zones the Government of India has been promoting qualitative production of processed food items for exports. Government has also been assisting exporters towards participation in important trade fairs abroad, organizing Buyer Seller Meets and publicity.

Statement

Export Performance

(Quantity in MTs, value in crores)

Item	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Processed Fruits & Vegetables						
Dried & Preserved Gevetables	339802.51	817.22	566238.30	1459.17	366319.79	1194.71
Mango Pulp	95857.00	315.72	134613.20	364.24	156835.51	505.83
Pickle & Chutney	71975.51	129.35	135381.85	260.98	145216.00	293.59
Other Processed Fruits & Vegetables	84646.21	289.00	107335.24	370.21	129110.05	508.14
Total for Processed Fruits & Vegetables	592281.23	1551.29	943568.59	2454.60	797481.35	2502.27

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Buffalo Meat	337777.65	1774.52	459937.63	2629.57	494111.48	3211.70
Sheep/Goat Meat	9024.49	81.27	7177.51	80.37	5481.55	63.05
Poultry Products	277744.46	160.79	145889.00	167.58	710880.12	315.90
Dairy Products	42160.06	358.69	59745.73	552.28	37391.11	395.15
Animal Casings	552.73	12.64	1125.82	17.51	435.98	9.51
Processed Meat	1359.70	9.45	256.04	2.43	825.01	6.80
Natural Honey	10523.24	68.27	16769.23	116.22	8135.60	60.92
Total for Animal Products	679142.33	2465.63	690900.96	3565.96	1257260.85	4063.03
Groundnuts	177154.08	547.02	190053.34	513.69	251428.65	798.46
Guargum	131299.98	689.48	186718.40	1049.23	189304.36	1125.79
Jaggery & Confectionery	40561.49	106.23	112644.06	269.97	455935.85	873.46
Cocoa Products	2313.30	27.66	2147.09	21.83	2891.00	35.08
Cereal Preparations	51803.14	292.04	78880.63	393.96	1080062.69	462.71
Alcoholic & Non Alch. Beverages	30748.49	117.74	55532.46	160.48	28778.68	116.61
Miscellaneous Preparations	54397.88	232.15	49606.69	225.77	57696.80	223.65
Total for Other Processed Foods	488278.36	2012.32	673582.67	2634.93	2066098.03	3635.76

Source: Apeda

[English]

Helicopter Service for North-East

3568. SHRI NARAYAN CHANDRA BORKATAKY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to improve the helicopter service for connecting remote regions of North-East States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the plan chalked out by the Government in this regard in the Eleventh Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited (PHHL) has provided helicopters on long term lease to Governments of Meghalaya, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Tripura. Helicopters have also been provided to Ministry of Home Affairs on wet lease basis. The regular services are operated by the respective State Governments as per their requirements and not by PHHL directly. Besides this, PHHL provides suitable helicopters to meet the requirements of States on wet lease basis.

Shortage of Trained Pilots

3569. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of pilots in the country those have so far trained under CAT II/III operations during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government has taken any steps to get trained more pilots to meet the shortfall of trained pilots;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) 1116 Indian Pilots in the country have so far trained under CAT-II/III operations during the last three years.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Airlines Operators are encouraged to train their pilots for operations in low visibility conditions. Flight schedules to/from fog bound airports are approved on the basis of number of pilots trained by the operators for low visibility operations. Only such pilots who are CAT II/III qualified, are approved as Instructor/Examiner so as to ensure that more trained pilots are available for Cat-II/III operations during low visibility conditions.

(d) Does not arise.

Ranchi-Bhubaneswar Garib Rath

3570. SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposed Ranchi-Bhubaneswar Garib Rath has started its journey;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the proposed train would be on the track?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. 2831/2832 Ranchi-Bhubaneswar Garib Rath Express has already been introduced from 08.03.2008.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Development of Tourist Spots in Maharashtra

5371. SHRI TUKARAM GANPATRAO RENGE PATIL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has sent any proposal for development of several tourist places in the State;

(b) if so, the details of the said proposal; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Development and promotion of places of tourist interest is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations themselves. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations including the State of Maharashtra for Product/Infrastructure development of tourist destinations/circuits.

The project proposals which are, complete in all respects, are appraised on the basis of inter-se-priority and funds are released, subject to availability under the respective head.

During the 10th Five Year Plan, the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned projects worth Rs. 8267.75 lakh for development of tourism in the State of Maharashtra.

In 2007-08, the following projects, which were complete as per guidelines, have been sanctioned to the State of Maharashtra:

Sl.No.	Name of the project	Amount (Rs. in lakh)
1.	Development of Art & Craft village at Mumbai	386.62
2.	Destination development of Mandhardev, Tal-wai, District Satara	498.40
3.	Integrated development of Bhandardara Tourist Circuit, Ahmednagar	374.22
4.	Setting up of the Institute of Hotel Management at Solapur	1000.00
5.	Chikhaldhara festival	5.00
6.	Kalidas festival	5.00
7.	Ellora festival	10.00

[English]

Public-Private Partnership in Tourism in North Eastern Region

3572. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Assam and other North Eastern (NE) States, have come up with a proposal for a Public-Private partnership for setting up an international tourist destination in the heart of Bodoland, with a five star hotel-cum-casino in Gangtok and a result-cum-golf course-cum airstrip in Arunachal Pradesh with infrastructure development in the NE;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals and the response of the private sector for such participation; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The development and promotion of tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territories themselves. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance for development of tourism infrastructure on the basis of project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territories under the following schemes:

(i) Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits

(ii) Large Revenue Generating Projects

Proposals which are complete in all respect as per guidelines are processed on inter-se priority basis and funds released subject to availability under the respective head.

No proposal has been submitted by the Government of Assam or other North Eastern (NE) States, for a Public-Private partnership for setting up an international tourist destination in the heart of Bodoland, with a five star hotel-cum-casino in Gangtok. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has forwarded proposals regarding a golf resort and air connectivity. However, these proposals could not be sanctioned as the required documents such as detailed project reports and source of funding by public financial institutions, etc. have not been submitted.

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has sanctioned projects to the tune of Rs. 392,04.64 lakh in the Tenth Plan Rs. 227,44.31 lakh in the year 2007-08 for development and promotion of tourism in the North Eastern Region.

[Translation]

Old Age Homes

3573. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is providing funds to the States to run old age homes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the amount sanctioned by the Union Government for Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh during the last three years to run old age homes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Government does not provide funds directly to the State Governments for running old age homes. However, the financial assistance is provided to the Non-Governmental Organizations for running old age homes under the scheme "Integrated Programme for Older Persons".

(c) The details of the amount sanctioned to the Non-Governmental Organization in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh during the last three years are given below:

Year	Sanctioned amount (Rupees in lakhs)	
	Madhya Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh
2005-06	7.65	74.68
2006-07	2.76	96.41
2007-08	8.02	53.52

Harassment by RPF and GRP

3574. SHRI CHANDRA DEV PRASAD RAJBHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway Police/GRP are harassing the passengers of unreserved compartments in North Eastern Railways and they do not hesitate in killing the person opposing to them; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to check such harassment by Police/GRP?

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

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Financial Benefit to CPSU's Employees

3575. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether some financial benefit has been extended to profit making CPSUs in the country;

(b) if so, the details of CPSUs going to extend this benefit to their employees;

(c) whether the financial benefit is applicable to the Board Level functionaries, executives below the board level and the supervisors only; and

(d) if so, the details alongwith the steps taken/proposed to be taken to extend the same benefit to workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The merger of IDA equal to 50% of the basic pay w.e.f. 01.01.2007 has been allowed to employees of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) following 1997 IDA pattern of pay scales that are not loss making and are in a position to absorb the additional expenditure on account of said merger from their own resources without any budgetary support from the Government and also to employees in the IDA pattern pay scales in the Food Corporation of India. This benefit has also been extended to the employees of CPSEs following CDA pattern of pay scales on the same conditions w.e.f. 1.4.2004.

(c) and (d) This benefit is applicable to all the employees including workmen of the CPSEs.

[Translation]

Inclusion of Sickle Cell Patients in the List of Handicapped Persons

3576. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to include sickle cell patients in the list of Handicapped persons;

(b) whether the State Governments have also sent any proposal to the Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) The definition of disabilities has been given in "the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995", and the National Trust Act, 1999. Both these Acts deal with disabilities and not with disease.

[English]

Helicopter Services at Hyderabad Airport

3577. SHRI G. NIZAMUDDIN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Helicopter Services are going to be made available in Hyderabad to ferry the passengers to the new International Airport from various parts of the Hyderabad city; 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.

Setting up of MRO

3578. SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no unit for maintenance, repair and overhauling (MRO) of aircraft at present in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes for setting up of such a unit in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government has since identified any location for setting up the Unit; and

(e) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facilities for aircraft are presently available in the country.

(b) to (e) Government per se does not have any plans to set up such a unit. However, the National Aviation Company of India Limited (NACIL) has plans for setting up of MRO Joint Ventures with M/s. Boeing (at Nagpur) and Airbus. Besides, M/s. Lufthansa and M/s. Hawker Pacific have also proposed MROs at Hyderabad and Delhi respectively for various types of aircraft.

Export of Drugs and Formulations

3579. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a wide range of drugs and formulations are being exported to various countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the foreign exchange earned therefrom during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Indian drug industry is in a position to meet the entire demand of the drug formulations meant for export;

(d) if so, the details in this regard; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to increase export of Indian drugs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) Exports of large number of Indian

drugs are destined to more than 200 countries around the globe including highly regulated markets of US, Europe, Japan, Germany, Russia, U.K. Canada, China, Brazil, Australia etc. Approximate exports figures of Drugs and Pharmaceuticals for the last three years are as under:-

Value figures in Rs. crores

2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
17857	22216	24942

Indian drug manufacturing companies have developed capacity and capability to cater to most of the Export demand in the last few years. Now, India has the highest number of US FDA approved plants outside USA.

The Government of India has taken a number of measures for export promotion under the Foreign Trade Policy, which, interalia include the following:—

- (1) Assistance to States for developing Export Infrastructure and Allied Activities (ASIDE).
- (2) Market Access Initiative (MAI)
- (3) Market Development Assistance (MDA).
- (4) Meeting Expenses for trade related matters.
- (5) Reorganization of Towns of Export Excellence and assistance to exporters.
- (6) Brand Promotion and Quality.
- (7) Modernization and upgradation of Test Houses.
- (8) Setting up a special Economic Zones in the country (SEZs).
- (9) Formation of Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council (Pharmexcil).

Train from Coimbatore to Kanyakumari

3580. SHRI M. APPADURAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to introduce a night train from Coimbatore to Kanyakumari via Palani, Dindigul, Madurai, Rajapalayam, Tirunelveli which caters the need of thousands of businessmen, pilgrims, officers, tourists etc.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not the timeframe for its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. At present there is no proposal to introduce the Coimbatore-Kanniyakumari train as Podanur-Palani-Dindigul section is Metre Gauge and Dindigul-Kanniyakumari section is Broad Gauge.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Setting up of Mega Chemical Industrial Estate

3581. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has started the process to set up mega chemical industry estates in coastal States with adequate port facilities to turn the country into South Asia's Petrochem-hub;

(b) if so, whether there is a proposal to have a mother complex which would provide proper linkage to other allied units;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) Yes Sir, the Cabinet has recently approved the Policy for setting up of Petroleum, Chemical and Petrochemical Investment Regions (PCPIR). The PCPIR is a specifically delineated investment region having an area of about 250 sq. kms (with at least 40% area earmarked for processing activities). Each PCPIR would have a refinery/petrochemical feedstock company as an anchor tenant. Applications received from interested State Governments for setting up PCPIRs are to be considered in terms of the PCPIR Policy.

(d) Does not arise in view of above.

Dibrugarh Airport

3582. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to land dispute with the Ministry of Defence, the construction of Dibrugarh Airport has been delayed by years;

(b) if so, whether the necessary clearance from the Ministry of Defence has been obtained in this regard;

(c) if so, details thereof and the target set for completion of the project; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) The issue relating to release of about 6 acres of land for extension of the runway has since been sorted out with the Ministry of Defence.

(c) and (d) A new terminal building and a new apron have already been constructed and would become operational by June, 2008. With the release of defence land, the extension of runway from 6000 feet to 7500 feet is expected to be completed by December, 2009.

Widow Complimentary Railway Passes

3583. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications for window complimentary railway passes for the year 2008 pending with the Eastern Railways;

(b) the applicant-wise details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to dispose them off expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Nil.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Losses to HPCL

3584. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) is running into losses;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years, till date and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any steps have been taken to improve the efficiency and profits of HPCL;

(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) No, Sir. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has earned profit during the last four year as per details given below:

Year	Profit (Rs. in Crores)
2004-05	1277.33
2005-06	405.63
2006-07	1571.17
April-Dec., 2007	750.37

(c) to (e) HPCL has taken a number of steps to improve its efficiency and profitability, including utilization of its refineries beyond their installed capacities resulting in improved Gross Refining Margin (GRM). The market sales of HPCL has also increased from 19.42 MMT during 2005-06 to 21.69 MMT in 2006-07. Market sales of HPCL during April-December 2007 was 17.94 MMT showing a growth of 11.57% over the corresponding period of its previous year.

Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline

3585. SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India did not attend three meetings scheduled in Islamabad and did not respond to an Iranian offer for holding a Trilateral meeting in Tehran;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether India is opposed to Pakistan's demand for a transit charge for gas; and

(d) the time by which the project will be functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Iran proposed to hold the Seventh

Trilateral Meeting in Tehran during last week of September 2007. Subsequently, Iran proposed to hold a meeting of the Oil Ministers of Iran, Pakistan and India on February 12-13, 2008 at Tehran. However, Government decided that a bilateral meeting between India and Pakistan should precede the trilateral meeting, as bilateral issues, such as transportation tariff and transit fee, needed to be resolved first. Certain technical and commercial issues relating to the project were also required to be discussed with Pakistan. Therefore, India did not participate in the trilateral meeting in Tehran.

Regarding the bilateral meeting between India and Pakistan, it has been agreed to hold official level meeting between India and Pakistan on April 16-17, 2008 at Islamabad and, thereafter, a Ministerial-level meeting also at Islamabad on April 25, 2008.

(c) Pakistan is demanding transit fees for passage of natural gas through Pakistan territory. The issue will be discussed in the forthcoming bilateral meetings between India and Pakistan.

(d) Such multilateral projects involve protracted discussions, as all the aspects have to be carefully examined and deliberated upon to the satisfaction of the participating countries to protect each country's interests and to avoid any problems in the future in the successful operation of the project.

Working of Aviation Academies

3586. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of flying academies have been given permission to operate in the country;

(b) whether some irregularities have been found in the working of the Aviation Academies in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof particularly about the working of the Carver Aviation Academy in Baramati, Maharashtra; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) At present there are 43 flying clubs out of which 28 are in Public Sector and 15 in Private Sector.

(b) to (d) Reports of malpractices by the Chief Flying Instructor (CFI) of M/s. Carver Aviation Academy were duly investigated by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Investigation revealed irregularity in the functioning of the academy, including improper logging of flying records, issue of fake certificates, non-compliance of rules and procedures, unauthorised night-flying, manipulation of records and lack of proper monitoring system. Pending investigation, the licence of the academy was suspended by DGCA. The CFI status of Capt. Ashim Taxali was withdrawn. However, in view of the fact that the management of the institute themselves detected the malpractices and reported to the local police authorities and keeping in view the career prospects of trainees enrolled with the institute, the suspension of the licence was revoked after assurance from the academy of a strict monitoring system. DGCA has been directed to ensure that these systems are in place.

[Translation]

Allotment of Petrol Pumps

3587. SHRI HEM LAL MURMU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the news item published in 'Dainik Jagran' dated December 14, 2007 "Sansad Hamle Me Saheed Ki Widhwa Ke Daavaon ko Sarkar Ne Galat Thehraya";

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the delay of six years in operation of petrol pumps and in allotment of land for this purpose; and

(c) the details of allotment of petrol pumps and places at which other facilities are to be given, acquisition of land and date of operation of petrol pumps?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) This Ministry had allotted nine (9) retail outlet (RO) dealership under the erstwhile Discretionary Quota Scheme of the Government to the dependants of martyrs who have laid down their lives while defending terrorists attack on Parliament on 13.12.2001. All these ROs except the one allotted to Smt. Munesh Devi, widow of late Shri Desh Raj have been commissioned. Letter of intent (LOI) for allotment

of RO dealership was issued to Smt. Munesh Devi by Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) on 10.12.2002. After regular follow up by IOC, the Noida Authority offered a site for setting up of the RO on 2.11.2004 at Sector-105 in Noida, which Smt. Munesh Devi refused to accept. On the request of the LOI-holder, another plot of land at the same Sector, was subsequently allotted by Noida authority on 27.2.2007. The LOI-holder has given her consent for this site on 12.5.2007. Possession of the site has been taken by IOC on 27.12.2007. Clearance from Police, District Supply Officer, City Magistrate and Fire Department have been obtained; the RO is likely to be commissioned shortly.

[English]

Violation of Terms and Conditions by OMDC

3588. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Orissa Minerals Development Company Ltd. (OMDC) has violated the terms and conditions of mining leases resulted in huge loss of revenue to the State exchequer;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) No, Sir. Orissa Minerals Development Company Ltd. (OMDC) has not violated the terms and conditions of the mining lease.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Outsourcing of USFD Machines

3589. SHRI A.K. MOORTHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the year when ultrasonic flaw detection (USFD) outsourcing was started;

(b) the details of Indian/Foreign firm doing the Ultrasonic Flaw Detectors (USFD) outsourcing works;

(c) the reasons for inviting open tender when only one firm is doing work;

(d) the steps taken to bring other firms, in order to increase the area of competition in the interest of the Railways;

(e) whether even now, after change of guidelines also, only single firm can qualify the tender conditions; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) In the year 2003-04, outsourcing of Ultrasonic Flaw Detection (USFD) testing of track was started.

(b) Presently only one firm viz. M/s Sperry Rail International, UK, through their Indian agent M/s Khyati Nilum Associates Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, is carrying out the work of USFD testing of track on service contract.

(c) The reason for inviting open tender is to permit even other interested parties capable of USFD testing of rails and meeting the eligibility criteria can also participate in the tender.

(d) The eligibility criteria is revised to encourage more firms to participate in tender of USFD testing of track on service contract.

(e) and (f) The intention of revising the eligibility criteria is to bring more vendors for USFD testing to prevent the monopolistic situation. It is not possible to comment whether one firm or more than firm can qualify as this will depend upon the firm quoting the tender invited by the Zonal Railways.

Welfare of Shepherd Community

3590. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had decided to constitute a Development and Finance Corporation to provide credit, exclusively to the Shepherd community at concessional rates;

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

(c) whether necessary infrastructure for proper working of this Corporation has been provided by the Government;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the other steps proposed to be taken by the Government to give benefits to Shepherd Community in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) and (e) The Government has set up the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation, with an objective to promote economic and developmental activities for the benefit of members of the target groups of Other Backward Classes including Shepherd Community through State Channelising Agencies.

Allotment of Land for Setting up of Small and Medium Enterprises

3591. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the drug and pharmaceutical manufacturers association has requested the Union Government or the Government of Andhra Pradesh to allocate 1000 acres of land near Ongole in Andhra Pradesh for setting up of small and medium enterprises exclusively;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government and Government of Andhra Pradesh thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (c) This Department has not received any request from Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association for allocating 1000 acres of land near Ongole in Andhra Pradesh for setting up of small and medium enterprises exclusively.

[Translation]

Helicopter Service for Uttarakhand

3592. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Uttarakhand have submitted any proposal to the Union Government requesting them to provide helicopter services to cross over about 70 kms. distance from Mangti to Lipulekh Pass in Pithoragarh district to reach Kailash Mansarovar;

(b) if so, the details of that proposal;

(c) whether the Union Government propose to clear the said proposal of helicopter service immediately so that the pilgrims could avail the benefit of helicopter service from this year itself;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the action plan work to improve the condition of "Yatra Marg"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Unlicensed Catering Services

3593. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether unlicensed catering coaches were being attached with some long distance trains under North Eastern Railway and Central East Railway and food was being sold to the passengers of these trains from these illegal bogies;

(b) if so, the names of trains with unlicensed catering bogies that had been attached in past;

(c) whether the senior officers of the department are hands in glove in conducting these bogies;

(d) whether the Railways are checking in all the Railway zones;

(e) if so, the names of Railway division under which unlicensed Railway bogies were found selling food;

(f) whether the Railways propose to check the contractors engaged in the running above illegal catering coaches; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

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

[English]

Separate Quota for Valmiki and Safai Karmachari Communities

3594. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Valmiki communities in the north comprising of scavengers and safai karmacharies are now demanding exclusion of creamy layer within the SC quota and claiming for a separate quota within SC quota for Valmiki and Safai karmachari communities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No such representation has been received in the recent past.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Refund Cases of used Tickets

3595. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:
SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cases of receiving refund for the ticket used for performing journey have come to light;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of officers of Railways found guilty in such cases during last three years and the action against them; and

(d) the nature of the said action thereof?

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

*[English]***Bed Roll Scam In IRCTC**

3596. SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether bedroll scam has been unearthed in the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) misappropriating lakhs of rupees of the Railways; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. No such bed-roll scam misappropriating lakhs of rupees of the Railways in Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been unearthed. Certain irregularities in the collection charges of bed-roll were detected during a surprise inspection, for which disciplinary action is being taken against the employees found responsible.

*[Translation]***Gas Extraction in Kerala, Konkan Basins**

3597. SHRI BHUBANESWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to grant special R&D status to certain private companies for carrying out gas extraction works in Kerala, Konkan Basins;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether ONGC has not been found eligible for grant of this status;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government has received the names of some private companies for grant of such special status;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the sources from where such names have been received?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (g) Proposal for grant of special R&D status to exploration blocks of Kerala-Konkan basin held by Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd., (ONGC) and Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) was considered by the Government. Since, the proposal was not in line with the PSC provision, it was not agreed to.

*[English]***Electrification of Western Corridor**

3598. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the news-item appeared in 'Business Line' on January 8th, 2008 captioned, "Railways willing to electrify Western corridor to get Japanese funding";

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

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Railway in this regard?

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

(b) It is reported in the news-item that trials for running double stack container trains on flat wagons under electric traction are proposed by Indian Railways and that electrification of the Western Corridor is linked to Japanese Government funding of the Corridor. Other details of the trials proposed including section identified for the trials have also been indicated in the article.

(c) Railways propose to conduct trials in association with Japanese experts to confirm double stack container trains running on flat wagons under electrified traction. As regards funding, the Dedicated Freight Corridor Projects are proposed to be financed through a mix of internal generation, market borrowings, budgetary and non-budgetary resources including multilateral and bilateral funding.

*[Translation]***Norms for Supply of LPG to Distributors**

3599. DR. SHAFIQUIR RAHMAN BARQ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the norms for supply of gas to the distributors by Oil and Gas (LPG) companies;

(b) whether there is a provision for subsequent supply of gas to the consumers after a minimum of 21 days from the last supply;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that the Oil and Natural Gas companies supply LPG of only 3000 consumers to the distributors in place of names of 5000; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine requirement of customers registered with the LPG distributors.

(b) No, Sir. Refill supplies of domestic LPG to the registered customers are being made through the LPG distributors appointed by the OMCs as per the genuine requirement of the customers.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Atrocities against SC

3600. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of harassment and killing of dalit families have increased recently in the country as has been published in "Dainik Jagran" on 14 March, 2008;

(b) if so, the State-wise number of incidents of harassment and killing of dalit families came to light during the last three years and current year in the country; and

(c) the action taken against the guilty persons in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No Sir, only a specific incident of atrocity in Aminabad Village, Etawah, Uttar Pradesh was reported in "Dainik Jagran", Delhi Edition, dated 14.3.2008.

(b) and (c) The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 is implemented by the concerned State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. The State/Union Territory wise, number of cases registered under the Act as well as number of cases ending in conviction during the year 2004, 2005 and 2006 under the Act are given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

State/Union Territory-wise number of cases registered and ending in conviction under the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 during the year 2004, 2005 and 2006

Sl. No.	Name of State/Union Territory	Number of cases registered under the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989			Number of cases ending in conviction under the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989		
		2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2236	3571	4579	85	290	261
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	56	27	0	7	2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3.	Assam	0	498	526	0	30	41
4.	Bihar	1785	1811	2097	15	153	178
5.	Chhattisgarh	769	950	1027	95	278	277
6.	Goa	0	3	4	0	0	0
7.	Gujarat	1070	1538	1155	30	41	46
8.	Haryana	61	288	283	3	21	13
9.	Himachal Pradesh	22	60	107	1	5	19
10.	Jharkhand	232	592	620	6	48	40
11.	Karnataka	1232	1913	1918	24	64	45
12.	Kerala	374	427	439	55	71	44
13.	Madhya Pradesh	4135	5970	5711	1024	1856	1902
14.	Maharashtra	922	1057	1284	74	42	52
15.	Manipur	0	0	26	0	0	0
16.	Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0	0
17.	Mizoram	0	0	0	0	0	0
18.	Nagaland	0	0	114	0	2	17
19.	Orissa	1407	2041	1502	53	160	163
20.	Punjab	66	139	184	1	5	8
21.	Rajasthan	5391	4657	4877	517	1141	1104
22.	Sikkim	0	29	2	0	7	0
23.	Tamil Nadu	891	1207	931	62	331	171
24.	Tripura	1	50	23	0	0	0
25.	Uttar Pradesh	2863	4375	4838	1176	2514	2361
26.	Uttarakhand	133	100	69	37	31	33
27.	West Bengal	28	24	20	0	2	1
28.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1	2	17	0	0	0
29.	Chandigarh	0	0	2	1	0	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
30.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0	4	3	0	0	0
31.	Tripura	1	2	1	0	0	0
32.	Uttar Pradesh	9	21	21	0	2	2
33.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	2
34.	Pondicherry	0	2	0	0	0	0
Total		23,629	31,387	32,407	3,259	7,110	6,782

The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 does not extend in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

[English]

Sale of Medicines at Exorbitant Prices

3601. DR. VALLABHABHAI KATHIRIA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether out of 2600 variety of drugs prices fixed by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority, 87% of drug variety prices are 50% to 500% more in the market.

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

(c) whether the ointment for skin diseases, drops for eyes, pain killer tablets and blood pressure medicines are all sold at an exorbitant prices by the companies; and

(d) if so, the remedial measures taken/proposed to be 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 MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has no specific information that out of 2600 variety of drugs prices fixed by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority, 87% of drug variety prices are 50% to 500% more in the market.

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. For any violation of prices by NPPA, action is taken under provisions of para 13 of DPCO, 1995.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufactures 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.

Oil Tankers near Marmogao Port Trust

3602. SHRI FRANCISCO COSME SARDINHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of oil companies having their oil tanker near Marmogao Port Trust;

(b) whether some oil companies have dismantled their oil tanks;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government is aware that Zuari Industries Ltd. has established an oil tanks farm for the oil companies at Sancoale, Zuari Nagar;

(e) the details of oil companies that have shifted to the Zuari Industries Ltd. farm at Sancoale, Goa; and

(f) the time by which remainder of the oil tanks will be decommissioned and dismantled from Vasco-da-Gamma and be shifted to Zil farm?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is having its oil storage tanks at Vasco location near Marmogao Port in Vasco Da Gama, Goa. IOC is revamping the Vasco location and in the process some of the storage tanks have been dismantled. The details of storage tanks dismantled by IOC are as under:—

Tank No	Capacity (In KL)	Product
01	5252	Furnace Oil (FO)
02	6900	Furnace Oil (FO)
03	6288	Furnace Oil (FO)
08	13610	Naphtha
13	1392	Kerosene (SKO)
14	7225	Kerosene (SKO)
20	2800	Light Diesel Oil (LDO)

(d) to (f) The Zuari Indian Oil Tanking Limited (ZIOTL), a joint venture of Zuari Industries Limited (ZIL) and Indian Oil Tanking Limited (IOTL) has constructed storage and terminal facilities for petroleum products at Sancoale, Zuari. As IOC's Vasco location is fully operating and their requirement of petroleum products for Goa State is met from IOC Vasco location, IOC has no plans to decommission their Vasco location and shifting to ZIL.

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has reported that they have made the arrangements with M/s ZIOTL from April, 2004. ZIOTL is having storage tanks for storage of Petrol, Diesel and Kerosene. Presently, HPCL is utilizing services of infrastructures provided by ZIOTL for storage, filling and delivery of Petrol, Diesel and Kerosene. HPCL is having storage tanks for storage of LDO and FO near Marmogao Port Trust. Storage tanks near Marmogao Port Trust are being currently used for the purpose of storage and delivery of Black Oils like LDO and FO. There is no immediate plan to de-commission these tankages and shifting to ZIOTL farm for black oils.

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) have reported that they had no storage at Vasco and were taking storage assistance ex-IOC Vasco till May 2004. Since May 2004, storage assistance is being taken from the terminal at Sancoale of M/s ZIOTL.

Allocation of Petrol/Diesel/LPG Dealership

3603. ADV. SURESH KURUP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether preference is given to women in the allocation of petrol/diesel/LPG dealership/distributorship; and

(b) if so, the details of such allotments made during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) As per extant guidelines for selection of Retail Outlet (RO) dealerships and LPG distributorships adopted by the public sector oil marketing companies, viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPC), the percentage of reservation for different categories of persons is as follows:

Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST)	-25%
Defence Category (DC)	-8%
Paramilitary/Police/Government Personnel (PMP)	-8%
Physically Handicapped Persons (PH)	-5%
Freedom Fighters (FF)	-2%
Outstanding Sports Persons (OSP)	-2%
	50%

33% of the dealerships/distributorships in each of the above categories are reserved for women belong to that category.

(b) 2567 Retail Outlets and 40 LPG distributorships were allotted by the OMCs to women under different categories during the last three years, i.e. 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 (April-December, 2007).

National Backward Classes Commission

3604. SHRIMATI RANJEET RANJAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the post of Member-Secretary is lying vacant in the National Backward Classes Commission;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Member-Secretary of National Backward Classes Commission has been appointed from the backward class since the year 1993 to till date; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The post of Member Secretary, National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) had fallen vacant on 09.08.2007, when the earlier Member Secretary completed his tenure. Member Secretary of the National Commission on Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes is holding the additional Charge of the Member Secretary, NCBC.

(c) and (d) In terms of Section 2 (d) of the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993, an officer of the Central Government who is or has been in the rank of Secretary to the Government of India can only be appointed as Member Secretary of the Commission. The Act does not specify any other criteria.

Rail Routes connecting Neighbouring Countries

3605. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI: SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of rail routes connecting neighbouring countries alongwith those for which a dialogue is going on; and

(b) the country-wise details of the agreements signed by the Railways with other neighbouring countries in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The details of the existing rail routes connecting neighbouring countries viz. Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal are as under:

Route	Remarks
Attari (India)—Wagah (Pakistan)	Used for both Passenger and Goods Traffic
Munnabao (India)—Khokrapar (Pakistan)	Used for Passenger Traffic only
Gede (India)—Darsana (Bangladesh)	Used for both Goods and Passenger Traffic
Singhabad (India)—Rohanpur (Bangladesh)	Used for Goods Traffic only
Petrapole (India)—Benapole (Bangladesh)	Used for Goods Traffic only
Radhikapur (India)—Birol (Bangladesh)	Closed for gauge conversion on Indian side on 1.4.2005
Mahisasan (India)—Shahbazpur (Bangladesh)	Not operational since December 1996 due to breaches
Raxual (India)—Birgunj (Nepal)	Used for Goods Traffic only

The agreement with Bangladesh for introduction of passenger train services between Kolkata and Dhaka Cantt. via Gede-Darsana route for which dialogue was going on has been concluded recently.

Apart from existing lines, survey has been conducted for new rail links with Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh are as under:

Name of the Country	Name of survey for New Line	Kms.
1	2	3
Bhutan	Hasimara (India) to Phuentsholing	18
	Banarhat (India) to Samtse	16
	Rangia (India) to Samdrupjongkhar (Bhutan)	60
	Kokrajhar (India) to Gelephu (Bhutan)	70
	Pathasala (India) to Nanglam (Bhutan)	40

1	2	3
Nepal	Nepalganj Road (India) to Nepalganj (Nepal)	12
	Nautanwa (India) to Bhairawaha (Nepal)	15
	Jogbani (India) to Biratnagar (Nepal)	17
	New Jalpaiguri (India) to Kakrabitta (Nepal)	46
	Jayanagar (India) to Bardibas (Nepal)	70
Bangladesh	Agartala (India) to Akhaura (Bangladesh), Survey in India Territory completed	12

[English]

One Thousand One Pillar Temple in Karnataka

3606. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVARAJ: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to renovate famous one thousand one pillar Jain Temple in Karkala, Karnataka; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) There is no such proposal as the one thousand one pillar Jain Temple in Karkala, Karnataka is not a Centrally protected monument.

Muslim Women Working In the Beedi Industry

3607. SHRI FRANCIS FANTHOME: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) any specific steps that have been initiated by the Ministry to provide easy credit to Muslim women working in the "beedi" industry in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (c) This Ministry does not have any scheme for providing credit facilities to people working in specific industries. However, National Minorities

Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) has been providing micro-credit to self-help groups (SHG), consisting of a large number of women belonging to minority communities, through non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Micro-credit, to the extent of Rs. 25,000 per member of the SHG is available through the NGOs for various income generating activities, including "beedi rolling". The micro credit is available on concessional terms.

Old Railway Bridges in Punjab

3608. SHRI ZORA SINGH MAAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of road over bridges which have outlived their lives in the State of Punjab;

(b) the details of road over bridges between Ferozepur City and Ferozepur Cantt; and

(c) the action plan formulated to replace such bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No work of Road over/ under bridge (ROB/RUB) has outlived its life in Punjab. Life of ROB/RUB is assessed on condition & functional basis. All these works are in sound position.

(b) There is an old ROB which is being replaced as new work having been sanctioned by State Government as a 'deposit work' at the cost of Rs. 15.80 Cr.

(c) Suitable & Adequate Mechanism already exists to take care of every road over & under bridge on Railways. These are inspected regularly and repair/

strengthening and rehabilitation work is taken up immediately, where required.

Gauge Conversion between Ahmedabad and Udaipur

3609. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:
SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:
SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the work of gauge conversion between Ahmedabad and Udaipur;

(b) the total allocation of funds and expenditure incurred on this project so far;

(c) whether the costs are being shared between the State Government and the Railways for this project; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The gauge conversion of Ahmedabad-Himmatnagar-Udaipur (299.20 km) has been included in the Budget 2008-09 at an anticipated cost of Rs. 742.88 crore to be funded through normal budgetary support. The work would be taken up once Budget is passed by Parliament.

(b) No expenditure has been incurred on this project so far.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Indian Oil Corporation

3610. SHRI RUPCHAND MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) has conveyed to Indian Railways to stop fuel supplies to rail locomotives;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Railways to meet the situation?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Sale of the Lands of Central Public Enterprises

3611. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to sell the lands of Central public enterprises to compensate the losses of certain public enterprises in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the CPSUs whose land has been sold out during the last three years and the total amount realised in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) and (b) Based on the recommendation of Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE), Government has approved revival of 28 CPSEs, which includes disposal of surplus land in the cases like those of National Textiles Corporation and its subsidiaries, Praga Tools Ltd., Richardson & Cruddas Ltd., Central Inland Water Transport Corporation Ltd., Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd., Cement Corporation of India Ltd., HMT Machine Tools Ltd., Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd., Hindustan Organic Chemicals Ltd., etc.

(c) Details of sale/disposal of surplus land by concerned CPSEs and the amount realised there from is not maintained centrally.

FDI in Aviation Industry

3612. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is planning to increase the FDI limit in certain specific sectors of the aviation industry including maintenance, repair and overhaul facilities, pilot training schools and cargo operations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the FDI limits in the passenger segment would remain the same till the time the industry is mature enough;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) The Government has taken decision on Policy for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Civil Aviation Sector as under:-

Airports

Greenfield Projects: FDI upto 100% is allowed under the automatic route

Air Transport Services

- (i) Scheduled Air Transport Service/Domestic Scheduled Passenger Airline—FDI upto 49% and investment by Non-resident Indians (NRI) upto 100% allowed on the automatic route.
- (ii) Non-Scheduled Air Transport Service/Non-Scheduled airlines, Chartered airlines and Cargo airlines: FDI upto 74% and investment by Non-resident Indian (NRI) upto 100% allowed on the automatic route.
- (iii) Helicopter services/seaplane services requiring DGCA approval - FDI upto 100% allowed on the automatic route.

Other services under Civil Aviation Sector

- (i) Ground Handling Services: FDI upto 74% and investment by Non-resident Indians (NRI) upto 100% allowed on the automatic route. This will be subject to sectoral regulations and security clearance.
- (ii) Maintenance and Repair organizations; flying training Institutes; and technical training institutions - FDI upto 100% allowed on the automatic route.

Supply of Iron Ore

3613. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any request from the Indian Chambers of Commerce to prioritise supply of iron ore to domestic steel producers and at a reasonable price;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereon;

(d) the number of companies having captive mining leases as of now;

(e) the production achieved out of the above mining leases during the last three years; and

(f) the measures taken or proposed to be taken to ensure maximum mining operations in the leased mines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has received a Report of Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) on Iron ore recently (in April, 2008).

(b) The recommendations contained in the Report of the ICC are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) as far as recommendations regarding export of iron ore are concerned, the policy regarding export of iron ore has been considered by the Government. It has been decided that even though conservation of iron ore resources of the country is of paramount importance, the same may not be achieved by banning or capping the export of iron ore but by taking recourse to appropriate fiscal measures. Presently, Govt. of India has imposed an export duty of Rs. 300 per tonne on export of all varieties of Lumps and on export of 62% and above Fe content fines and an export duty of Rs. 50/- per tonne on iron ore fines having Fe content less than 62%.

As regards recommendations pertaining to iron ore mining/prospecting leases, it is informed that the mineral concessions for iron ore are granted in accordance with the provisions of the Mines & Mineral (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957 and Rules made there under. The Government is fully aware of the need of long term availability of adequate quantity of good quality iron ore for domestic steel industries and the need to maximise domestic value addition. In this regard, the Government has approved National Mineral Policy 2008 and along with it, has also given in-principle approval to the High Level Committee's (Hoda Committee) recommendations on the basis of consultations with State Governments, Inter-Ministerial consultations and recommendations of the Group of Ministers (GOM), which takes care of the interests of value adders in grant of mineral concessions for iron ore.

As far as iron ore linkage is concerned, it may be stated that NMDC, India's largest iron ore producing company and a major PSU under Ministry of Steel, accord priority to domestic steel industry for supply of iron ore by entering into long term agreements with major domestic steel producers. However, as far as pricing of its products is concerned, it may be stated that after de-regulation of steel industry, prices of iron ore are governed by market forces and demand supply scenario and the company is free to fix prices based on

international market scenario and terms and conditions of its long term agreements. It is, however added that long term agreement prices of iron ore of NMDC are presently much lower than spot prices of iron ore prevailing in the market.

(d) and (e) As per the available information, a statement of iron ore production in captive mines during the last three years and in 2007-08 (upto December' 2007) is given below:

(Quantity in 000 tonnes)				
Name of the company	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07 (Prov.)	2007-08 (Upto Dec' 07)
Indian Iron & Steel Co. Ltd.	1992	2961	1962	2347
Jindal Steel & Power Ltd.	2030	1845	2277	1465
Sharda Energy & Minerals Ltd.	76	171	196	114
Orissa Mining Corpn. Ltd.	413	461	380	35
Steel Authority of India Ltd.	19922	20952	21587	16270
Tata Iron & Steel Co. Ltd.	10730	10594	10070	7639
Visvesvaraya Iron & Steel Plan	39	—	—	—
Total	35202	36984	36472	28250

(Source: Ministry of Mines)

(f) The production of iron ore is directly related to its demand. Presently, the total production of iron ore in India is quite high in comparison to the demand of domestic iron and steel industries and iron ore in large quantity is being exported. For example, during 2006-07, the country produced 181 million tonne of iron ore out of which, domestic steel industry consumed about 68.504 million tonne of iron ore (estimated), whereas 93.79 million tonne of iron ore was exported (Provisional). Further, it may be mentioned that Government has approved National Mineral Policy, 2008, so as to attract technology and investment on the required scale in exploration and mining, optimize extraction of resources in volume & value, and develop the mining sector up to its potential so as to enable it to contribute substantively to the country's GDP.

(Source: Ministry of Mines for production and domestic consumption and Department of Commerce for Export)

Statement

Policy Recommendations made in the Report of Indian Chamber of Commerce

1. Iron Ore Export

- 1.1 Exports of iron ore with Fe above 62% should be banned with immediate effect.
- 1.2 Exports of iron ore with Fe below 62% should be regulated and canalized by government of India and subsequently should be phased out in a progressive manner, reducing 15% every year to zero by 2013.
- 1.3 Export tax of 25% ad-valorem should be applied for exports of iron ore in the interim period.

2. Iron Ore Mining/Prospecting Leases

- 2.1 The Government should allocate iron ore mines to iron and steel producing companies to meet their requirement for 25 years, with priority given to units under DTA versus SEZ/EOU.

- 2.2 ML/PL should be recommended to iron and steel companies once they have invested 25% of their proposed capital and should be allotted to them once they have invested 50% of their proposed capital.
- 2.3 Time-frame for allotting ML/PL needs to be shortened and brought strictly in line with standards of 3-6 months.
- 2.4 The Government should monitor operations of allocated mining leases. If there is no significant activity in 2 years then the Government should take back the mining lease.
- 2.5 Mining leases should only be renewed by the Government if there is value-addition being done by the company to the extent justified by the size of the reserve in the lease area.
- 2.6 Existing iron and steel companies already having captive mining leases should not be granted fresh mining leases simply based on their proposed expansion plans. Some of these companies have been holding on to several mining leases for many decades without carrying out any significant mining operations and have been getting their mining leases renewed from time to time under one pretext or the other. The State Governments should be directed to refrain from recommending repeated renewal of such mining leases so that the new and upcoming iron and steel companies could be offered these blocks.
- 2.7. For value addition, transfer of mining leases should be encouraged. Any individual proprietorship/partnership firm or private limited company should be encouraged to transfer its PL/ML to an iron and steel producer provided they do not exceed the iron ore requirement criterion laid down by Government.
- 2.8 Existing large mining lease holders of over 80 million ton deposits of iron ore should value-add the fines and low grade ores by putting inter/pellet plants and/or beneficiation plants, else their mining leases should not be renewed after the expiry of the current term.
- 2.9. Mineral Concession Act and MMRD Act needs to be amended to accommodate above recommendations and to minimize the iron ore blocks getting locked-up in prolonged litigation which can choke up the industrial and economic development of the country.

3. Iron Ore Linkage

- 3.1 The Government of India must issue a directive to all public sector mining companies such that they must accord priority for supply of iron ore (sized ore and fines) for domestic industry under long term contracts wherein pricing can be linked to the cost of mining plus a reasonable ROI. Such prices may be subject to cost escalation annually.

Airport at Jharsuguda

3614. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the site for construction of a civil airport at Jharsuguda area in Orissa been identified;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the work in this regard is likely to be started; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Jharsuguda Airport belonging to Airports Authority of India (AAI) is non-operational for the last two decades. On a request from the Orissa State Government, AAI have planned to develop the existing airport for schedule flight operation. The State Government has been requested to provide 815 acres of land for the proposed development.

Underground Natural Gas Storage

3615. SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has decided to develop underground natural gas storage facilities to meet requirements of seasonal demand variations; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) The Ministry has constituted a Committee for preparation of Pre-feasibility Report/ Detailed Feasibility Report for setting up of Strategic Natural gas storage facilities. The Committee comprised of members from OIDB, GAIL, DGH, and EIL. OIBD

has taken up the preparation of Pre-feasibility Report through EIL.

[Translation]

**Memorandum of Understanding between
IAF and PHHL**

3616. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the increasing demand of Helicopter pilots any Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Indian Air Force and Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. (PHHL);

(b) if so, whether the Indian Air Force pilots who are on the verge of their retirement will be allowed to fly the planes of PHHL under the said MoU;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the salient features, of the MoU; and

(d) the time by which the above MoU will be made effective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited (PHHL) has signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Air Force (IAF) on 15.2.2008 for inducting IAF pilots into its stream on mutually agreed terms and conditions.

(b) and (c) Pursuant to the MoU, IAF will provide suitable pilots who can be spread as per the qualifying requirements in order to meet in part the vacancies created due to fleet expansion plan of PHHL. Such arrangement will promote mutual benefits to both the organisations. The IAF pilots will get opportunity for growth and longer, fruitful, second career upto 65 years of age. Similarly, PHHL will also be benefitted by augmenting their strength of qualified pilots.

(d) MoU has already been signed on 15.2.2008.

[English]

Allocation of Blocks for Exploration to GSPCL

3617. SHRI HARILAL MADHAVAJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat has made a request for allocation of blocks for exploration of Oil and Gas to the Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (GSPCL) on nomination basis in the areas of Saurashtra and Kutch Regions of the State; and

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

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

(b) Under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), launched in 1977, the Government of India adopted international competitive bidding system for offering acreages for exploration and production of oil & gas in the country, NELP has provided a level playing field wherein bids are invited from private and public sector companies-both Indian as well as foreign.

Even National Oil Companies, viz. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Oil India Ltd. (OIL) etc. are not awarded blocks on nomination basis as they have to compete with other private/public sector companies under NELP. Therefore, it would not be possible to allocate any block to Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation (GSPC) on nomination basis.

Global Service Mobile Facility in the Railways

3618. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Global Service Mobile (GSM) facility has been introduced in Indian Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether trials have been completed; and

(d) if so, the details of fund allocated for this project?

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

(b) Global System for Mobile communications-Railway (GSM-R) based Mobile Train Radio Communication system has been sanctioned on 3200 Route Kilometers (RKMs) of Indian Railways.

(c) The work has been commissioned on 265 RKMs of Eastern Railway, 150 RKMs of Northeast Frontier

Railway, 315 RKMs of North Central Railway. Balance work is under various stages of execution.

(d) This work has been sanctioned at an approximate cost of Rs. 284 crores. So far Rs. 179 crores fund has been utilized for this project. Rs. 61 crores has been proposed for the year 2008-09.

Setting up of 500 Operational Airports

3619. SHRI PRABODH PANDA:
DR. M. JAGANNATH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government plans to set up 500 operational Airports in various parts of the country during next 10 to 12 years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the strategy chalked out for setting up of these airports in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) There is no such specific proposal under the consideration of the Government.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Rehabilitation of People by ONGC

3620. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:
SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state the assistance provided by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to the people who have lost their lands due to land acquisition in Mehsana for carrying out gas and oil activities during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): The lands have been acquired by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Mehsana Asset as per the prevailing laws for the purpose of Oil & Gas exploration and production in and around Mehsana District. The lands are initially acquired on temporary basis for which the landowners are compensated by payment of rents and crop compensation, if any. After discovery of hydrocarbons the lands are acquired on permanent basis as per the rate fixed by State Government.

The details of compensation paid during last three years are as follows:

Land Acquired on Temporary basis

Sl.No.	Year	No. of Cases	Amount (Rs.)	Remarks
1.	2005-06	1357	4,67,12,374	Paid
2.	2006-07	1295	7,26,39,724	Paid
3.	2006-07	1333	5,57,64,532	Rent revision arrears w.e.f. 1.1.2003 paid
4.	2007-08	1435	8,13,91,875	Payment has been made in 1428 cases. Remaining 7 are recently acquired cases for which demand has not been raised by Special Land Acquisition Officer (SPLAO). Payment will be made as and when demand is raised by SPLAO.
5.	2007-08	1410	8,63,40,072	Rent revision arrears w.e.f. 1.1.2006 paid in 2007-08.

Land Acquired on Permanent basis

Sl.No.	Year	No. of Cases	Amount (Rs.)	Remarks
1.	2005-06	Nil	0	—
2.	2006-07	2	2,17,068	Paid
3.	2007-08	5	26,11,692	Paid

*[English]***Electrification of Rail Line by NTPC**

3621. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is planning rail line electrification from New Delhi to Ahmedabad, Mehsana to Jamnagar, with help of NTPC Ltd;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the solutions thereof; and

(d) the time by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The route from New Delhi to Ahmedabad via Vadodara is already electrified. There is, however, no proposal to electrify Mehsana-Jamnagar section with help of NTPC Ltd. or otherwise.

(c) The choice of electrification of a section is based on a number of factors like economic viability and operational flexibility etc.

(d) Does not arise.

*[Translation]***Security Arrangements on the Monuments**

3622. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to provide special security arrangement for important cultural and religious places in the country; and

(b) if so, the State-wise details of the locations selected under the said scheme?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) While no formal scheme has been formulated, Archaeological Survey of India has deployed a mix of regular watch & ward staff of the ASI, private security guards and State Police personnel for security of 3667 centrally protected monuments. In addition, CISF personnel has been deployed at selected monuments. It is the constant endeavour of the ASI to maintain these monuments in good shape through structural conservation, chemical preservation and environmental development which are taken up as per requirements on side subject to availability of funds. Fencing of the protected areas has also been stepped up to prevent encroachments.

Child Abuse by Tourists

3623. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of the fact that incidents of child abuse by tourists are increasing on a large scale in those places where tourism is developing in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether according to the report of "Trafficking in Women and Children in India" child abuse by tourists are taking very serious turn in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government is contemplating to enact a law in order to punish the tourists and guides indulging in child abuse activities; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) Ministry of Tourism does not compile the data on incidents of child abuse or trafficking in women and children in India by tourists.

(e) and (f) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India and as such, registration, investigation, detection, and prevention of crime, including cases relating to

crimes against women and children is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. The Government of India has been issuing guidelines from time to time to make concerted efforts to improve the administration of Criminal Justice System and to take effective measures to control crime against vulnerable sections including women and children.

[English]

Bhavnagar Airport

3624. SHRI RAJU RANA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is in receipt of the completion report from Bhavnagar Airport authority regarding night landing facility;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the concerned authority would be in a position to give the clearance sanction letter for night landing facility to start at Bhavnagar Airport;

(d) the details of the modernisation plan of Bhavnagar Airport; and

(e) the time by which the new flights are proposed to be started from the said airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The work of providing Night Landing Facilities namely, High Intensity Runway Lights, Apron and Taxiway edge lights and Simple Approach lights has been completed. The re-location of Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) is likely to be completed by 31.5.2008.

(c) Ground Lighting Facility has already been made operational w.e.f. 01.4.2008, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is in the process of carrying out inspection of the remaining equipments forming part of night landing facilities. After DGCA's clearance, the night landing facilities would be made operational.

(d) Construction of a new Terminal Building, extension of runway and provision of CAT-I approach light system will be taken up after the required additional land measuring 490.36 acres is made available free of cost and free from all encumbrances by the State Government to Airports Authority of India.

(e) Government have 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 airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country including Bhavnagar subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by the Government in this regard.

Yeshvanthapura-Mangalore Express

3625. SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for delay in starting the train No. 6515/6516 Yashvanthapura-Mangalore Express (Daily) via Arasikere even though it was included in the railway budget for the year 2004-05; and

(b) by when this train service is likely to be commenced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Introduction of 6515/6516 Yesvantpur-Mangalore Express via Arsikere is getting delayed primarily to observe the behaviour of ghat section during the fourth coming monsoon season and also for completion of capacity enhancement works between Arsikere-Hassan and Hassan-Kankanadi including strengthening of land slip prone and boulder fall areas.

(b) A firm decision for introduction of the train would largely depend on the behaviour of the section during monsoon and completion of ongoing works.

Coal Conversion Technology

3626. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to the increasing crude oil prices, India and European Union have begun exercise of close cooperation in clean coal conversion technology and transfer of advanced technologies through joint ventures;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether India has made strong pitch for investment of European gas companies in gas distribution network during the recent working group meet of India and EU energy panel.

(d) if so, to what extent the increased collaboration with EU is likely to help in restricting petroleum products; and

(e) the other agreements reached between the two in oil sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) India and European Union (EU) have exchanged information and identifying areas for possible joint cooperation in January 2008. Some joint studies are planned to be undertaken in this sector.

(c) to (e) During India and European Union (EU) Energy panel meeting held in November 2007, Indian side impressed on EU side that given their expertise in gas use in EU countries, India offers a lot of opportunities for the EU industry. It is, however, early to assess impact, if any, of EU response. No agreement has been signed between India and EU in oil sector.

Helicopter Service to difficult Terrain Areas

3627. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to introduce helicopter services to the inaccessible and difficult terrain areas in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands to ferry the local people;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by when these are likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. (PHHL) has provided one Dauphin SA 365 N helicopter on long term lease basis to the Andaman & Nicobar Administration w.e.f. 25th March, 2003 and it is being utilized for inter-island services connecting Car Nicobar, Campbell Bay and Hut Bay etc. for VIP transportation and medical evacuation etc. The Administration has been operating regular

passenger flights by helicopter. The average utilization of the helicopter has been 100 hrs. per month. Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. (PHHL) has also provided one additional Dauphin helicopter to A & N Administration with effect from 27 Jan 05 to meet additional requirements of the Administration. In addition to the above arrangement, a proposal for acquisition of 2 Nos. of medium helicopters and 2 Nos. fixed wing aircraft by Andaman and Nicobar Islands is under consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

Public Transport Vehicle for Disabled

3628. SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has stopped manufacturing public transport vehicles for disabled;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the organisation presently manufacturing public transport vehicle for disabled;

(d) whether any scheme is being formulated to provide any other facility for the welfare of the disabled in future; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) M/s Maruti Udyog Ltd. and M/s Hyundai Motors India Ltd. manufacture vehicles for the physically challenged people.

(d) and (e) For the mobility of persons with disabilities, assistance is provided to eligible persons under Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP) Scheme.

Profit Earned by Factories of SAIL

3629. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the locations where Steel Authority of India Ltd. has set up factories in the country;

(b) the profit earned by these factories during each of the last three years; and

(c) the amount out of the profit earned by Bhilai Steel Plant in Chhattisgarh re-invested in the State during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) and (b) The location-wise details of the Steel Plants under the Steel Authority of India Ltd. and the profit before tax (PBT)/ Loss earned by these plants during the last three years are as under:

(Rs. in crores)

	Plants	Locations	Profit/Loss before tax			
			2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1.	Bhilai Steel Plant	Bhilai, Chattiegarh	4042	2781	4272	3367
2.	Durgapur Steel Plant	Durgapur, West Bengal	784	261	624	686
3.	Rourkela Steel Plant	Rourkela, Orissa	1045	497	1336	1018
4.	Bokaro Steel Plant	Bokaro, Jharkhand	3290	2056	2737	2034
5.	Indian Iron & Steel Company Limited (ISP)*	Bumpur, West Bengal	47	-258	-250	-113
6.	Alloy Steel Plant	Durgapur, West Bengal	-42	19	14	0.1
7.	Salem Steel Plant	Salem, Tamilnadu	3	-67	118	73
8.	Visvesvaraya Iron & Steel Plant	Bhadravati, Kamataka	-24	14	-41	-18

*IISCO, a subsidiary company of SAIL was merged with SAIL in 2005-06.

Apart from the above, SAIL has one subsidiary i.e. Maharashtra Electrosmelt Ltd. located at Chandrapur,

Maharashtra. The profit of the subsidiary is as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Maharashtra Electrosmelt Ltd.	65	32	28	36

(c) (i) The investment made in Chattisgarh State by Bhilai Steel plant on Capital Expenditure and expenditure on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) during last three years is as follows:

Year	Amount (Rs./Crore)
2004-05	154.50
2005-06	236.51
2006-07	427.68
2007-08	651.42

(ii) In addition to above (i), a sum off Rs. 5 crore has been paid to Railways during 2006-07 and a sum of Rs. 48 crore has been paid to Railways during 2007-08 for construction of the Dalli-Rajhara-Rowghat-Jagdalpur Railway line.

(iii) SAIL Board, in its meeting held on 3rd April 2007 had approved in principle the modernisation and expansion plan of BSP at an indicative cost of Rs. 11262 crore (net of cenvat).

Proposals from the State Governments

3630. SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received some proposals regarding development of tourism from various State Governments;

(b) if so, the details of the projects submitted by each of the said State Governments during the last three years and the current year;

(c) whether the Government has sanctioned the said projects;

(d) if so, the amount of funds sanctioned for the said projects; and

(e) the time by when the said projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) Development of Tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. Ministry of Tourism, however, provides financial assistance to States/Union Territories on the basis of project proposals received from them in accordance with scheme guidelines subject to availability of funds and inter-se priority. State-wise details of projects sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism during the last three years for development and promotion of tourism are given in the statement enclosed.

Implementation of projects is also the responsibility of State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. Ministry of Tourism, however, monitors and reviews the projects through site visits and review meetings from time to time.

Statement

The Projects sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism from 2005-06 to 2007-08

(Rs. in lakh)

Sl.No.	State/UT	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
		No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	7	2615.82	3	1540.56	9	2629.48
2.	Assam	10	2140.00	9	2453.39	5	1271.90
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	10	2240.16	12	1887.80	10	3330.12
4.	Bihar	3	1212.23	2	1937.29	3	1194.75
5.	Chattisgarh	7	1775.59	16	3540.17	4	1274.09
6.	Goa	1	10.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
7.	Gujarat	5	2011.58	7	443.65	5	576.58
8.	Haryana	7	639.71	5	1836.16	11	2260.27
9.	Himachal Pradesh	6	1645.00	8	1871.00	12	2286.22
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	22	6656.01	29	5233.82	36	6851.15

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11.	Jharkhand	5	1227.27	3	956.35	7	1130.47
12.	Karnataka	8	1706.52	4	1323.89	5	2004.71
13.	Kerala	13	4858.88	18	4474.02	10	3124.31
14.	Madhya Pradesh	12	3047.39	10	3668.47	16	3952.66
15.	Maharashtra	9	2075.04	13	2839.05	5	1279.44
16.	Manipur	2	49.80	9	939.35	5	1110.77
17.	Meghalaya	1	5.00	9	1435.29	2	674.40
18.	Mizoram	10	2273.41	9	2613.38	5	1692.94
19.	Nagaland	9	2528.97	8	2340.32	21	2241.35
20.	Orissa	10	2309.61	13	2826.84	12	2376.30
21.	Punjab	5	1437.67	13	3223.37	1	397.89
22.	Rajasthan	7	2591.87	8	953.84	2	1554.46
23.	Sikkim	14	2844.56	13	2609.42	27	6036.48
24.	Tamil Nadu	19	4264.62	11	1866.41	13	2831.80
25.	Tripura	3	716.26	4	291.27	11	1110.76
26.	Uttaranchal	13	2738.00	16	1907.50	5	2081.04
27.	Uttar Pradesh	18	3905.23	7	3329.06	7	2833.03
28.	West Bengal	5	989.35	10	2978.32	12	3243.17
29.	Andaman and Nicobar	1	6.25	0	0.00	0	0.00
30.	Chandigarh	1	13.70	2	15.00	2	20.00
31.	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	2	29.79	0	0.00	0	0.00
32.	Delhi	2	20.00	5	2400.09	7	749.08
33.	Daman and Diu	4	262.28	0	0.00	0	0.00
34.	Lakshadweep	0	0	1	7.00	1	782.73
35.	Pondicherry	2	469.39	1	500.00	6	1610.88
Total		253	61316.96	278	64242.08	277	64513.23

*[English]***Aviation Infrastructure in NE Region**

3631. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the aircraft movement in the North-East region has increased during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the steps are being taken to expedite the setting up of adequate aviation infrastructure in the region including new greenfield airports; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Total number of aircraft movement were 33019 in 2004-05, 34036 in 2005-06 and 42069 in 2006-07 in N.E. Region.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The details of ongoing development works at various airports undertaken by Airports Authority of India (AAI) are given as under:

(A) Runways Works

Extension of Runways has been completed at Agartala Airport, extension of Runways is in Progress at Guwahati and Silchar Airport. Extension of Runways is at planning stage at Dibrugarh and Barapani (Shillong) Airport.

(B) Apron Works

Extension of Apron Work is in progress at Agartala, Dibrugarh, Guwahati and Silchar Airport and at planning stage at Imphal, Diampur and Barapani (Shillong) Airport.

(c) Terminal Building

New Terminal Building/Expansion of Existing Terminal Building is in progress at Dibrugarh, Barapani (Shillong) and Imphal Airport. Expansion of existing Terminal Building is at planning stage at Agartala, Guwahati and Dimapur Airport. New Terminal Building is at planning stage at Jorhat and Bagdogra Airport.

(D) Green Field Airports

The following Green Field Airports are at planning stage:

Pakyong (Sikkim), Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh), Kokrajhar (Assam) and Cheithu (Nagaland) Airport. Green Field Airport at Tura (Meghalaya) has been completed and is suitable for operation of 20 seater aircraft in fair weather conditions. Besides these, development of non-operational airports at Tezu, Passighat, Rupsi, Kamalpur and Kailashar are also being planned.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps/LPG Agencies to SC/ST/OBCs

3632. SHRI RAM CHANDRA PASWAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications received by the Government from SC/ST/OBCs for allotment of petrol pumps/LPG (Liquified Petroleum Gas) agencies since year 2004 to till date, State-wise;

(b) the number of petrol pumps/LPG agencies allotted to SC/ST/OBCs during the last three years, State-wise and company-wise; and

(c) the number of petrol pumps/LPG agencies likely to be allotted to SC/ST/OBCs during the current year, State-wise and company-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) The selection of dealers/distributors of petroleum products are done by the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPC) in accordance with objective and transparent guidelines laid down by them for the purpose. These guidelines provide for 50% reservation of retail outlet dealerships, LPG distributorships and SKO-LDO dealerships for different sections of society as under:-

(i) Defence personnel	— 8%
(ii) Freedom Fighters	— 2%
(iii) Outstanding Sports Persons	— 2%
(iv) Paramilitary/Police/Government Personnel	— 8%
(v) Physically Handicapped Persons	— 5%
(vi) Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes	— 25%

33% of the dealerships/distributorships in all categories mentioned above will be reserved for women belonging to that category.

State-wise number of applications received under various categories, including SC/ST category for allotment of retail outlet dealerships and LPG agencies and allotments made by the OMCs are available with the Director (Marketing) of the OMCs concerned.

(c) It is not possible to indicate a precise time-frame for the allotment of retail outlets/LPG distributorships during the current year as the selection process adopted by OMCs involves various steps like issue of advertisement, scrutiny of applications and documents, holding of interviews of the eligible candidates, release of merit panels, field investigation in respect of the selected candidate, etc.

Study on Viability of Undertakings

3633. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any extensive study to know whether the existing undertaking under the Ministry are a viable undertakings or profit-making undertakings;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government had conducted such a study previously also;

(d) if so, the findings of studies conducted in this regard;

(e) whether the Government has implemented any of the recommendations of the study conducted in this regard; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) and (b) Since the adoption of the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) in May 2004 all sick/loss making PSEs are reviewed for their revival/restructuring by the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE). Out of 27 such

PSEs under the Department of Heavy Industry, recommendations of the BRPSE have been received in 25 cases as per statement enclosed.

(c) to (f) No composite and comprehensive study has been done for all PSEs prior to the above BRPSE exercise. However, restructuring/revival was undertaken in the past from time to time in specific cases.

Statement

1. Andrew Yule & Co. Ltd
2. Bridge & Roof Co. Ltd.
3. Hindustan Salts Ltd.
4. BBJ Construction Co. Ltd.
5. Praga Tools Ltd.
6. HMT (Bearings) Ltd.
7. Heavy Engineering Corp. Ltd.
8. Braithwaite & Co. Ltd.
9. Cement Corporation of India Ltd.
10. HMT (MT) Ltd.
11. Bharat Pumps & Compressors Ltd.
12. Bharat Heavy Plate & Vessels Ltd.
13. Bharat Wagon & Engineering Co. Ltd.
14. Tungabhadra Steel Products Ltd.
15. Richardson & Cruddas Ltd.
16. Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd.
17. Bharat Yantra Nigam Ltd.
18. Tyre Corporation of India Ltd.
19. HMT Ltd.
20. Triveni Structural Ltd.
21. HMT (Watches) Ltd.
22. Nepa Ltd.
23. HMIT (Chinar Watches) Ltd.
24. Hindustan Cables Ltd.
25. Instrumentation Ltd.

Development of Rourkela Airport

3634. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a proposal to develop Rourkela Airport and revive air services from there;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the fund provision made for the purpose in 2008-09; and

(c) if not the steps taken to examine the proposal as the route may be proved profitable due to various facts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Rourkela airport belongs to Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL). There is no proposal for development of this airport by Airports Authority of India (AAI).

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Food Parks

3635. DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Food Parks to be set up in the country during the 11th Five Year Plan;

(b) the details including the places where they are likely to be set up;

(c) the amounts allocated so far for this programme;

(d) whether these Food Parks include cold storages; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (e) Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) has developed a scheme for providing financial assistance for establishment of Mega Food Parks, which envisages a well-defined agri/horticultural-processing zone containing state of the art processing facilities with support infrastructure and well established supply chain. During the 11th Five Year Plan, 30 Mega

Food Parks are proposed to be established with financial assistance of MFPI. 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 maximization of value addition, minimization of wastages and improving farmers' income. 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 envisages initiatives led by prospective private investors after creating a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) with all stakeholders and assisted by MFPI for implementation of the project.

The scheme is project oriented. The locations of the Mega Food Parks have to be selected on demand-driven cluster based approach with delineated supply chain and well supported by pre-feasibility studies. Total fund amounting to Rs. 2613 crore has been allocated for infrastructure Development Scheme including Mega Food Park for 11th Plan period. Mega Food Park will have need based common infrastructure facilities depending upon the functional requirements of the project and may include cold storages.

[Translation]

New LPG Connections

3636. CH. MUNAWAR HASSAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cooking gas dealers of various companies in Dehradun, Rishikesh and Hardwar in Uttarakhand;

(b) the total number of cylinders issued to the said dealers by various companies between January 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008, month-wise;

(c) the number of connections released by each agency during the said period, month-wise;

(d) whether the Government is aware that because of undeclared ban by the companies new connections are not being released to the consumers;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the guidelines being issued to the companies by the Government for making gas connections available to the consumers on demand; and

(f) the time by which supply of gas is likely to be ensured on demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that as on 1.4.2008 there are 28, 6 and 12 LPG distributorships in Dehradun, Rishikesh and Hardwar respectively.

(b) and (c) OMCs have reported that the distributors have uplifted a total number of 2410717, 456987 and 1001101 LPG cylinders in Dehradun, Rishikesh and Haridwar respectively during the period 1.1.2007 to 31.3.2008 we have enrolled 15216, 4727 and 7078 new domestic LPG customers in Dehradun, Rishikesh and Hardwar respectively during the same period. Month-wise details are available with the Directors (Marketing) of concerned OMCs.

(d) to (f) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that at present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the OMCs through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors.

At present, new LPG connections are available across the counter for genuine domestic customers and supply of LPG connection is regulated under the provisions of the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000 (Control Order).

[English]

Modernisation of the Railway Station under Southern Railway

3637. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN:
SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway stations under Southern Railway which have been selected for modernization as announced in the last Railway Budget; and

(b) the details of stations where work has already been commenced particularly Thiruvananthapuram Central Railway Station?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) On Southern Railway, 25 and 22 stations were identified during 2006-07 and during 2007-08 respectively for modernisation work. The details of the stations identified are as under:

During 2006-07

1. Chengalpattu
2. Katpadi
3. Tambaram
4. Chennai Egmore (II Entry)
5. Tiruttani
6. Erode
7. Colmbatore
8. Palghat
9. Calicut
10. Mangalore
11. Emakulam
12. Trichur
13. Quilon
14. Thiruvananthapuram Central
15. Kanyakumari
16. Pudicherry
17. Vridhachalam
18. Tiruchchirappalli
19. Thanjavur
20. Kumbakonam
21. Dindigul
22. Madurai
23. Tirunelveli
24. Tuticorin
25. Virudhunagar

During 2007-08

1. Chennai Beach
2. Ambur

3. Jolapet
4. Puttur
5. Sullurpetta
6. Salem
7. Tiruppur
8. Shoranur
9. Kannur
10. Thalassery
11. Emakulam
12. Kottayam
13. Chengannur
14. Nagercoil
15. Srirangam
16. Mayiladuthurai
17. Thiruvapur
18. Nagapattinam
19. Rameshwaram
20. Karaikkudi
21. Palani and
22. Ramanathapuram.

Work of modernisation at all the above 47 railway stations including Thiruvananthapuram Central railway station has already been commenced.

Enforcement of Non-Smoking Law in Railway Coaches

3638. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have enforced the non-smoking law in the Railway coaches;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of passengers caught while smoking in the Railway coaches particularly in NCR of Delhi Division and Mumbai;

(d) the details of revenue that has been earned by imposing fine for smoking from these regions; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to stop smoking in the trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Smoking in trains and railway premises has been made a punishable offence under the provisions of Railways Act, 1989 and The Cigarettes and other Tobacco Product (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003.

(c) and (d) Passengers caught smoking in the railway coaches and premises are charged as per relevant provisions of the law. However, no separate statistics are maintained in this regard.

(e) Regular drives are conducted to check smoking in the trains by the staff from the Commercial, Operating and Security departments who have been empowered to take action against the offenders as per law. In addition, public are educated through various media, not to smoke in railway premises including railway coaches and by displaying notices at prominent places both at the stations and inside the coaches.

Compensation for Loss/Damage to Air Passengers

3639. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:
SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of passenger injured/died on board or at the airport in the last four years;

(b) the details of the circumstances leading to these incidents;

(c) the compensation paid to the passengers relatives during the said period;

(d) the details of the medical facilities are being provided at all the airports;

(e) whether the medical facilities in India are at par with the international standards;

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

(g) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to provide adequate medical care compensation at par with the International standards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (g) Death due to natural causes does not come under the definition of aircraft accident and hence Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) does not maintain statistics/data of the same. However, DGCA has issued directions to all airlines operating long haul flights to provide necessary medical advice to their passengers to avoid instances of deep-vein thrombosis, which is identified as possible cause of sudden discomfort in long haul flights. All airlines operating long haul have confirmed introducing necessary medical advice suggesting light exercise to passengers during in-flight passenger briefing. International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has not prescribed any standards for availability of the medical facility at the airport. Medical facility for first aid is available at all airports. For further treatment, if required, passengers are shifted to the nearby hospitals including civil hospitals.

Air Service from Kolkata

3640. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the time by which Kolkata Airport is proposed to be revived;

(b) whether number of flights have been withdrawn from Kolkata Airport and about 15 State capitals have no direct flight from Kolkata specially services of Air India;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to provide air service from Kolkata Airport; and

(d) the time by which the Greenfield Airport of Andal is proposed to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) An Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) has approved the Action Plan for development of Kolkata airport at a total cost of Rs. 1942.51 crore. The airport development is programmed to be accomplished by June, 2010.

(b) and (c) At present, Kolkata is directly air linked with Agartala, Aizwal, Ahmedabad, Bagdogra, Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Delhi, Dibrugarh, Dimapur, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Imphal, Jaipur, Jamshedpur, Jorhat, Lucknow, Mumbai, Nagpur, Patna, Port Blair, Raipur, Ranchi, Shillong, Silchar and Vizag.

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 the Government.

(d) On a request of Government of West Bengal, Airports Authority of India (AAI) has prepared an on-site inspection report for establishment of a new Greenfield airport at Andal near Asansol. AAI has brought out several issues which need to be addressed. The Airport Promoter has been advised to address these issues while preparing the project report.

[Translation]

Decrease in Custom Duty

3641. SHRI THAWARCHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the protection provided to the petrochemical industries is diminishing due to sharply decreasing custom duty;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the petrochemical industry is in crisis due to anomaly in the structure of VAT, higher rates of tax on inputs and products, wide disparity in taxes from one State to another; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government to provide protection to the petrochemical industries and rationalise the duties and tax structure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF

STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a), (b) and (d) The Petrochemical Sector is de-licensed and de-regulated. Currently most of the petrochemicals products attract custom duty between 5 to 10%. The current peak rate of custom duty is 10%. Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals through a consultation process with the stakeholder industry association recommends corrections in the duty/tax structure to Ministry of Finance during the pre-budget/post-budget exercise on an annual basis.

(c) This is a State subject.

Providing LPG Connection to Uttar Pradesh

3642. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to formulate any action plan to provide cooking gas connection at village level in Hamirpur, Mahoba, Banda, Chitrakoot, Jalaun, Jhansi and Lalitpur districts of Bundelkhand area of Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) At present, new LPG connections are available across the counter for genuine domestic customers and supply of LPG connection is regulated under the provisions of the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000 (Control Order).

Government have given freedom to OMCs to set up LPG distributorships in accordance with their commercial assessment and locations are identified by them on the basis of available refill sale potential for sustaining an independent distributorship. However, Government have advised OMCs to draw up Marketing Plans for covering semi-urban and rural areas. The details of existing & proposed distributorships is given in the statement enclosed. Advertisement for the proposed distributorships was released in the month of September, 2007.

The setting up of LPG distributorships is a continuous process and involves identification of suitable locations, arranging land for setting up of godown, obtaining various statutory clearances, etc.

Statement

Details of Existing and Proposed Distributorships

District	No. of Existing Distributorships	No. of Proposed Distributorships
Jhansi	21	2
Lalitpur	5	1
Banda	7	1
Jalaun	11	1
Mahoba	4	1
Chitrakoot	3	—
Hamirpur	7	—
Total	58	6

[English]

Inclusion in Teaching Syllabus the Discovery of an Ancient Fort

3643. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the discovery of an ancient fort on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar at Sishupalgarh the remains of a 2,500 year old city is an important matter as can be considered for inclusion in the teaching syllabus of history books at school/college level as was the case with Harappa and Mohan Jodaro;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any further study is being done on the findings; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The recent excavation carried out at an early historic period site of Sisupalgarh by Deccan College, Pune suggests that its earliest date may go back to 2500 years ago.

It is premature to consider the inclusion of the findings from Sishupalgarh in the teaching syllabus of

history books at school/college level, as the said excavation at Sishupalgarh is yet to be formally reported upon by Deccan College, Pune.

Trade Margins on Drugs

3644. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of controlled and control-free drugs and branded and non-branded drugs;

(b) the existing policy on pricing of each category of drugs;

(c) whether any proposal has been received by the Government for imposing trade margins on each category of drugs both for wholesale and retail; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (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 margins to the wholesalers and retailers in respect of branded-generics and generic-generic medicines of certain non-Scheduled formulations. However, this segment forms a small portion of total pharma market in the country.

The Draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy, 2006 proposes to streamline the system of trade margins by capping the trade margins.

The Policy was submitted before the Cabinet for its approval. The Cabinet considered the Policy in its meeting held on 11-1-2007. It was decided that the matter may, in the first instance, be considered by a Group of Ministers (GOM). GOM has since been constituted and has held three meetings so far on 10-4-2007, 12-9-2007 and 30-1-2008. GOM is yet to make its recommendations to the Cabinet.

Allotment of Gas Agency

3645. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has any proposal to open/allot a gas agency at Balachaur District Nawanshahr in Punjab, Narpur Bedi District Ropar, Garhshankar District Hoshiarpur; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be allotted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Government have given freedom to Public Sector Oil Marketing Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to set up LPG distributorships in accordance with their commercial assessment and locations are identified by them on the basis of available refill sale potential for sustaining an independent distributorship.

The consumers of Balachaur, District Nawanshahr; Narpurbedi, District Ropar and Garhshankar, District Hoshiarpur are being catered by the three LPG distributorships of the OMCs.

OMCs have been advised to conduct a survey for feasibility of opening of LPG distributorships at Balachaur in District Nawanshahr, Narpur Bedi in District Ropar and Garhshankar in District Hoshiarpur in the State of Punjab.

[Translation]

Dirty Condition of Banha and Jamul Railway Stations

3646. SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway Stations in Banha and Jamui districts of Bihar remain dirty and lack basic amenities;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Railways in this regard during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) There is no district called Banha in Bihar. However, Jhajha, Gidhaur and Jamui are important stations in Jamui district of Bihar falling in Danapur Division. The stations are maintained clean on regular basis and all minimum essential amenities have been provided at these stations.

[English]

Revamp of the Tourism Website

3647. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the tourism industry is facing increasing competition from different countries in attracting foreign tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to relocate tourism offices abroad;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is also proposal to revamp the Government's tourism website and making it more user friendly for wider access to tourism destinations; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)'s world tourism barometer, international tourism arrivals expanded by 6% in 2007 with arrivals reaching close to 900 million. The fastest growing region is Asia and the Pacific and countries of this region are competing for larger numbers of the international tourist arrivals.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, a new Indiatourism office has been opened in Beijing (China) on 7th April, 2008.

(e) and (f) Maintenance and revamping of the website of Ministry of Tourism is an on-going process in order to make it updated and user friendly. Ministry of Tourism's website www.incredibleindia.org received the National Award for E-governance for best Government website in 2007.

Flight from Kolkata to New York

3648. SHRI RANEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India plans to start a direct flight from Kolkata to New York on all the seven days of the week;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The traffic potential from Kolkata and the surrounding areas is presently not considered sufficient to support a direct flight on this route.

Oil Pricing Policy

3649. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether petroleum products like petrol, diesel, LPG etc. are being sold to the consumers in the country on the basis of import price despite the fact that there is huge domestic investment in the refineries in the country;

(b) if so, the names of the beneficiaries of such huge domestic investment;

(c) the reasons for not percolating these benefits down to the common consumers in the country;

(d) whether the Government would consider to formulate a new oil pricing policy to safeguard the interest of the consumers in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (e) While abolishing the Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) effective 1st April 2002, the Government decided that pricing of all other petroleum products, except PDS Kerosene and Domestic LPG, would be determined by market factors. In order to provide kerosene and LPG at affordable prices, the Government formulated subsidy schemes which are in operation since April 2002.

In order to formulate a long-term pricing policy, the Government had constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee on 'Pricing and Taxation of Petroleum Product' under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister. The Committee submitted its Report on 17.2.2006. The Government had accepted the following recommendations of Dr. Rangarajan Committee Report;

- (i) Pricing of petrol and diesel on Trade Parity basis which shall be a weighted average of Import Parity and Export parity prices in the ratio of 80:20.
- (ii) Reduction of Custom Duty on petrol and diesel from 10% to 7.5%.
- (iii) In principle revision to restrict subsidized PDS kerosene to BPL families only.

Accordingly, the pricing of petrol and diesel was changed from Import Parity to Trade Parity basis (weighted average of import and export parity price in the ratio of 80:20). The Custom Duty on petrol and diesel was reduced to 7.5% from 10% with effect from 16.6.2006.

The interest of the consumers is already being protected by the Government under the current pricing policy. The duties on sensitive petroleum products namely petrol, diesel, domestic LPG and PDS kerosene have been rationalized to mitigate the impact of high international oil prices on their retail selling prices. The ad-valorem component of Excise Duty on unbranded petrol and unbranded diesel has been abolished with effect from 1.3.08. The Customs Duty and Excise Duty on domestic LPG and PDS kerosene were also abolished with effect from 1.3.2005. Further, consequent to enactment of Finance Bill 2006, domestic LPG becomes "Declared Goods" under CST Act and the maximum

Sales Tax/Vat rate is 4% effective 19.04.06 across all the States/Union Territories.

Moreover, in view of the steep increase in international oil prices since 2004, the Government took a conscious decision not to pass on the increase in international oil prices to the consumers. To deal with the steep escalation in international oil prices, the Government has adopted the principle of burden sharing between the Government, the oil PSUs and consumers to protect the interests of the common man and vulnerable sections of society, as also the financial health of OMCs. The Government has issued Oil Bonds and the Upstream Oil Companies have also contributed by offering discount on crude oil and petroleum products to partially compensate the under-recoveries of OMCs.

The prices of domestic LPG and PDS kerosene which are considered as common man's fuels have not been increased since November, 2004 and March 2002 respectively, despite steep increase in the international oil prices. Petrol and diesel prices are also highly subsidized.

[Translation]

Exodus of Pilots

3650. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the amount incurred by the Government on the training of pilots of the Government owned airlines during each of the last three years till date;

(b) whether the Government is aware that these pilots are lured by private airlines with lucrative offers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government for the protection of interest of the pilots and also that of Government owned airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The expenditure incurred on training of Pilots during 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08 was Rs. 13.20 crores, Rs. 10.75 crores, Rs. 17.89 crores respectively by the erstwhile Air India and Rs. 11.28 crores, Rs. 30.62 crores, and Rs. 15.08 crores respectively by erstwhile Indian Airlines. Besides, Airline Allied Services Limited, a subsidiary of

erstwhile Indian Airlines, incurred an expenditure of Rs. 193.24 lakhs during 2005-06, Rs. 107.81 lakhs during 2006-07 and Rs. 300.00 lakhs during 2007-08 on training of its pilots.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Besides providing job security, the Public Sector airlines have taken various steps to improve the service conditions of its pilots. Some of the steps taken are as follows:

- (i) Keep the emoluments at comparable levels vis-a-vis the established Indian carriers;
- (ii) Revision of Loss of license Insurance and Insurance Coverage for pilots to provide them high degree of security;
- (iii) Retain services of pilots beyond the age of superannuation subject to the validity of the license;
- (iv) Revision of Productivity Linked Incentive and other allowances.

Further, in order to check poaching of Pilots, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has also issued a Civil Aviation Requirement (Section 7, Series "X" Part II) in September, 2005, whereby a Pilot intending to resign from an airlines is required to give a notice of six months to his employer.

Foot Overbridge at Mau Station

3651. SHRI CHANDRA DEV PRASAD RAJBHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether foot overbridges has been constructed only over two platforms out of four at Mau Station;
- (b) if so, whether the Railways propose to construct foot overbridge over the rest of the platforms; and
- (c) if so, the time by which these are likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Mau railway station has

a main platform (Platform No. 1) and an island platform. The island platform accommodates Platform nos. 2 & 3 on one face and Platform no. 4 on other face. A foot over bridge connects the main platform and island platforms and thus is serving all the four platforms already existing.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Exploration in Rajasthan by ONGC

3652. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) had started excavation for oil exploration at Marubhumi Rashtriya Udyan situated near Jodhpur in Rajasthan which is a prohibited area without getting prior approval of the forest department;

(b) if so, the time of commencement of excavation and the time by which it was stopped and the amount spent thereon till then; and

(c) the action taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has no exploration activity at Marubhumi Rashtriya Udyan situated near Jodhpur in Rajasthan.

Scrap Cutting Work

3653. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether scrap cutting work is carried out at Izzatnagar Depot (North East);
- (b) if so, the nature of the said work;
- (c) whether any changes are being proposed therein; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Scrap Cutting is not being done at Izzatnagar Depot (North East) by Railway.

(b) However, scrap cutting of sold lots is being done at Izzatnagar Depot only by the scrap purchasers in some cases like condemned rolling stock etc. as permitted by railways to facilitate loading.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Pending Railway Projects in Madhya Pradesh

3654. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Rail Projects relating to Madhya Pradesh are pending clearance with the Union Government;

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

(c) the time by which all above pending projects relating to Madhya Pradesh State are likely to be given approval?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A project pending for clearance is that project which has been included in Budget with the proviso that work would be taken up after obtaining requisite approval and for which approval is awaited. There is no such pending project in Madhya Pradesh. However, there are certain new proposals pertaining to projects for which survey has been done and decision will be taken in due course after finalization of survey reports based on results of the survey. The proposal of Manmad-Indore new line has been processed for necessary approval.

[English]

Profit/Loss Incurred by the Railways

3655. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the profit/loss incurred by the Railways during the last three years;

(b) whether the Railways have fixed any target to increase its profit in the coming years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Surplus generated by the railways during the last three years are as under:-

Year	Amount (Rs. in crore)
2006-07	10206.32
2005-06	6193.32
2004-05	2074.23

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The Indian Railways have fixed the revised target of surplus of Rs. 13534.08 crore for 2007-08 and Rs. 11786.74 crore surplus target for 2008-09.

(d) Does not arise.

Exports of DMUs and EMUs

3656. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have got overseas orders for export of Diesel Multiple Units (DMUs) and Electrical Multiple Units (EMUs);

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the revenue earned by the Railways during the last three years;

(c) whether the Railways have taken any steps to further promote its exports to various other countries;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An order from Angolan Railways for 2 DMU rakes has been executed. Value of the order is Rs. 18.48 Crores. A letter of intent has also been received from Sri Lankan Railways for the supply of 16 rakes of BG DMU coaches. No order for EMU Coaches has been received so far.

(c) to (e) Export of Railway rolling stock is done through the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) of Indian Railways i.e. RITES Limited and IRCON International Limited.

[Translation]

Passenger Coaches and Goods Wagons

3657. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether new passenger coaches and goods wagons have been made available to rail divisions during the last three years including the current year; and

(b) if so, the zone-wise and year-wise details thereof, particularly in the Western Central Railway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The numbers of new passenger coaches and goods wagons allotted to the Zonal Railways during the last three years including the current year are detailed in the statement enclosed.

Statement

Allotment of Passenger Coaches during last three years including Current Year

Rly.	CR	ER	ECR	ECOR	NR	NCR	NER	NFR	NWR	SR	SCR	SER	SECR	SWR	WR	WCR
2005-06	92	129	169	97	270	27	59	108	132	225	157	153	86	109	134	75
2006-07	103	141	167	107	372	34	74	123	48	300	112	45	78	186	236	30
2007-08	156	175	309	82	304	75	201	155	208	198	173	213	50	223	203	97
2008-09 (upto 10.04.2008)	20	0	24	18	0	0	2	0	0	6	0	2	4	0	2	16

Allotment of Passenger Coaches during last three years including Current Year

Rly.	CR	ER	ECR	ECOR	NR	NCR	NER	NFR	NWR	SR	SCR	SER	SECR	SWR	WR	WCR
2005-06	0	599	824	1167	0	1568	0	0	1327	0	0	462	400	2266	0	1086
2006-07	86	520	729	2347	70	2182	479	631	1015	568	0	0	780	942	0	1886
2007-08	0	0	509	1452	0	919	0	0	677	0	0	280	904	238	0	601
2008-09 (upto 10.04.2008)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

CR Central Railway
ER Eastern Railway
ECR East Central Railway
ECOR East Coast Railway
NR Northern Railway
NCR North Central Railway
NER North Eastern Railway
NFR Northeast Frontier Railway

NWR North Western Railway
SR Southern Railway
SCR South Central Railway
SER South Eastern Railway
SECR South East Central Railway
SWR South Western Railway
WR Western Railway
WCR West Central Railway

[English]

**Incidents of Accidents/Technical Snag/
Force Landing**

3658. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the flights of Air India, Indian Airlines and other private airlines have involved in any accidents/technical snag/force landing in the last six months;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to avoid the recurrence of such incidents in the future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) There had been no accidents/forced landing incidents with respect to Air India, Indian Airlines and other private airlines in last six months. During this period, there were technical snags involving some aircraft systems such as auto pilot, electrical system, hydraulic system etc. These snags were rectified as per guidance prescribed in the various Manuals depending on the type of aircraft.

(c) Action is always taken on the recommendations emanating from the investigations of accident/incident to avoid the recurrence of similar incidents in future. Technical snags were also analysed and necessary steps were taken to prevent recurrence of such snags by changing the frequency of inspections, ensuring compliance of service bulletin issued by manufactures, changing maintenance frequency of components etc.

Railway Overbridges and Level Crossings

3659. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of execution of ROBs and level crossings taken up in various parts of Assam during last three years and target set for incomplete works;

(b) the details of pending proposals of ROBs and level crossings which are yet to be taken up stating the causes of delay;

(c) new proposals if any under consideration of the Railways;

(d) whether the Railways have modified the policy pertaining to the share of funding ROBs and level crossings;

(e) if so, details thereof;

(f) whether the Railways have simplified procedure; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) 6 works of ROBs (Road over Bridges) are being executed at present in Assam out of which 5 works are proposed for completion during financial year 2008-09. 12 works are being executed by National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) and 9 works are being executed on Deposit terms basis in the State of Assam. One work being done on cost sharing basis. Only one temporary level crossing was opened in Assam during last 3 years (in 2007-08) for construction of ROB (Road over Bridge).

(b) Three proposals have been recently received from State Government of Assam for ROBs viz at Bharalumukh in Guwahati city, Bijni between Bijni-Chaparakata and another between Badarpur-Silchar. Similarly 2 proposals for opening of level crossings are under consideration.

(c) No new proposals of ROB is under consideration at present. However, one proposal of Level crossing at Rangiya is under process.

(d) No policy change has been enacted so far.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) Does not arise.

Availability of Ethanol

3660. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:
SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI:

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

(a) whether the Government have any mechanism to assess the indigenous availability of ethanol in the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the estimated quantity of ethanol required per annum for supply of 5% ethanol blended petrol in the country; and

(d) the details of the steps taken by the Government to meet the requirement of ethanol for the said purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) The required quantity of ethanol for 5% blending with petrol is procured on the basis of open tender system. The requirement of ethanol for the three year period is 180 crore litres 5% blending with petrol. The OMCs have been able to contract 140.4 crore litres. They have so far procured 29.5 crore litres under the programme (as on 31.03.2008).

However, the shortfall in procurement of ethanol is due to levies/taxes on ethanol imposed by the different States. The matter has been taken up with the concerned State Government to reduce/remove the duties & taxes on ethanol meant for doping with petrol. Some of the States like Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand have recently exempted/reduced the import and export fee.

Sourcing of Casting by Foreign MNCs

3661. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether many foreign multinational companies are sourcing their casting from India but our share in the world casting market is rather small;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the measures being taken to increase substantially the casting industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) and (b) As per the available information, export of iron castings during the year 2006-07 and April-February period of 2007-08 are as under:-

Year	Quantity (in tonnes)
2006-07	4849
April 2007-February, 2008	882

(Source: JPC)

The Indian casting industry due to its technological strength in the field has advantage over other developing countries in exports. This is evident from the current trend of increase in outsourcing by international manufacturers of engineering products from India (Source:-DIPP Annual Report 2007-08).

(c) The casting industry is eligible for automatic approval up to 100% Foreign Direct Investment.

[Translation]

Authorisation of Delhi Police Personnel

3662. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Constables and Head Constables of Delhi Police are authorized to travel by Rajdhani Trains;

(b) if so, the rules thereof;

(c) whether these rules are being violated in Rajdhani Rail service which causes a lot of inconvenience to the passengers as they forcibly deprive them of their seats and take undue advantage of police uniform; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to check such activities of Police personnel in trains?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No such case has been reported over Northern Railway in the year, 2008 in this regard.

(d) Although no such incident has been reported, yet the Railway administration has instructed Vigilance, Commercial and Railway Protection Force/Government Railway Force to keep a close watch on such incidents and take legal action against the offenders.

Awareness Programmes by the Railways

3663. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have launched any awareness campaign to protect the train passengers from the gang of robbers who loot with sedatives in trains

and railway premises;

(b) if so, the total number of persons against whom cases have been registered and those against whom action has been taken in this regard; and

(c) the details of treatment given to the affected railway passengers in the railway hospitals and other hospitals and assistance provided by the Railways to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Railways have launched passengers awareness programme to protect the train passengers from drugging gangs.

(b) It is pertinent to mention that maintenance of law and order is a State subject and power to investigate in IPC crimes are vested with Police. Registration and detection of IPC crimes is the responsibility of Government Railway Police which works under the control of the State Governments and as such, Ministry of Railways has to depend largely on them for control of crime over Railways.

In spite of the above fact, Railways is supplementing the efforts of the State Governments in controlling crime on the Railways by deploying Railway Protection Force staff to escort trains for security of passengers.

During the year 2007, 714 cases of drugging of Railway passengers were reported. 304 persons involved in these cases were arrested by Railway Protection Force and handed over to the Government Railway Police for further legal action under the provisions of laws.

(c) Affected train passengers requiring medical treatment have been attended on trains, Railway stations and at the Railway Hospitals by the Railway Medical Officers. Supportive treatment was given with stomach wash, I.V. Fluids, Injections, Antibiotics in Railway Hospitals. After rendering First Aid, affected passengers, where necessary, were referred to the nearest Government Hospitals.

[English]

Working Conditions in Asbestos Factories

3664. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted a study through the Institute of Occupational Health on the betterment of working conditions in asbestos factories in India.

(b) if so, whether it is proper to enlist the support of the asbestos industry against whom UN has imposed sanctions world wide;

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

(d) whether the study report is likely to be presented at the forthcoming Rotterdam Convention of the UN Chemical Review Committee; 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 MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) Yes Sir. The National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), Ahmedabad has been entrusted with a study on environmental and health impacts of the usages of Chrysotile Asbestos with an objective to find out the concentration of asbestos fibres in the work zone and to assess the health status of the workers and the residents in the vicinity of the industry.

Out of a total of Rs. 59.66 lacs allocated for the study by Department of Chemical and Petrochemicals, the Asbestos Cement Products Manufacturers Association has contributed Rs. 16 lacs to ensure their co-operation and access to the factories. NIOH is a body under Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

Since the NIOH study is still under progress, no report was presented before the Chemical Review Committee of Rotterdam Convention held at Geneva during March 10-13, 2008.

[Translation]

Seized Naptha in Gujarat

3665. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:
SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

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

(a) whether a large quantity of Naptha has been seized in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of persons caught for involvement in this illegal work during the last three years; and

(d) the action taken by the Government against the guilty persons alongwith the rules under which such action has been taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies and Government of Gujarat have reported that they have not seized any quantity of Naptha in Gujarat.

(b) to (d) Does not arise, in view of reply to part (a) above.

Registration of NGOs

3666. SHRIMATI RANJEET RANJAN:
SHRI BALESHWAR YADAV:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of NGOs registered with the Ministry;

(b) the number of NGOs being run by OBCs/ Scheduled Castes;

(c) the details thereof;

(d) the total grant-in-aid given to those NGOs during the last three years;

(e) whether any NGOs has been found involved in bungling of grant-in-aid provided to it;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the action taken by the Government to probe into the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No NGO is registered with the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

(b) and (c) Release of grant-in-aid under the schemes is not linked with member of NGOs having affiliation to any particular caste/category. Therefore no such data is maintained in the Ministry.

(d) to (g) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

[English]

Manufacturing of Anti-Hemophilic Factor

3667. SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to manufacture Anti-Hemophilic Factor (AHF) for the Hemophilia patients 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 MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) The Office of Drugs Controller General (India) has informed that they have not received any proposal in this regard from the Government of India.

Naptha Mixed Petrol

3668. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL:
SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:

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

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Naptha is mixed with Petrol;

(b) if so, the percentage thereof;

(c) whether the smoke emitted from the Naptha mixed petrol is harmful to health and environment;

(d) if so, the nature of ill effects of the Naptha mixed smoke on health; and

(e) the details of the steps Government have taken to check such adulteration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) The possibility of mixing of Naptha with petrol by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out owing to substantial price differential between petrol and Naptha and the easy miscibility of Naptha with petrol.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. If petrol is mixed with Naptha, it affects the Octane Number and thereby combustion, which leads to increase in unburnt Hydrocarbon and Carbon-monoxide emissions.

(e) Government have issued the Naptha (Acquisition, Sales, Storage and Prevention of Use in Automobile) Order, 2000 under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to prevent diversion and misuse of Naptha for adulteration. State Governments have been empowered under this Order to take action in the case of malpractices/irregularities. Also, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) take action against their dealers under the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG), for adulteration in petrol.

Harassment of Foreign Tourists

3669. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE:
SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:
SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases regarding the crime against tourists particularly foreign tourists, have come to the notice of the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details in this regard as collected from the State/UT Governments for the last three years, State-wise and year-wise;

(c) whether some foreign tourists have even died in such incidents;

(d) if so, the details thereof for the last three years, State-wise;

(e) whether the Union Government has issued new guidelines/directions/suggestions to the States in this regard recently; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (f) Public Order and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India and as such, the registration, investigation, detection and prevention of crime, including crimes against tourists, is the primary responsibility of State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The data on incidents of crimes against tourists, including foreign tourists is not compiled by Ministry of Tourism. Following recent media reports regarding harassment with tourists in India, the Ministry, of Tourism discussed the issue of safety and security of tourists with Secretaries of Tourism of States/Union Territories and representatives of Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Defence. Ministry of Tourism in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence and State Governments/Union Territories is in the process of framing guidelines for formation of a Tourist Security Organization comprising mainly of Ex-Servicemen for the safety and security of tourists.

[Translation]

Use/Supply of Gas as Fuel

3670. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether gas is main source of fuel in the country and its demand exceeds supply;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Government has selected certain sectors on priority for use of gas keeping in view the limited availability of gas;

(d) if so, the names of the said sectors; and

(e) the percentage of gas consumption in each of the said sectors in the country?

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

PATEL): (a) and (b) According to the report of Working Group on Petroleum & Natural Gas for XI Plan, natural gas fulfills about 8.5% of the energy needs of the country. The estimated demand of natural gas for 2007-08 was 179.17 Million Standard Cubic Meters per day (mmscmd). As against this, the present total availability of natural gas in the country is 114.74 mmscmd.

(c) to (e) Government has been giving priority, inter alia to Fertilizer and Power sectors for supply of natural gas. Presently Fertilizer and Power sectors consume around 29% and 40% of the natural gas available for distribution in the country.

[English]

M.C. Gupta Committee on Delhi Public Library

3671. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE:

SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the M.C. Gupta Committee has recommended Delhi Public Library (DPL) should have a two-tier management structure comprising of an enlarged board and an executive committee with the creation of a Director General post as its member-secretary;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the review committee also recommended the creation of an additional post of director and the two directors will have an equitable work distribution;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government has examined and taken a final decision on the recommendation of the M.C. Gupta Committee, especially the reconstitution/expansion of the members of Delhi Library Board (DLB); and

(f) if so, the details of action so far taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (d) Yes.

Sir. The M.C. Gupta Committee had recommended that DPL should have a two-tier management structure comprising of an enlarged Board and a smaller functional body to be known as Executive Committee. It is recommended that the strength of the Board may be raised to thirty (30) with the Director General (a new post) as member secretary.

The Committee had also recommended that DPL should have a seven member Executive Committee headed by the Director General. The Review Committee recommends the creation of two senior positions a Director General and an additional post of Director. The two Directors will have an equitable work distribution.

(e) and (f) Delhi Public Library is an autonomous body governed and administered by the Delhi Library Board. The Delhi Public Library will take necessary action on the recommendations.

[Translation]

International Flights from Indore

3672. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to introduce international Flights from Indore Airport in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Air India Express has plans to introduce flights from Indore to Dubai via Nagpur on availability of customs and immigration facilities at Indore Airport.

Handling of Cargo by Air India

3673. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether cargo handling of Air India is worse than that of private airlines;

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

(c) the number of baggages lost by Air India during the last two years and the number of baggages not retrieved and those found broken; and

(d) the corrective measures taken/proposed to be taken to improve the standard of cargo handling by Air India in comparison to other airlines of the world?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) During 2006, 132 baggage were lost and 3688 were reported broken/damaged on the erstwhile Air India network. During 2007, 158 baggage were lost and 2844 were reported broken/damaged.

(d) The following systems are in place to improve the standard of Cargo handling by Air India:

(i) All stations are to,

(a) ensure baggage connected alongwith passenger;

(b) ensure correct tagging of baggage;

(c) ensure correct loading/off-loading of baggage;

(d) optimize usage of the World Tracer System for effective tracing.

(ii) Implementation of Cargo Automation for speedy and accurate transactions in fifty domestic stations and three international stations.

(iii) Provision of worldwide Track-and-trace facility in Cargo Automation.

(iv) Provision and access to FIRM allotment of cargo space by providing internet booking access to the remotest parts of the country through Cargo Automation.

[English]

Withdrawal of Tax Rebate on Commissioning of new Refineries

3674. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI B. MAHTAB:
SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI:
SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY:

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

(a) whether the Government has withdrawn the tax rebate on commissioning of new refineries in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Indian Oil Corporation Pradeep refinery will suffer loss due to such withdrawal of tax rebate;

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

(e) whether the project will be delayed as a result of Government's latest decision; and

(f) if not, the time by which the construction work at the site would be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Presently, Section 80-IB (9) provides that the amount of deduction to an undertaking which begins commercial production or refining of mineral oil shall be 100% of the profits for a period of seven consecutive assessment years including the initial assessment year. However, with the introduction of the proposed Sunset Clause in the Budget 2008-09, the tax holiday will stand withdrawn if refining of mineral oil begins after 1.4.2009.

(c) and (d) Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has informed that due to withdrawal of the tax rebate, there would be financial implications for its Paradeep Refinery and it would adversely impact the Project's Internal Rate of Return (IRR). IOC has as such represented for withdrawal of the proposed amendment.

(e) and (f) IOC has also informed that based on the Detailed Feasibility Report (DFR), the Board of Directors of IOC in its meeting held on 25.3.2006 have accorded in-principle approval to the Paradeep Refinery Project at an estimated investment of Rs. 25,646 crore with completion schedule as October, 2011, consisting of 15 MMTPA refinery integrated with petrochemicals viz. paraxylene, polypropylene and styrene. The final investment approval for the project is expected to be obtained during 1st quarter of 2008-09 based on the \pm 10% cost estimate after completion of Front End Engineering Design (FEED) which is under finalization of IOC. With this, no delay is expected in implementation of the project.

Agreement for Bharuch-Dahej Railway Line

3675. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:
SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether stake holder agreement has been signed between GMB, Dahej SEZ limited, GNFC, Adani Port and RVNL for gauge conversion of Bharuch-Dahej railway line;

(b) if so, the time limit for implementation of the project;

(c) whether it is also feasible to integrate this corridor with dedicated freight corridor between Delhi and Mumbai; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Timeframe can be decided only after signing of Concession Agreement.

(c) and (d) As per present plan, the Bharuch-Dahej line will have connectivity to the Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) through the nearest junction points on the DFC.

Separate Food Processing Policy

3676. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

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

(a) whether separate policy for food processing would attract investors and encourage setting up of food processing units;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the response of the State Governments on issue of framing separate policy, State-wise;

(d) whether the Union Government is planning to develop new technologies to minimize the wastage of perishable food items; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (e) Ministry of Food Processing Industries with the intention to make concerted efforts for development and growth of food processing sector is encouraging states to frame Food Processing Industrial Policy for their respective States. This will facilitate the State to create enabling environment for creating rural infrastructure, raise level of processing and generate farm level employment keeping in view their distinct agro climatic scenario and availability of rural infrastructure. Vision 2015 Document has been finalized by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI), which envisages tripling the size of the processed food sector by increasing the level of processing of perishable from 6% to 20%, value addition from 20% to 35% and share in global trade from 1.5% to 3% by 2015. An integrated strategy for promotion of agri business-Vision, Strategy and Action Plan for the food processing sector has also been approved by the Government. To minimize the wastage of perishable food items the Ministry has developed strategic initiatives like setting up of Mega Food Parks and Integrated Cold Chain Infrastructure during the 11th Plan.

As per information available, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka have a separate food processing policy for the State. Bihar, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala have taken steps to develop food processing policy for their States. Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have set up separate Department of Food Processing for a sector specific approach. Ministry of Food Processing Industries is organizing a meeting of the States Ministers of Food Processing shortly for better-coordinated efforts for development and growth of the food processing sector.

[*Translation*]

Rise in the International Prices of Steel

3677. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN": Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state the extent of rise in international prices of steel at various phases during the period from March, 2004 to February 2008?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): The International prices of steel (*CIS FOB Export Price*) on quarterly basis from March 2004 to February 2008 is given in the table below:

(Price range in \$/tonne)

	Merchant Bar	HR Coils	CR Coils
March, 2004	440-450	480-570	560-600
June, 2004	380-390	470-530	520-560
Sept., 2004	430-450	550-620	590-650
Dec., 2004	420-440	480-600	570-690
March 2005	420-440	515-590	600-680
June 2005	410-430	440-450	580-640
Sept. 2005	380-400	400-425	500-535
Dec. 2005	380-400	360-390	460-480
March 2006	400-420	400-450	490-535
June 2006	480-500	550-570	590-640
Sep. 2006	500-470	460-510	540-580
Dec. 2006	470-500	480-530	560-600
March 2007	470-500	525-580	600-660
June 2007	560-570	520-580	580-650
Sept. 2007	560-570	530-600	630-640
Dec. 2007	560-580	560-620	650-680
Feb. 2008	720-760	760-790	820-860

Source: Metal Bulletin

*[English]***Re-scheduling of Air India Domestic Services**

3678. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India have re-scheduled its certain domestic services recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the criteria or methodology adopted to re-schedule its Existing Domestic Services?

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

(b) Details are given in the statement enclosed.

(c) The rescheduling is planned basically due to constraints such as shortage of aircraft, crew, engineering, Airport constraints, prolonged inclement weather over certain places, etc. The rescheduling is finalized on the basis of inputs from Operations, Engineering Headquarters, the regions and after confirming finally with the Commercial Headquarters.

Statement

Sector	Frequency	Date of withdrawal	Remarks/Current Status
Mumbai-Vizag-Mumbai	Daily	7/11/07	IC513/514 (Mumbai-Vizag-Mumbai) merged with IC 617/618 (Mumbai-Hyderabad-Mumbai) to operate as Mumbai-Hyderabad-Vizag and return on daily basis w.e.f. 7/11/2007.
Delhi-Surat-Delhi	Frequency reduced from daily to four flights per week.	7/11/07	Four flights per week operated upto 29/3/2008 with A319 aircraft. Delhi-Surat-Delhi route taken over by Alliance Air to operate six flight/wk with CRJ aircraft w.e.f. 30.3.2008.
Delhi-Vadodara-Delhi	Daily	10.12.07	IC819/820 & IC610/604 restored w.e.f.
Mumbai-Ahmedabad-Mumbai	Daily	10.12.07	30.3.08 on daily basis with A 320 aircraft.
Pune-Hyderabad-Pune	Twice weekly	10.12.07	Withdrawn due to Pune airfield closure.
Kolkata-Jaipur Ahmedabad-Kolkata Ahmedabad-Kolkata	Thrice weekly weekly	10.12.07	IC267 restored w.e.f. 26/2/2008
Kolkata-Ahmedabad-Jaipur-Kolkata	Four flights per weekly	10/12/07	IC269 restored w.e.f. 26/2/2008
Chennai-Bangalore-Chennai-Bhubaneswar-Kolkata & return	Four flights per week with B737 aircraft	Mid Dec 07	Due to withdrawal of B737 a/c from passengers' services, the route taken over on A 319 a/c w.e.f. 18.2.08 on daily basis up to 29.3.08. Effective 30.3.08 this service is operating daily as Kolkata-Bhubaneswar-Chennai & return by A320 a/c.

Following domestic flights were rescheduled from January, 2008 onwards:

Sector	Frequency	Remarks/Current Status
Kolkata-Guwahati-Kolkata	Reduced from daily to 5 per week	North Eastern Schedule restructured in consultation with North Eastern Council.
Guwahati-Silchar-Guwahati	-do-	-do-
Sinchar-Imphal-Sinchar	Reduced from daily to 4 per week	-do-
Delhi-Gwalior-Bhopal & Vice-versa	4 days/a week	Route restructured to commence operations to Delhi-Gwalior-JLR & vice versa.
Delhi-Kullu-Delhi	Reduced to 2 per week	Due to grounding of one ATR aircraft
Delhi-Kanpur-Alihabad & vice versa	Daily	Route restructured to operate as Delhi-Kanpur-Alihabad-Delhi.

Private Companies for Development of Private Siding in Railway Land

3679. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any laid down policy which allows private companies to develop private sidings in railway land;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) zone-wise details of private-sidings in railway land developed so far and approved for development;

(d) whether this policy is uniformly adopted by all zonal railways; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) As per policy on

licensing of railway land for commercial plots etc., annual licence fee for land used to lay private sidings is 6% of the land value. As per another circular for development of goods sheds/sidings in railway premises, private investment is permitted without any right for exclusive use and assets so created will belong to the Indian Railways.

Zone-wise details of private sidings in railway land as per the available information, is as under:

Railway	No. of Siding Developed	No. of Sidings on different stages of approval	Total
Eastern Railway	4	0	4
Northern Railway	7	4	11
North Central Railway	7	0	7
North Eastern Railway	0	1	1
Northeast Frontier Railway	19	0	19
North Western Railway	9	0	9
Southern Railway	1	1	2
South Central Railway	1	0	1
South Eastern Railway	4	54	58
Western Railway	0	0	0
Total	52	60	112

However, the entire issue of laying of private sidings in railway land and the conditions thereof is under review.

Domestic Carriers

3680. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether relaxing the five-year norm for domestic carriers to fly overseas has been formulated in the new policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the new policy is proposed to be announced in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The New Civil Aviation Policy is presently under consideration of a Group of Ministers (GoM).

Freight for Salt Transportation

3681. DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA:
SHRI RAJU RANA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present rate of railway freight for salt transportation;

(b) whether the Government of India is considering to reduce the freight as salt is basic and important product both for human consumption as well as industrial use;

(c) is there any difference in freight rate between salt for human consumption and industrial use; and

(d) the freight rates during last four years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) At present the Salt for transportation in train load is charged at Class 110 except for Salt for industrial use which is charged at Class 120.

(b) Presently there is no such proposal under consideration.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) From 01.4.2004 to 31.3.2005, Salt for industrial use was charged at Class 115. From 01.4.2005, it is charged at Class 120. Salt other than Salt for industrial use was charged at Class 90 from 01.4.2004 to 14.1.2006. It was revised to class 100 from 15.1.2006. It was further revised to Class 110 from 01.6.2006.

[*Translation*]

Renovation of Petrol Pumps in Maharashtra

3682. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI:
SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

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

(a) whether Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. has renovated the petrol pumps in Maharashtra; and

(b) if so, the district-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HCPL) has renovated/modernized 165 of its Petrol Pumps in Maharashtra during the last three years as per district-wise details given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

District-wise details of HPCL Petrol Pumps Modernized/Renovated in Maharashtra

Sl. No.	Name of District	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Mumbai	2	0	1
2.	Pune	8	8	2
3.	Latur	0	0	0
4.	Kolhapur	0	0	0
5.	Aurangabad	10	9	1
6.	Jalna	1	0	2
7.	Nasik	6	3	5
8.	Ahmednagar	4	3	5
9.	Nanded	0	2	2
10.	Nagpur	4	3	2
11.	Yavatmal	1	1	1
12.	Amravati	2	1	2
13.	Chandrapur	4	2	1

1	2	3	4	5
14.	Wardha	1	1	2
15.	Jaigaon	1	3	1
16.	Akola	1	1	0
17.	Raigad	3	2	2
18.	Thane	9	2	9
19.	Sangli	1	0	0
20.	Solapur	1	0	0
21.	Satara	3	0	0
22.	Usmanabad	0	0	0
23.	Ratnagiri	0	1	0
24.	Beed	3	3	0
25.	Dhule	1	0	0
26.	Buldhana	3	2	0
27.	Washim	2	0	0
28.	Parbhani	0	4	0
29.	Nandurbar	0	1	1
30.	Bhandara	0	2	0
31.	Hingoli	0	0	1
Total		71	54	40

*[English]***Campaigns Launched for Promotion of Tourism**

3683. SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of campaigns launched in the recent past to promote tourism in the country; and

(b) the impact of these campaigns to boost tourism?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Tourism regularly undertakes Incredible India media campaigns in print, TV, internet and outdoor media

to attract inbound tourists. The Ministry of Tourism also undertook media campaigns in the domestic market to promote products such as Adventure Tourism, Rural Tourism, Eco Tourism, Social Awareness Campaigns against Graffiti and Garbage at monuments etc. The Indiatourism offices in the country and abroad also do extensive promotion and publicity through road shows, joint advertising with tour operators, familiarization tours of travel media and tour operators, participation in travel fairs and distribution of publicity material.

Foreign tourist arrivals have increased from 3.46 million in 2004 to an estimated 5 million in 2007. India's foreign exchange earnings through tourism grew from US \$ 6.17 billion (Rs. 27944 crore) in 2004 to an estimated US\$ 11.62 billion (Rs. 47925 crore) in 2007.

Cartel of Steel Companies

3684. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI:
SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the corresponding cost of various inputs vis-a-vis the selling price of steel and operating profit of the ten biggest steel companies in India during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the Government is aware of any cartel formed by steel producing companies to keep the prices high;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government to prove into the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) The inputs cost, sales of products & services and profit after tax of the

top ten India steel companies, as per their Annual Reports, for the years 2006-07, 2005-06 and 2004-05 are given company-wise in Statement-I. It may however, be noted that the selling price of various steel products by the steel companies is determined both through long-term agreements as well as retail market prices. Since the long-term agreement is a contract price, it varies between the companies and also between the customers. Ministry of Steel monitors the retail market price of representative steel products in various retail markets. The price movement of the nine representative categories of steel products, in April this year and preceding 3 years, as observed in Mumbai retail market is given in Statement-II.

(b) The Steel prices are determined by market factors such as demand and supply situation, international price as per landed cost of imports and the cost of input materials. However, no evidence on cartelisation by steel companies in determining the steel prices has been brought to the notice of the Ministry of Steel.

(c) and (d) Does not arise in view of the (b) above.

Statement I*Steel Authority of India Limited*

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	39188.66	32555.15	33482.65
Other Income & stock adjustment	2247.47	2614.40	1859.33
Material Consumption	13276.20	12462.40	10294.29
Employee Cost	5087.42	4204.37	4604.24
Power & Fuel	2578.84	2614.30	2400.28
Excise Duty	5265.54	4449.47	3397.97
Other Expenses	4261.90	3919.89	3340.88
Depreciation	1211.48	1257.10	1204.68
Interest	332.13	484.00	636.44
Taxes	3220.33	1706.80	2568.76
Profit after Taxes	6202.29	4071.22	6894.44

Tata Steel Limited

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	19762.57	17144.22	15876.87
Other Income & stock adjustment	516.14	359.67	466.16
Material Consumption	3572.06	3024.38	3020.42
Employee Cost	1606.93	1404.28	1410.11
Power & Fuel	1027.84	897.57	778.30
Excise Duty	2210.55	2004.83	1377.92
Other Expenses	4606.49	4039.33	3653.42
Depreciation	819.29	775.10	618.78
Interest	173.90	118.44	186.80
Taxes	2039.50	1733.58	1823.12
Profit after Taxes	4222.15	3506.38	3474.16

JSW Steel Limited

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	9337.34	6766.09	7035.90
Other Income & stock adjustment	105.15	513.81	58.05
Material Consumption	4029.95	3112.05	2887.97
Employee Cost	175.47	127.04	107.21
Power & Fuel	393.10	415.76	541.87
Excise Duty	742.90	585.99	356.54
Other Expenses	1288.12	971.78	898.54
Depreciation	498.23	405.82	359.54
Interest	399.54	360.32	469.87
Taxes	623.18	444.61	602.50
Profit after Taxes	1292.00	856.53	870.11

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd.

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	9150.57	8490.88	8181.34
Other Income & stock adjustment	660.97	447.44	286.31
Material Consumption	3884.31	3625.99	2685.02
Employee Cost	740.94	572.34	490.25
Power & Fuel	242.95	235.10	216.06
Excise Duty	1217.91	1176.73	821.50
Other Expenses	1103.07	992.02	1006.89
Depreciation	351.60	415.57	983.06
Interest	48.42	31.06	11.11
Taxes	858.91	637.14	245.67
Profit after Taxes	1367.43	1252.37	2008.09

Essar Steel Limited

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	9000.46	6850.45	6533.25
Other Income & stock adjustment	891.88	297.88	96.58
Material Consumption	5747.74	3725.28	3100.37
Employee Cost	152.80	99.75	76.09
Power & Fuel	503.22	424.98	369.25
Excise Duty	806.11	667.87	416.54
Other Expenses	750.03	629.70	928.46
Depreciation	631.04	482.10	394.29
Interest	617.94	422.67	550.73
Taxes	246.97	165.80	203.95
Profit after Taxes	436.49	530.18	590.15

Ispat Industries Ltd.

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	8378.44	5580.02	6459.39
Other Income & stock adjustment	137.05	125.52	23.54
Material Consumption	3702.04	2910.12	3025.66
Employee Cost	165.34	131.55	112.43
Power & Fuel		849.86	632.91
Excise Duty	889.80	621.28	381.31
Other Expenses	2140.24	881.34	465.03
Depreciation	623.83	571.43	435.99
Interest	990.87	936.81	534.06
Taxes	12.90	-384.18	199.48
Profit after Taxes	-9.53	-812.67	696.06

Jindal Stainless Ltd.

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	5267.80	3494.61	3422.42
Other Income & stock adjustment	18.93	19.47	5.67
Material Consumption	3037.19	1991.25	2035.28
Employee Cost	73.51	53.47	48.04
Power & Fuel	436.12	300.74	229.29
Excise Duty	390.30	311.47	227.38
Other Expenses	505.43	425.78	375.12
Depreciation	216.10	136.11	130.99
Interest	70.35	55.04	26.18
Taxes	204.72	80.49	111.96
Profit after Taxes	353.01	159.73	245.85

Bhushan Steel & Strips Limited

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	4202.05	3070.38	2867.90
Other Income & stock adjustment	125.61	-63.16	171.36
Material Consumption	2937.92	2068.10	2208.78
Employee Cost	51.01	36.43	23.61
Power & Fuel	147.70	126.60	108.31
Excise Duty	364.33	277.64	185.78
Other Expenses	168.17	90.00	101.59
Depreciation	208.92	165.76	164.72
Interest	77.25	83.03	80.83
Taxes	59.11	5.21	12.30
Profit after Taxes	313.26	154.45	153.35

Jindal Steel & Power Limited

Summarised Profit & Loss	Figures in Crore		
	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	3919.79	2877.95	2449.87
Other Income & stock adjustment	28.97	186.28	20.17
Material Consumption	783.38	450.35	341.67
Employee Cost	93.70	72.81	48.45
Power & Fuel	341.27	420.14	429.07
Excise Duty	399.98	287.70	185.15
Other Expenses	898.85	798.90	569.70
Depreciation	336.47	219.17	152.48
Interest	150.27	87.31	65.76
Taxes	241.85	154.91	162.06
Profit after Taxes	702.99	572.94	515.70

*Uttam Galva Ltd.***Summarised Profit & Loss****Figures in Crore**

	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
Sales of Products & Services	2679.90	1897.06	2156.11
Other Income & stock adjustment	4.40	9.60	5.38
Material Consumption	2010.60	1366.09	1650.67
Employee Cost	28.42	23.53	17.03
Power & Fuel			
Excise Duty	104.61	108.86	64.40
Other Expenses	268.92	211.09	229.99
Depreciation	49.02	37.99	32.20
Interest	109.25	77.44	64.48
Taxes	0.42	7.33	8.05
Profit after Taxes	113.06	74.33	94.67

Statement II*Retail Price of select Steel Items at Mumbai***(In Rs./tonne)**

Period	Pig Iron LM Gr. IV	TMT 10mm	Wire Rods 8mm	Rounds 16mm	Plates 12mm	HR Coil 2.5mm	CR Coil 0.63mm	GP Sheets 0.63mm	Pencil Ingot/ Billets 100mm
April, 2005	20200	30500	29200	30000	36125	36750	41000	41000	26200
April, 2006	16900	26250	27750	26000	32750	32000	34000	37500	22150
April, 2007	19000	30250	28250	29500	34500	34500	38500	41000	25075
April, 2008*	29100	49000	42500	44000	42750	42250	45250	48000	38250

*1st April 2008

(Source: ERU/JPC)

Note: (i) Prices are inclusive of Excise Duty and Sales Tax.

(ii) All prices are indicative.

New Trains, Increase in Frequency of Trains and Additional Coaches for Gujarat

3685. SHRI HARILAL MADHAVJI BHAI PATEL:
SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether various railways passenger associations of Gujarat have represented to the Railways authorities for starting of new trains/increase in frequency in trains/ additional coaches in various trains; and

(b) the steps being taken by the Railways on the demands of these associations?

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

(b) The proposals received from various Railway Passenger Associations of Gujarat have been examined and action as found feasible and justified taken. The following train facilities have been provided in Gujarat during 2007-08:

New Trains

S.No.	Train No.	From	To	Type	Frequency
1.	2989/2990- 2995A/2996A	Bandra-	Ajmer/Udaipur	Express	Tri-weekly
2.	9113/9114	Vadodara	Bhilad	Express	Daily
3.	9151/9152	Gandhidham	Palanpur	Express	Daily
4.	2993/2994	Jaipur	Bandra (T)	Garib Rath	Tri-weekly
5.	1049/1050	Shri Chhatrapati Sahu Maharaj (T)-	Ahmedabad	Express	weekly
6.	209A/210A	Mahesana	Viramgam	Passenger	Special (daily)

Extension

S.No.	Train No.	From	To	Name	Upto
1.	9165/9166	Ahmedabad	Faizabad	Sabarmati Express	Varanasi
2.	6509/6510	Ajmer	Bangalore	Express	Mysore
3.	754/753	Valsad	Sanjan	MEMU	Umbergaon

Frequency

S.No.	Train No.	From	To	Type	From	To
1.	9311/9312	Indore	Pune	Express	Bi-weekly	Tri-weekly
2.	2843/2844	Puri	Ahmedabad	Express	Tri-weekly	Four days in a week

The following train facilities serving Gujarat have also been announced in Railway Budget 2008-09:

New Trains

S.No.	From	To	Type	Frequency
1.	Kamakhya	Gandhidham	Express	Weekly
2.	Amritsar	Kochuveli	Express	Weekly
3.	Surat	Muzaffarpur	Express	Weekly
4.	Yesvantpur	Jodhpur	Express	Weekly
5.	Ahmedabad	Mumbai	AC Express	Weekly
6.	Ahmedabad	Patan	Passenger (after gauge conversion)	Daily
7.	Kochuveli	Dehradun	Express	Weekly
8.	Dabhoi	Pratapnagar	Passenger (after gauge conversion)	Daily

Extension

S.No.	Train No.	From	To	Type	Frequency
1.	6733/6734	Madurai	Manmad	Express	Rameswaram/Okha
2.	1095/1096	Pune	Ahmedabad	Ahimsa Express	Veraval

Frequency

S.No.	Train No.	From	To	Type	From	To
1.	2449/2450	Nizamuddin	Madgaon	Goa Sampark Kranti Express	Weekly	Bi-weekly
2.	2947/2498	Ahmedabad	Patna	Azimabad Express	Weekly	Bi-weekly
3.	2431/2432	Nizamuddin	Thiruvananthapuram	Rajdhani Express	Bi-weekly	Tri-weekly
4.	9269/9270	Porbandar	Motihari	Express	Weekly	Bi-weekly

Helpline for Foreign Tourists

3686. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to form any special cell for the redressal of the grievances of foreign tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to create a national Help Line number to help the foreign tourists to curb the situation of harassment of foreign tourists;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the number of foreign tourists visited the country during the last three years, till date?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Tourism has a Complaint Cell for the redressal of grievances of tourists, including foreign tourists. This cell functions in coordination with the field offices of Ministry of Tourism, concerned Ministries, States Governments and concerned organizations. 'Public order' and 'Police' are State subjects, as such, the prevention

of crime, including crimes against women tourists is the primary responsibility of State Governments/Union Territories.

(e) The number of foreign tourists who visited the country during the last three years, till date is as follows:-

Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals (In Millions)
2005	3.92
2006	4.45
2007 ●	5.00
2008 ●	1.66 Million (Jan. to March)

● Provisional

Rehabilitation Centres

3687. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI RAVIPRAKASH VERMA:
SHRIMATI PRIYA DUTT:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken steps to launch drug awareness campaign among the young people;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is aware that certain commonly used medicines and chemicals like cough syrups, paints etc. are being used as drugs, particularly by the young generation;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether street children and children with disabilities are more vulnerable to such drug abuse;

(f) if so, the steps taken/being taken to protect such children from drug abuse;

(g) whether the Government proposes to make a special provision for Integrated Rehabilitation Centre for Addicts; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government of India under its Scheme of Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse is providing financial assistance to Non-Governmental organizations for running Counselling Centres and De-addiction centres for drug abuse awareness generation for all categories of people including youth. A National Drug Awareness Campaign is launched every year on the occasion of International Day against Illicit Trafficking and Drug Abuse on 26th June and special camps are organized for making people aware about the ill effects of drug abuse. Similarly information, education and communication materials have been developed to impart knowledge about drugs through radio, television newspapers and other mass media.

(c) and (d) There is no authentic data to conclusively indicate that certain commonly used medicines and chemicals like cough syrups, paints etc. are being used as drugs, particularly by young generation. Also in this regard no survey has been conducted.

(e) and (f) There is no specific data either for street children or disabled children. On the face of it, street children are more vulnerable than children living in homes. However, the same cannot be said for vulnerability of disabled children. The Ministry of Women and Child Development are implementing an Integrated Programme for Street Children under which one of the components aims at reducing the incidence of drug and substance abuse among children.

(g) and (h) The Ministry has been implementing the Scheme of Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drugs) Abuse through its De-addiction Centre, which itself are working as Integrated Rehabilitation Centre for Addicts.

Post Matric Scholarships

3688. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any amount has been earmarked for Maharashtra in regard to Post Matric Scholarship for OBC during current financial year;

(b) if so, the time by which the outstanding amount will be reimbursed;

(c) whether the amount for current financial year will be released; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) The funds under the Scheme of Post-Matric Scholarship for OBC students will be released to the States including the State of Maharashtra on receipt of proposals from the State Governments within the budgetary allocation of Rs. 134.00 crores during the current financial year.

[Translation]

Share of Food Processing Industry In World Trade

3689. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:
DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

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

(a) whether despite being a major producer of vegetables and fruits the share of this country is almost negligible in the Food Processing Industries of the world;

(b) if not, the India's share in the Food Processing Industries of the World during the last three years;

(c) the reasons of less share therefor;

(d) the steps taken by the Government to increase this share; and

(e) the success achieved by the Government so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (e) India is the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables in the world. However, India's export of processed food in global trade is only 1.5%. Non availability of adequate infrastructure facilities, lack of adequate quality control and testing facilities, non-availability of sufficient quantity of raw materials of processable varieties, lack of continuous product innovation and ability to deal in volumes, high packaging cost etc. are some of the reasons of India's low share of food processing industries in the world.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries provides financial assistance in the form of grant under the Scheme of Technology Upgradation/Modernization/ Establishment of food processing industries for promotion of fruits & vegetables processing units. Under this Scheme, the Ministry extends financial assistance to food processing units in the form of grant-in-aid @25% of the cost of Plant and Machinery and Technical Civil Works subject to maximum of Rs. 50.00 lakhs in general areas or 33.33% subject to maximum of Rs. 75.00 lakhs in difficult areas. In order to ensure speedy disbursement of the financial assistance. The Ministry has decentralized the disbursement procedure through banks under the Scheme of Technology Upgradation/Modernization/ Establishment of food processing industries w.e.f. 1.4.2007. Besides, under Mini Mission IV of Technology Mission of Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Sikkim, J&K, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, higher level of assistance @50% upto Rs. 4 crores for promotion of new units and upto Rs. 1 crore for upgradation/modernization of units is available for processing of horticulture produce.

Since one of the major constraints for low level of processing in agro-food products is lack of infrastructure such as cold chain facilities and inefficient supply chain, the Ministry has developed comprehensive Cold Chain Infrastructure Scheme, during the XI Plan, for creating integrated cold chain infrastructure at different levels-farm level primary processing centre-cum-cold chain, collection/aggregation centres and Strategic Distribution Centres. The initiative being undertaken by the Ministry are aimed at filling the gaps in the supply chain, strengthening of cold chain infrastructure leading to overall development of food processing industries and reduction in wastages.

Ministry has also identified thrust areas for strategic intervention for the 11th Plan, by establishing Mega Food Parks, Cold-chain/value addition and preservation infrastructure, capacity building by setting up of National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship & Management (NIFTEM) and establishment/upgradation of Quality Control Laboratories, which could result in increasing the level of processing, value addition of food products, including perishables.

The export of processed fruit and vegetable products has increased from 385984.29 MT (Rs. 1100.57 crores) during 2001-02 to 501826 MT (Rs. 1359.54 crores) during 2005-06.

(English)

**Oil Exploration by ONGC in Arabian Sea
and Bay of Bengal**

3690. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:
SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

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

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has made a lot of efforts for oil exploration in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal since 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total amount spent on these projects till date;

(d) the details of the results achieved so far in respect of oil exploration; and

(e) the reaction of the Government thereon?

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) has made efforts for oil exploration in Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal since 2000. In the Arabian Sea, the total exploratory inputs expended by ONGC from 2000 to 2008 (as on 01.04.2008) includes 57,959 Line Kilometre (LK) of 2D seismic and 55776.6 square kilometre of 3D seismic data acquisition and drilling of 140 wells.

In the Eastern Offshore (including Krishna Godavari, Cauvery, Mahanadi, Bengal and Andaman basins) in Bay of Bengal, total exploratory inputs expended by ONGC from 2000 to 2008 (as on 01.04.2008) include 40,723 LK of 2D seismic and 54,168.5 square kilometre of 3D seismic data acquisition and drilling of 69 wells.

(c) The total expenditure on exploration (including depreciation) by ONGC during 2000-01 to 2006-07 in Arabian Sea was Rs. 8165.71 crores and in Bay of Bengal was Rs. 5774.85 crores.

(d) and (e) In the Arabian sea, out of total 140 wells drilled during 2000 to 2008 (as on 01.04.2008), 45 wells proved to be hydrocarbon bearing. Accretion made in terms of inplace hydrocarbons is 404.64 Million Metric Tone (MMT) of Oil Equivalent of Gas (O+OEG) as on 01.04.07.

In the Bay of Bengal (Including Krishna Godavari, Cauvery, Mahanadi, Bengal and Andaman basins) out of 69 wells drilled, 32 proved to be hydrocarbon bearing. Accretion made in terms of inplace hydrocarbons is 186.83 MMT (O+OGC) as on 01.04.2007.

Air Services from Jamnagar

3691. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to start air services of public/private airlines from Jamnagar to various destinations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, destination wise;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to arrange the public or private air services for the passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The National Aviation Company of India Limited operates daily services between Jamnagar and Mumbai with A-319 aircraft.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The 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. 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 the Government.

Safety Audits in Oil and Gas Installations

3692. ADV. SURESH KURUP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether regular safety audits are conducted in the oil and gas installations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the general findings of such audits during the last three years; and

(d) the follow up actions taken by the concerned companies in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) Oil Industry Safety Directorate (OISD), a technical directorate under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, formulates and coordinates the implementation of a series of self regulatory measures aimed at enhancing the safety in the oil and gas industry in India. OISD conducts regular safety audits of oil & gas installations, both upstream and downstream, in the country.

During last three years, OISD has conducted following safety audits:

Sector	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Exploration & Production			
Onshore	40	51	58
Offshore	—	4	8
Refinery	12	11	6
Gas processing plants	7	8	3
LPG/POL Installations	22	24	12
Cross country pipelines	1750 kms	1898 kms	1454 kms

The general findings of such audits in various oil & gas installations are as below:

1. Non adherence to operating procedures/laid down norm.
2. Poor inspection and maintenance of facilities.
3. Deficiencies in fire fighting and protection system.
4. Inadequate training.

The recommendations of the safety audits are complied in a time bound manner. These recommendations are regularly reviewed by the concerned company. Further, OISD regularly follows up the compliance of the recommendations and reviews the same with senior officials of the concerned company.

Ethanol Blended Petrol

3693. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has set deadline of October 2008 for oil firms to begin selling 10% blended fuel also known as E10;

(b) if so, whether there are some bottlenecks in meeting the given deadline;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether oil firms are finding it difficult to meet blending requirement of 5% ethanol;

(e) the total demand likely to be of ethanol by October 2008; and

(f) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to meet the requirement of oil companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) decided on 9.10.2007 to make 10% blending optional from October, 2007 and thereafter mandatory from October 2008. Since the issue of modification of the engines are involved for 10% blending, IOC (R&D) Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and Society for Indian Automobiles Manufacturers (SIAM) have been requested to study the issue and to finalise the technical specifications for the implementation of ethanol with petrol in consultation with all the stake holders.

(d) to (f) At present, 5% ethanol mixed petrol is being sold and total requirement of ethanol for 5% blending in notified States and Union territories is 60 Crore litre per year which comes out to approx. 1600 KL per day. As against industry's requirement of 180 crore litres of ethanol for a period of three years, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have been able to contract for 140.4 crore litres and they have so far procured 29.5 crore litres under the programme (as on 31.03.2008). However, the shortfall is due to levies/taxes on ethanol imposed by the different States. The matter has been taken up with the concerned State Governments to reduce/remove the duties & taxes on

ethanol meant for doping with petrol. Some of the States like Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand have recently exempted/reduced the import and export fee.

Food Processing Industries in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

3694. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received representations and proposals from the Andaman and Nicobar Administration for setting up of Food Processing Industries in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the financial assistance provided in this regard during the last three years including the current year, scheme-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) No proposal has been received by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries from Andaman and Nicobar Administration for setting up of Food Processing Industries in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

MoU between RINL and the Government

3695. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) and the Government has recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to produce various variety of steel;

(b) if so, the salient features of the MoU;

(c) whether MoU between RINL and the Government is going to meet the shortage of steel in the open market; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) and (b) A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) and the Government for the year 2008-09 was signed on 19.3.2008. The MoU has Performance Evaluation Parameters as per guidelines of Department of Public Enterprises for the year 2008-09 classified as Static Financial parameters, Dynamic parameters, Sector specific and Enterprises specific parameters. As per the MoU signed, the Budget estimates for the year by RINL for Gross Sales and Gross Margin are Rs. 10,500 crores and Rs. 2300 crores respectively. RINL also envisages Rs. 17 crores for Research & Development and the production of 3.08 million tonnes of Saleable Steel during 2008-09. The Project Implementation Milestones are also included as MoU parameters.

(c) and (d) Achievement of the production targets fixed in the MoU signed would ensure greater supply and thus bridge the demand supply gap to a certain extent.

[*Translation*]

VRS for Surplus Employees in CPSUs

3696. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to offer special Voluntary Retirement Scheme to overcome the problem of surplus employees in Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) and (b) Government had announced a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) in 1988. The Scheme has been revised in 2000 to make it more efficacious having regard to both, the interests of the employees and the need to enable CPSEs to

rationalize their surplus manpower. The managements of CPSEs introduce the VRS with the approval of their Boards and the administrative Ministries.

(c) The Scheme of Counselling, Retraining and Redeployment (CRR) for the separated employees of CPSEs is being implemented in order to equip them with skills so that they may engage themselves in income generating activities.

Review of Performance of Public Sector Fertilizer Plants

3697. SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has reviewed the performance of public sector fertilizer plants of the country during the last three years and current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the plant-wise profits earned or loss incurred by these plants during the said period;

(d) the reasons for losses incurred by these plants; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to make the loss-making plants profitable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The Government is reviewing the performance of Public Sector Fertilizer Plants on a regular basis through review meetings. The MOU targets and related issued are reviewed on a regular basis from time to time.

The plant-wise profits earned or loss incurred by these fertilizer plants during the last three years are given in the enclosed Statement.

The reasons for losses incurred by the plants and the steps taken by the Government to make the loss making plants profitable are indicated against each of the loss making PSUs in the Statement enclosed.

Statement

Name of the Company	Year	Profit/loss	Reasons for losses, if any	Steps taken by the Government
1	2	3	4	5
Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd. (RCF)	2004-05	Rs. 140.96 cr.	Not applicable	Not applicable.
	2005-06	Rs. 147.96 cr.		
	2006-07	Rs. 148.74 cr.		
	2007-08	Rs. 147.00 cr. (provisional)		
Projects and Fertilizers Ltd. (RCF)	2004-05	Rs. 10.06 cr.	Not applicable	Not applicable
	2005-06	Rs. 10.64 cr.		
	2006-07	Rs. 11.20 cr.		
	2007-08	Rs. 12.57 cr. (Provisional)		
National Fertilizers Ltd. (NFL)	2004-05	Rs. 214.55 cr.	Not applicable	Not applicable
	2005-06	Rs. 179.30 cr.		
	2006-07	Rs. 263.67 cr.		
	2007-08	Rs. 11.84 cr. (provisional)		

1	2	3	4	5
Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. (FCIL)	2004-05 2005-06 2006-07 2007-08	(-) Rs. 1209.10 cr. (-) Rs. 1298.32 cr. (-) Rs. 1422.62 cr. —	All plants of the company remain closed since April, 2002. The BIFR recommended winding up of the company in 2004. The proceedings are pending before the Delhi High Court in Company Petition (CP) No. 183/2004. The major liability is on account of interest accrued over the years.	Pursuant to the Government decision dated 12.4.2007 the feasibility of revival of various units of the company are being examined subject to the confirmed availability of gas.
Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (HFCL)	2004-05 2005-06 2006-07 2007-08	Rs. (-) 878.00 cr. Rs. (-) 964.63 cr. Rs. (-) 1065.12 cr. —	All plants of the company remain closed since April, 2002. The matter of winding up of the company is before the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR)	Pursuant to the Government decision dated 12.4.2007 the feasibility of revival of various units of the company are being examined subject to the confirmed availability of gas
Madras Fertilizers Ltd. (MFL)	2004-05 2005-06 2006-07 2007-08	(-) Rs. 58.39 cr. (-) Rs. 131.74 cr. (-) Rs. 114.78 cr. (-) Rs. 140.33 cr. (provisional)	The reasons for losses include high investment during 1993 and 1998 for revamp of ammonia and urea plants and under recovery in cost of production of urea and complex fertilizers	A financial restructuring package for revival of MFL is under consideration by the Government
Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Ltd. (FACT)	2004-05 2005-06 2006-07 2007-08	Rs. (-) 145.43 cr. Rs. (-) 134.70 cr. Rs. (-) 114.70 cr. Rs. (-) 191.01 cr. (provisional)	The reasons for losses include usage of costly naphtha as feedstock, steep increase in the prices of furnace oil and other raw material and inadequate compensation for complex fertilizers under the price concession scheme	During 2006 a financial restructuring package was sanctioned by the Government to FACT involving waiver off all outstanding interest as on 31.3.2005 amount to Rs. 85.77 cr.; and penal interest thereon; conversion of 50% of the outstanding GOI loan of Rs. 584.60 cr. (i.e. Rs. 292.30 cr.) into equity capital, write off of non-plan loan of Rs. 60 cr. given for VRS; write off of

1	2	3	4	5
				balance outstanding GOI loan of Rs. 232.30 cr. as on 31.3.2005
				During the financial year 2007-08, the Government sanctioned Rs. 200 cr. to FACT as a one-time interim grant for sustaining the operations of the company.
Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (BVFCL)	2004-05 2005-06 2006-07 2007-08	Rs. 22.54 cr. Rs. (-) 99.77 cr. Rs. (-) 62.37 cr. Rs. (-) 93.00 cr. (provisional)	Due to limitation in supply of natural gas, the plants are running at 50% load resulting in higher cost of production; interruption in plant operation due to low supply of natural gas; high energy consumption due to old technology, equipment breakdown, and high interest liability on Government of India loan, etc. are the main reasons for losses.	Feasibility of retrofitting/ upgrading of ammonia and urea plant is being explored.
Pyrites Phosphates and Chemicals Ltd. (PPCL)	The company has been closed since 2002. The Patna High Court in Company Petition (CP 14/2002) has ordered winding up of the company and has appointed Official Liquidator.			

*[English]***Automation of Level Crossings**

3698. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are plans for automation of level crossings like in other developed countries; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Automation of Level Crossing on Indian Railways (IR) has been done by providing electric lifting barriers which is operated

through button/switch instead of mechanically operated lifting barriers. Electric lifting barriers are being progressively provided on IR and about 500 level crossings have already been provided with electric lifting barriers.

Losses Incurred in the Food Processing Industries

3699. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has provided any facilities of refrigeration in the rural areas for the benefit of food processing industries during the last three years;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the amount of losses incurred in the food processing sector during the last three years; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) and (b) Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) had been providing financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid upto 25% of the cost of plant & machinery and technical civil works in general areas and 33.33% in difficult areas with a common ceiling of Rs. 75 lakhs under the Cold Chain component of 10th Plan Scheme. The assistance under the scheme was limited to cold storages for non-horticulture produces, special type of cold storages with controlled/modified atmosphere technology, cold storages as integral part of processing units or as a common facility in food parks. MFPI had assisted 16 cold storage projects during last three years (from 2005-06 to 2007-08) involving financial assistance of Rs. 5.70 crore.

(c) and (d) According to the Vision 2015 document, wastage of Agricultural food items (including fruits) is estimated to be about Rs. 58,000 crore annually, occurring at various stages of handling after harvesting due to lack of adequate post-harvest infrastructure, lack of cold chain facilities, transportation, proper storage facilities etc.

Government has formulated and implemented several Plan Schemes to provide financial assistance for the establishment and modernization of food processing units, creation of infrastructure, support for R & D, human resource development besides other promotional measures aimed at reducing wastages, enhancing value addition and increasing shelf life.

MFPI has developed a scheme on Mega Food Parks for 11th Plan which aims to provide a mechanism to bring together farmers, processors and retailers and link agricultural production to the market so as to ensure maximization of value addition, minimization of wastages

and improving farmers' income. 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. Further, a comprehensive Cold Chain Infrastructure Scheme has also been developed for 11th Plan for creating integrated cold chain infrastructure at different levels-farm level primary processing centre-cum-cold chain, collection/aggregation centres and Strategic Distribution Centres. These initiatives are aimed at filling the gaps in the supply chain, strengthening of cold chain infrastructure leading to overall development of food processing industries and reduction in wastages.

Recruitment of North East States People in the Railways

3700. SHRI FRANCIS FANTHOM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the fact that the recruitment of people from the North-East States is the lowest in the Indian Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken/being taken to increase the recruitment from these States in the Railways;

(d) whether the Railways has examined the prospectus of the establishment of a recruitment centre in Guwahati and Dibrugarh for this purpose;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Domicile-wise data of recruitment done on the railway is not maintained, therefore, it is not possible to ascertain the shortage in recruitment of persons belonging to a particular area.

(c) Wide publicity is given while filling up vacancies in Group 'C' & 'D' posts on the railways by way of publication of notification in the Employment News, national and local dailies in line with guidelines of Department of Personnel & Training (which is the nodal department) and all those (including persons from North East States) who apply are considered for appointment on the railways.

(d) to (f) A Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) and A Railway Recruitment Cell (RRC) for conducting recruitment exercise for filling up of Group 'C' & Group 'D' posts respectively are functional at Guwahati and there is no proposal to establish either RRB or RRC at Dibrugarh since they are catering well to requirement of zonal railway in that region.

Demand of LNG

3701. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total demand of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in the country during the Eleventh Plan;

(b) the expected production of LNG by Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and other PSUs in that Plan;

(c) whether the Government continue to import LNG to meet country's domestic demand; and

(d) if so, the MoU signed/proposed to be signed for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Demand of LNG is not assessed separately. It depends on the overall demand of natural gas in the country. According to the Report of Working Group on Petroleum and Natural Gas Sector for XI Plan, the demand of natural gas at the end of XI plan, is expected to be 279.43 Million Standard Cubic Metres per Day (MMSCMD).

(b) LNG is not produced in the country, it is imported into the country and, thereafter, converted to Regasified

LNG (RLNG). The Working Group Report has projected LNG imports during 2011-12 of 23.75 Million Metric Tonne (MMT), which translates to about 83.12 MMSCMD of RLNG.

(c) Government intends to continue to bridge the gap between demand and supply, *inter alia*, through LNG imports.

(d) Petronet LNG Limited (PLL) signed a contract with RasGas, Qatar in July 1999 for import of 7.5 Million Metric Tonnes per Annum (MMTPA) LNG for a period of 25 years. As per the contract, supply of 5 MMTPA LNG commenced in 2004 and the supply of remaining 2.5 MMTPA will commence in 2009. Further, Petronet LNG Ltd. (PLL) has signed a contract with RasGas, Qatar in July 2007 for supply of 1.25 MMT LNG for a period of 1 year.

A Sale-Purchase Agreement (SPA) was signed on 13th June, 2005 in Tehran for 5 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) of LNG between the National Iranian Gas Export Company (NIGEC) and the Indian Consortium of GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL), Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) & Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL). The contract period is for 25 years, beginning from the last quarter of 2009. Simultaneously, the parties have also signed a side letter to the LNG SPA on 13th June, 2005, as per which NIGEC desired to obtain the approval of their parent company, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), for the SPA to become effective. NIGEC has not conveyed NIOC's Board approval till now.

Unmanned Level Crossings

3702. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether about 18,000 level crossings are unmanned;

(b) whether the percentage of accidents has increased at unmanned level crossings; and

(c) if so, measures taken to man unmanned level crossings to check loss lives and property?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) As on 01.04.2008 there

are 17,966 unmanned level crossings on Indian Railways (Excluding Canal and 'D' class cattle crossings).

(b)

Year	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Total Accidents	473	415	351	325	324	234	195	194
Unmanned Level Crossing Accidents	73	80	82	86	65	65	72	65
Unmanned Level Crossing Accident (in %)	15.43	19.28	23.36	26.46	27.78	27.78	36.92	33.51

The percentage of unmanned level crossing accidents over total accidents had shown an increasing trend upto year 2006-07, it has come down in 2007-08 from 36.92% to 33.51%.

(c)

- (1) Proper Road signs have been provided on the approaches to level crossings so that the road vehicle drivers are made aware of the existence of level crossings.
- (2) Speed breakers/rumble strips have been provided on the approaches to level crossing gates so that the road vehicle drivers are reminded to reduce their speed.
- (3) Whistle Boards are also provided alongside the rail track on approach to level crossings. The train drivers are required to whistle right from the whistle board till such time the train crosses the level crossings gate in order to warn the road users about the approaching train. Periodic drives are launched for checking whether the drivers are whistling from such Whistle Boards.
- (4) To educate the road drivers about safety at unmanned level crossings, publicity campaign is launched through various media like quickies on TV, cinema slides, posters, talks on radio, newspaper advertisements and street plays.
- (5) Since accidents at unmanned level crossings take place due to negligence of road users, the State Governments can help by exercising strict checks while issuing driving licenses, specially to drivers of trucks, buses and other heavy

vehicles. All Chief Secretaries have been requested to co-operate in educating the road users.

- (6) Road users must realize that a train traveling at 90 KMPH covers 25 meters per second. Thus, although to the road users, the train appears to be 200 meters away, in terms of time it is only 8 seconds away. This message is being conveyed to them progressively by various publicity measures.
- (7) Joint ambush checks with civil authorities to nab errant road vehicle drivers under the provisions of Motor Vehicle Act, 1988 and the Railways Act, 1989 are being intensified.
- (8) Village panchayats are involved in their public awareness programmes.
- (9) The Safety posters are being put up at level crossings and Village Panchayat Offices progressively.
- (10) The Safety posters are being put up progressively at retail fuel pumps.
- (11) The level crossing gates are progressively being manned in a phased manner where justified.
- (12) Retro-reflective boards are being provided on the crossings for improving the visibility during the night-time.

Buddhist Tourist Circuit

3703. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to link Buddhist tourist circuit in India with foreign such centres in Japan, Thailand and Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Buddhist hubs in Bihar, Orissa and UP are also proposed to be linked with these countries under the above project; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) Ministry of Tourism promotes and publicizes all tourist attractions in the country including the Buddhist sites, in major source markets. In addition, a major integrated campaign titled 'Walk with the Buddha' was launched to showcase Buddhist sites in India in the predominantly Buddhist source markets in Far East and South East Asia.

Tourism products including Buddhist hubs in India are also being promoted through bilateral agreements and multilateral forums such as ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations), SASEC (South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) and SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) through distribution of brochures, posters, Compact Disc Roms and other collateral in the member countries.

CPSEs in Karnataka

3704. SHRI G. KARUNAKERA REDDY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) functioning in the State of Karnataka;

(b) the economic status of each of the CPSEs in the State;

(c) the efforts proposed to be made to revive and sick CPSEs in the State;

(d) whether number of CPSEs set up in Karnataka is very less than compared to other States; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefore and the steps proposed to be taken more CPSEs in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) and (b) As on 31.3.2007, 16 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) were having their registered offices in the state of Karnataka, out of which 12 CPSEs made profit and 4 incurred losses during 2006-07. The enterprise-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) Out of the 4 loss incurring CPSEs, namely, HMT Watches Limited, HMT Machine Tools Limited, Tungabhadra Steel Products Limited and ITI Limited, first 3 were referred to the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) for considering their revival proposals and for making recommendations to the Government. The BRPSE has made recommendations for revival of Tungabhadra Steel Products Limited and HMT Machine Tools Limited, which have been approved by the Government. BRPSE has also made recommendations for revival of HMT Watches Limited. In regard to ITI Limited, the Government had approved the revival of this company in December, 2004.

(d) and (e) There are 98 CPSEs that are having their presence in the state of Karnataka with a gross block of Rs. 32726 crore as on 31.3.2007. The enterprise-wise details of CPSEs in Karnataka vis a vis in other states are given in Statement 13 of Volume I of the Public Enterprises Survey, 2006-07, which was laid in the Parliament on 28.2.2008 and is now a public document.

Statement

List of Karnataka based CPSEs with Net Profit/Loss (-) and Turnover as on 31.3.2007

(Rs. in lakh)

Sl.No.	Name of the CPSEs	Net Profit/Loss(-)	Turnover
1	2	3	4
1.	Antrix Corporation Ltd.	10559	60546
2.	BEML Ltd.	20943	260179

1	2	3	4
3.	Bharat Electronics Ltd.	71816	395270
4.	Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.	114876	778361
5.	HMT (International) Ltd.	137	3145
6.	HMT Ltd.	5430	22729
7.	HMT Machine Tools Ltd.	(-)14978	25655
8.	HMT Watches Ltd.	(-)19581	3688
9.	ITI Ltd.	(-)40526	181833
10.	Karnataka Antibiotics & Pharmaceuticals Ltd.	420	13112
11.	Karnataka Trade Promotion Organisation Ltd.	98	323
12.	Kudremukh Iron Ore Co. Ltd.	1377	26744
13.	Mangalore Refinery & Petrochemicals Ltd.	52552	3237688
14.	STCL Ltd.	1200	100904
15.	Tungabhadra Steel Products Ltd.	(-)3750	511
16.	Vignyan Industries Ltd.	104	2451
Total		200227	5113139

Tourism Development in North Eastern Region

3705. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: ,
SHRI NARAYAN CHANDRA BORKATAKY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is planning to have a big campaign on tourism promotion in China recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any of the tourist destinations in North Eastern Region also figure in the campaign; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Tourism regularly undertakes the Incredible India media campaign in important source markets including China. Recently, an India tourism Office has been opened in Beijing for promotion of inbound tourism from China. The Ministry of Tourism promotes tourist spots of the country, including tourist sites in the North

Eastern Region, in all international markets through production and distribution of Publicity material, dissemination of information through the website and publicity campaigns in the print and electronic media.

Setting up of Centres of Excellence

3706. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to set up 'Centres of Excellence' in various parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas is setting up the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Petroleum Technology (RGIPT) at Jais, District Rai Bareli, Uttar Pradesh, as an "Institute of National Importance" through an Act of Parliament, The RGIPT Act, 2007. Clause 10(4) of the RGIPT Act empowers the Board to establish campus and academic centres at any place within India. On successful establishment of RGIPT,

depending upon the requirement, the Institute would consider setting up of branches in other parts of the country.

Boys Hostel for Scheduled Castes

3707. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state: .

(a) whether the State Government of Gujarat has submitted any proposal for Central assistance to Schedule Castes Boy's Hostel at Morbi and Idar and Ideal Residential School at Mehsana and Idar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has considered the request of State Government of Gujarat; and

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

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

(b) to: (d) The Government of Gujarat had sent proposal for construction of hostel for SC boys during 2002-03 at Morbi & Mehsana for which central share of Rs. 1,00,39,650/- was sanctioned. Out of this, Rs. 77,00,000/- (Rupees seventy seven lakh only) were released during 2002-03 and remaining amount of Rs. 23,39,650/- (Rupees twenty three lakh thirty nine thousand six hundred and fifty only) has been released during 2007-08. No proposal has been received for Govt. boys hostel at Idar. The Government of Gujarat had also sent the proposals for ideal residential school at Mehsana and Idar (Sabarkantha) during 2005-06. Grant-in-aid of Rs. 87,08,500/- (Rupees eighty seven lakh eight thousand and five hundred only) for ideal residential school at Idar has been released by the Ministry during 2007-08.

Railway Crossings on National Highways

3708. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway crossings on national highways in different parts of the country, particularly in Karnataka;

(b) the steps taken by the Railways to build under/over bridges on these highways; and

(c) the time by which construction of these bridges will be started/completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) State-wise figure of level crossings is not maintained. However, as on 01.04.2008, there were 497 level crossing on National Highways on Indian Railways.

(b) Railways construct bridge proper across tracks and approaches are constructed by National Highway Authorities (NHAI). Railways sanction works as and when sponsored by NHAI. At present therefore 222 works of Road Over Bridges/Road Under Bridges (ROBs/RUBs) sanctioned on National Highways in the country.

(c) Railways take up construction of their portion of works as soon as these are sanctioned and General arrangement drawings, combined Estimates are approved by both sides. All our efforts are made to complete Railway portion to work before or simultaneously with the work of approaches done by National Highway Authorities (NHAI).

[Translation]

Trains to Darbhanga (Bihar)

3709. SHRI CHANDRA DEV PRASAD RAJBHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the time frame by which a Rajdhani Express between Delhi to Darbhanga is likely to be introduced;

(b) whether people of Mithalanchal, central ministers, elected members of Parliament and members of Legislative Assembly had demanded for above said Rajdhani Express;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether demand for extension of Lichhavi Express/Saptkranti up to Darbhanga has been looked into;

(e) if so, any decision has been taken in this regard; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There is no proposal for introduction of Rajdhani Express between Delhi & Darbhanga.

(b) and (c) Requests for introduction of new train services including Rajdhani Express are received at various levels viz. division level, headquarter level and Railway Board level form public. However, this data is not maintained.

(d) to (f) Extension of 4005/4006 New Delhi-Samastipur Lichavi Express and 2557/2558 Sapt Kranti Express has been examined but not found feasible, at present, due to operational and resource constraints.

Post Matric Scholarship In Rajasthan for SC

3710. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the year-wise details of the amount sanctioned and the number of students benefited under the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for students for Schedule Castes in Rajasthan State during the last five years;

(b) whether many eligible applicants remained deprived of scholarship due to reduction in sanctioned amount each year;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether adequate funds are likely to be made available to ensure award of scholarship to all eligible applicants; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Year-wise details of the central assistance released and the number of students benefited under the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for students of Scheduled Castes in Rajasthan State during last five years are as under:

Year	Central assistance released	Number of students benefited (Rupees in lakhs)
2003-04	1207.70	83948
2004-05	1157.87	79985
2005-06	1508.34	70411
2006-07	3804.48	126544
2007-08	3204.42	139198

(b) and (c) Under the scheme central assistance is released on the basis of proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The scheme is implemented through them and they maintain data.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Criteria for Allowing Private Airlines to Fly International Destinations

3711. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria for allowing the private airlines to fly international destinations;

(b) whether the Government has relaxed the criteria while permitting any private airlines in the recent past; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) As per the current Government policy, Indian scheduled carriers having continuous operators of 5 years in the domestic sector and having a minimum fleet size of 20 aircraft are eligible to operate on international routes.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Commercial Utilization of Surplus Land

3712. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSU) are having huge areas of unused surplus lands;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has any proposal for commercial utilization of surplus lands held by CPSUs; and

(d) if so, the revenue likely to be generated to the CPSUs as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) and (b) The details of land are maintained by concerned Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). Identification of the surplus land is done by CPSEs based on their present and future business plans/projects.

(c) Commercial utilization of surplus lands is decided by the CPSEs after approval from the appropriate authority. In case of the sick companies, approved revival packages in some cases also include disposal of surplus land.

(d) Revenue likely to be generated from sale/disposal of such lands depends upon various factors such as location, its status like free-hold/lease-hold, land use permission etc.

[Translation]

Gauge Conversion

3713. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is still a great length of narrow gauge and meter gauge rail lines in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways has plans for converting these lines into broad gauge at the earliest;

(d) if so, the zone-wise details of the length of existing narrow gauge and meter gauge rail lines; and

(e) the names of the rail lines out of the above which have been approved for gauge conversion alongwith the number of the rail lines which are being considered for approval in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As on 1.4.2007, Indian Railway had 10621 Km. Meter Gauge (MG) and 3013 Km. Narrow Gauge (NG) lines. Further, about 1549 Km has been completed in 2007-08.

(c) As mentioned in the Railway Budget Speech 2007-08, all efforts would be made to convert all MG/NG lines into BG during 11th Five Year Plan period.

(d) Zone-wise details of MG/NG lines is given as under:

Zone	Meter Gauge	Narrow Gauge
Central	—	572.52
Eastern	—	132.53
East Central	655.48	—
East Coast	—	90.20
Northern	11.27	260.85
North Central	46.48	288.59
North Western	2342.67	—
North Eastern	1723.75	—
Northeast Frontier	1614.07	87.84
Southern	1741.00	—
South Central	650.49	—
South Eastern	—	37.42
South East Central	—	757.23
South Western	276.00	—
West Central	—	—
Western	1588.97	786.67

(e) Names of the gauge conversion approved projects which have been included in the various Budgets and are in progress is given in Railway Budget Documents for the year 2008-09. Proposals for gauge conversion of Ahmedabad-Botad & Dhasa-Jetalsar have also been processed for necessary approval.

[English]

Low Cost Airports

3714. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether many of the State Governments in the country have identified sites for setting up of low cost airports;

(b) if so, the details alongwith its present status thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the time by which the low cost airport are likely to be set up particularly in Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Creation of airport infrastructure is a capital intensive venture with long gestation period. The airport infrastructure is created as per standards and norms recommended by ICAO. There is no concept of a low cost airport.

Sattara Institutions of Assam

3715. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to refer to Unstarred Question No. 1373 dated the 8th March, 2007 regarding Sattara Institutions of Assam and state:

(a) whether Government has examined the project report submitted by the Government of Assam for assistance to Sattara Institution of Assam for promotion of their art forms as well as for improvement of basic infrastructure and preservation of heritage properties;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the amount already allocated and utilizations made so far;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be materialized?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The project report submitted by the Government of Assam has been examined in the Ministry of Culture. It was found that it is not feasible to include this project within the parameters of the existing schemes of the Ministry. However, the Ministry has strongly supported the proposal and sent the same to the Planning Commission for its consideration. The Ministry of Culture has suggested constitution of an Expert Group consisting of eminent members from various fields such as Archaeology, Anthropology, Performing, Arts, etc. for the purpose.

[Translation]

Drilling of Oil Wells by ONGC

3716. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of oil well drilled under the programme of drilling of oil well in 200 meters deep water by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) during the last 10 years;

(b) the details relating to depth and area of each well, the expenditure involved therein along with the availability of oil and gas;

(c) whether incentives and disincentives for the officers are attached with these success and failure of these programmes; 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) During last ten years (1997-2007) as on 1.4.2007 ONGC has drilled 49 offshore exploratory wells, out of which one well was drilled in the water depth of less than 200 m. The remaining 48 wells were drilled in more than 200 m water depth.

Out of the total 49 wells drilled in deepwater during the period (1997-2007), 34 wells were drilled in the KG offshore, two wells in Cauvery offshore, ten wells in western offshore and three wells were drilled in Mahanadi offshore. As a result of these efforts ONGC has made 18 discoveries in KG Offshore (Oil & Gas 2, Gas 16) and one gas discovery in Mahanadi offshore. The basin-wise details regarding water depth, drilled depth and hydrocarbon status are indicated in the enclosed Statement I and II.

(c) and (d) ONGC follows a rigorous procedure for release of exploratory locations (both in onland or offshore areas of explanatory locations (both in onland or offshore areas) wherein after detailed analysis and deliberation with the representative of concerned Basins/Institutes the proposal is put to the Director (Exploration) who is the final approving authority for release of these locations.

In ONGC, there are set guidelines for approbation of good work and disapprobation for work not properly done and these guidelines are strictly adhered to. However, in case of exploration for oil and gas each basin has its own inherent problem and discovery of new fields is a matter of risk, size and the number of opportunities. Even with best efforts, the results are not always commensurate with the inputs, in any fixed time. The continuance of any exploratory effort is primarily guided by the prevailing geological knowledge, which is a dynamic process that involves rigorous refinement at every incremental stage of data acquisition, processing and interpretation; and is succeeded by data integration

and model building. The identified prospective areas are then followed by exploratory drilling to confirm presence of hydrocarbon. The programme is further reviewed considering the leads/geo-scientific data. Even when an exploratory well goes dry it provides significant sub-surface information that may lead to future prospect generation which eventually may prove hydrocarbon bearing. ONGC works with mandate of having direct responsibility of exploration and exploitation and it cannot concentrate solely on the prospective segment of the basin. With the responsibility of narrowing down the hydrocarbon demand-supply gap in the country, ONGC has to go in for high-risk ventures also.

Statement I

Basin-wise list of exploratory wells drilled in deepwater by ONGC during last ten years (1997-2007) as on 1.4.2007

Sl. No.	Basin	Well No.	PEL/NELP Name	Year	W.D. (m)	DD (m)	Status
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Krishna-Godavary	G-1-8	KG-OS-DW-IV	1998-99	506	2817	Dry
2.		G-19	KG-OS-DW-IV	1999-00	267	2517	Oil & Gas
3.		KD-1-1	KG-OS-DW	2000-01	844	3445	Gas
4.		KD-1-2	KG-OS-DW	2000-01	650	2725	Dry
5.		GD-1-1	KG-OS-DW-III	2001-02	677	2705	Gas
6.		G-1-10	KG-OS-DW-IV	2002-03	282	2617	Oil & Gas
7.		G-1-11	KG-OS-DW-IV	2002-03	420	2564	Gas
8.		GD-1-2	KG-OS-DW-III	2003-04	751	2517	Duty
9.		G-4-2	IG	2003-05	429	2872	Gas
10.		KD-2-1	KG-OS-DW	2004-05	1463	3950	Dry
11.		GD-2-1A	KG-OS-DW-III	2004-05	653	2700	Dry
12.		KD-3-1A	KG-OS-DW-Extn	2004-05	1731	4314	Dry
13.		GD-3-1	KG-OS-DW-III	2004-05	1036	1814	Dry
14.		GD-5-1A	KG-OS-DW-III	2004-05	808	2814	Dry

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15.		KD-4-1	KG-OS-DW	2004-05	1153	3314	Dry
16.		G-4-3	IG	2004-05	524	3017	Gas
17.		GD-4-1	KG-OS-DW-III	2004-05	845	2429	Dry
18.		Vashista-1A	KG-OS-DW-IV	2004-05	553	2449	Gas
19.		L-1-1A	KG-DWN-98/5	2005-06	2554	4767	Dry
20.		Vashista-2	KG-OS-DW-IV	2005-06	689	2614	Gas
21.		Vashista-3	KG-OS-DW-IV	2005-06	822	2214 (ST)	Dry
22.		G-4-4	IG	2005-06	331	3234 (ST)	Gas
23.		KD-1-3	KG-OS-DW	2005-06	572	4259	Gas Ind.
24.		D-1	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	603	2416	Gas
25.		K-1	KG-DWN-98/4	2005-06	2678	7094	Dry
26.		A-1	KG-DWN-98/4	2005-06	778	2996.5	Dry
27.		A-1 (KG-DWN-98/2-A-AA)	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	720	2609	Gas
28.		U-1 (KG-DWN-98/2-U-AA)	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	1265	2435	Gas
29.		W-1 (KG-DWN-98/2-W-AA)	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	1283	2670 (ST)	Gas
30.		KG-DWN-98/2-E-1 (Deep & Shallow)	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	703	2450	Gas
31.		GD-6-1	KG-OS-DW-III	2005-06	1043	3848	Gas Ind.
32.		KG-OS-DW-S-1	G-1 (ML)	2006-07	515	2774	Gas
33.		KG-DWN-98/2-G-1 (KG-DWN-98/2-G-AA)	KG-DWN-98/2	2006-07	946	2530	Gas Ind.
34.		KG-DWN-98/2-UD-AA	KG-DWN-98/2	2006-07	2841	3868	Gas
35.		KG-DWN-2002/1-E#1	KG-DWN-2002/1-E	2007-08	2478	3675	Dry
36.	Western offshore	KKDW-A-1	KK-DW-A	2000-01	897	4123	Dry
37.		GKDW-A1	GK-DW-I	2003-04	1860	6050	Dry

1	2	3	4	5			
38.	GS-DW-2A-1	GS-DWN-2000/1	2004-05	3008	3916	Dry	
39.	DWRO-1	BB-OS-DW-II	2004-05	1090	5405	Dry	
40.	BR-DW-4-1	MB_DWN-2000/2	2004-05	2378	3250	Dry	
41.	GS-DW5-1	GS-DWN-2000/2	2004-05	2545	3838	Dry	
42.	GS-DW1-1A (GSDOO1NBAA)	GS-DWN-2000/1	2004-05	2839	3834	Dry	
43.	KKD-1A	KK-Offshore	2004-05	1054	3772	Dry	
44.	KS-1-1	GK-DW-I	2004-05	2035	4624	Dry	
45.	Cauvery	CDW1-1A	CY-OIS-DW-VII (Surrendered)	1998-99	771	2122	Dry
46.	CY-DW-F-1	CY-OSN-2000/01	2005-06	948	3552	Dry	
47.	Mahanadi	MNO-1	MN-OSN-2000/2	2005-06	795	3039	Dry
48.	MDW-2A/2B (Shallow/Deep)* MN-OS-BA	MN-OSN-2000/2	2006-07		2064	Gas	
49.	MDW-3	NEC-DWN-2002/2	2006-07	1067	2185	Dry	

Statement II

*Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.
Cost of Deepwater Wells Drilled during 1997-2007*

(Rs. in crore)

Sl.No.	Well No.	PEL/NELP Name	Year	Cost
1	2	3	4	5

Krishna Godavari Basin

1.	G-18	KG-OS-DW-IV	1998-99	74.02
2.	G-1-9	KG-OS-DW-IV	1999-00	82.42
3.	KD-1-1	KG-OS-DW	2000-01	68.43
4.	KD-1-2A	KG-OS-DW	2000-01	45.54
5.	GD-1-1	KG-OS-DW-III	2001-02	75.77
6.	G-1-10	KG-OS-DW-IV	2002-03	71.11

1	2	3	4	5
7.	G-1-11	KG-OS-DW-IV	2002-03	47.02
8.	GD-1-2	KG-OS-DW-III	2003-04	41.05
9.	G-4-2	IG	2003-04	65.43
10.	KD-2-1	KG-OS-DW	2004-05	159.35
11.	GD-2-1A	KG-OS-DW-III	2004-05	44.09
12.	KD-3-1A	KG-OS-DW-Extn.	2004-05	86.56
13.	GD-3-1	KG-OS-DW-III	2004-05	70.99
14.	GD-5-1A	KG-OS-DW-III	2004-05	55.84
15.	KD-4-1	KG-OS-DW	2004-05	45.8
16.	G-4-3	IG	2004-05	41.56
17.	GD-4-3	KG-OS-DW-III	2004-05	38.23
18.	Vashista-1A	KG-OS-DW-IV	2004-05	110.94
19.	KG-DWN-98/5-L-1	KG-DWN-98/5	2005-06	187
20.	Vashista-2	KG-OS-DW-IV	2005-06	75.49
21.	Vashista-3	KG-OS-DW-IV	2005-06	39.03
22.	G-4-4	IG	2005-06	54.51
23.	KD-1-3	KG-OS-DW	2005-06	94.62
24.	KG-DWN-98/2-D-1	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	94.62
25.	KG-DWN-98/4-K-1	KG-DWN-98/4	2005-06	43.18
26.	KG-DWN-98/4-A-1	KG-DWN-98/4	2005-06	91.43
27.	KG-DWN-98/2-A-1	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	64.59
28.	KG-DWN-98/2-U-1	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	85.05
29.	KG-DWN-98/2-W-1	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	88.67
30.	KG-DWN-98/2-E-1 (shallow)	KG-DWN-98/2	2005-06	74.62

1	2	3	4	5
31.	GD-6-1	KG-OS-DW-III	2005-06	220.95
32.	KG-DW-S-1	G1 MI	2006-07	53.23
33.	KG-DWN-98/2-G-1	KG-DWN-98/2	2006-07	53.23
34.	KG-DWN-98/2-UD-1	KG-DwN-98/2	2006-07	230.25
Western Offshore				
35.	KKDW-17-A	KK-DW-12/17	1997-98	23.83
36.	KKDW-A-1	KK-DW-A	2000-01	67.67
37.	GKDW-A-1	GGK-DW-I	2003-04	154.06
38.	GS-DW-2A-1	GS-DWN-2000/1	2004-05	27.86
39.	DWRO-1-1	BB-OS-DW-II	2004-05	201.32
40.	BR-BW-4-1	MB-DWN-2000/2	2004-05	28.87
41.	GS-DW-5-1	GS-DWN-200/2	2004-05	36.78
42.	GS-DW1-1/A GSD001NBA/1A	GS-DWN-2000/1	2004-05	64.19
43.	KKD-1A	KK-Offshore	2004-05	103.95
44.	KS-1-1	GK-DW-1	2004-05	48.73
Cauvery Offshore				
45.	CDW-1A-1	CY-OS-DW-VII	1998-99	36.12
46.	CY-DW-F-1	CY-OSN-2000/1	2005-06	45.71
Mahanadi Offshore				
47.	MN-OS/A-1 (MDW-1)	MN-OSN-2000/2	2005-06	27.92
48.	MD-OS/B1 (MDW2A)	MN-OSN-2000/2	2006-07	28.72
	MN-OS-B2 (MDW-2B)	MN-OSN-2000/2	2006-07	12.98
49.	MDW-3	NEC-DWN-2002/2	2006-07	47.47

Electric Power

3717. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds allocated and released for upgradation and development of power capacity in railway quarters, railway complexes and other places including renewal of old electric wires and power connections in every railway division/zone (zonal railway) during the last three years and current year till date;

(b) the details of funds spent by each zone and division for this purpose during the above period;

(c) whether there are problems in power supply and distribution due to non-renewal of old electric wires and

power connections in quarters and offices of Indian Railways; and

(d) if so, the effective measures taken by the Railways in this regard?

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

(c) and (d) No major problem has been encountered as replacements are planned on age-cum-condition basis and wherever additional infrastructure is required. Utmost care is taken to ensure safety of the system.

Statement

Details of the fund allotment and expenditure on works sanctioned during the last three years and till date are as under:

(Fig. in lakh)

Sl.No.	Zonal Rly.	Fund Allotment				Fund Utilized			
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1.	CR	157.80	327.09	330.80	412.58	159.82	324.77	322.98	189.67
2.	ER	454.75	390.15	634.16	630.52	387.67	359.63	563.28	366.63
3.	ECR	268.64	233.53	165.66	309.89	268.64	157.53	80.00	216.00
4.	ECOR	325.64	439.54	672.55	981.95	116.9	277.81	319.46	232.46
5.	NR	500.00	552.00	676.00	750.00	478.00	532.00	698.00	650.00
6.	NCR	82.00	113.97	242.89	225.62	77.56	64.31	177.38	227.90
7.	NER	196.35	132.58	188.09	265.73	195.42	112.92	168.11	114.96
8.	NFR	230.34	302.4	350.12	491.39	168.67	244.63	331.01	261.80
9.	NWR	421.56	540.31	836.16	644.24	420.14	406.6	851.33	373.74
10.	SR	215.28	296.24	315.47	549.41	233.94	238.39	363.72	396.60
11.	SCR	135.00	132.00	126.00	175.19	155.71	96.30	134.74	242.13
12.	SER	181.68	213.75	335.51	484.64	139.14	179.33	247.02	91.01
13.	SECR	126.30	408.41	518.82	391.45	149.23	441.71	572.01	240.98
14.	SWR	45.24	51.52	168.36	121.06	61.02	167.00	114.07	65.03
15.	WR	103.50	124.89	95.69	102.30	93.30	114.90	76.46	129.55
16.	WCR	115.94	201.91	157.33	199.23	73.68	223.11	126.45	246.75
Total		3560.02	4460.29	5813.61	6735.20	3178.84	3940.94	5146.02	4045.21

CR—Central Railway
ER—Eastern Railway
ECR—East Central Railway
ECOR—East Coast Railway
NR—Northern Railway
NCR—North Central Railway

NER—North Eastern Railway
NFR—Northeast Frontier Railway
NWR—North Western Railway
SR—Southern Railway
SCR—South Central Railway
SER—South Eastern Railway

SECR—South East Central Railway
SWR—South Western Railway
WR—Western Railway
WCR—West Central Railway

[English]

Discontinuance of Navratna Status of State-owned Oil Companies

3718. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Public Enterprises has sought discontinuance of Navratna status for the State-owned oil companies; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

Comprehensive Policy for Foreign Tourists

3719. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to frame a comprehensive policy in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs and State/UT Governments to provide adequate security to the tourists particularly women and foreign tourists at different tourist locations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India and as such, registration, investigation, detection, and prevention of crime, including cases relating to crimes against foreign and women tourists is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. However, Ministry of Tourism in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence and State Governments/Union Territories is in the process of framing guidelines for formation of a

Tourist Security Organization comprising mainly of Ex-Servicemen for the safety and security of tourists.

Protected Monuments In Rajasthan

3720. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Centrally protected monuments in Rajasthan;

(b) the amount spent on the preservation and maintenance of these monuments during the last three years; and

(c) the revenue earned by the Government from these monuments during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The details of Centrally protected monuments are given in enclosed statement.

(b) The amount spent on preservation and maintenance of these monuments during the last three years is as under:

Sl. No.	Year	Amount Spent (Rs. in lakhs)
1.	2005-06	285.00
2.	2006-07	302.00
3.	2007-08	285.00

(c) There are 3 ticketed monuments in Rajasthan. The revenue earned from these monuments during the last three years is as under:

Sl.No.	Year	Revenue Earned
1.	2005-06	47.89 lakhs
2.	2006-07	51.90 lakhs
3.	2007-08	55.92 lakhs

Statement

List of Centrally Protected Monuments/Sites in Rajasthan

Sl.No.	Name of the monument/site	Locality	District
1	2	3	4
1.	Adhai din-ka-Jopra	Ajmer	Ajmer
2.	Badshahi Haveli	Ajmer	Ajmer

1	2	3	4
3.	Delhi Gate consisting of one Archway	Ajmer	Ajmer
4.	Gateway of Taragarh Hill	Ajmer	Ajmer
5.	Marble Pavilions and Balustrade on Ana sagar Bund and Ruins of the Marble Hamam behind the Ana sagar Bund	Ajmer	Ajmer
6.	Saheli Bazar Buildings in Daulat Bagh	Ajmer	Ajmer
7.	Tombs of Abdulla Khan and his wife	Ajmer	Ajmer
8.	Tomb of Allauddin Khan known as 'Sola Thumba'	Ajmer	Ajmer
9.	Tripolia Gate	Ajmer	Ajmer
10.	Kos Minar erected by Emperor Akbar	Jaipur-Ajmer road	Ajmer
11.	Kos Minar erected by Emperor Akbar	Jaipur-Ajmer road	Ajmer
12.	Baori on Jaipur-Ajmer road	Ajmer	Ajmer
13.	Kos Minar erected by Emperor Akbar	Chhattri	Ajmer
14.	Sarai	Chhattri	Ajmer
15.	Kos Minar erected by Emperor Akbar	Ghughra	Ajmer
16.	Kos Minar erected by Emperor Akbar	Hoshiara	Ajmer
17.	Kos Minar erected by Emperor Akbar	Hoshiara	Ajmer
18.	Kos Minar erected by Emperor Akbar	Kair	Ajmer
19.	Kos Minar erected by Emperor Akbar	Khanpura	Ajmer
20.	Mahal Badshahi	Pushkar	Ajmer
21.	Brahma Temple	Pushkar	Ajmer
22.	Ancient Site	Bhangadh	Alwar
23.	Shiva Temple	Neelkanth (Alwar)	Alwar
24.	Ancient Remains	Pandrupol	Alwar
25.	Lal Masjid	Tijara	Alwar
26.	Siva Temple and Ruins	Arthuna	Banswara
27.	Ancient Remains	Vithaldeva	Banswara
28.	Ruins of Temples	Atru/Ganeshganj	Baran
29.	Yupa Pillars	Badva	Baran
30.	Temple (12th century)	Baran	Baran
31.	Ancient Ruins and Structural Remains	Krishna-vilas	Baran
32.	Old Temple, Statues and Inscriptions	Shergarh	Baran

1	2	3	4
33.	Akbar's Chhatni	Bayana	Bharatpur
34.	Ancient Fort with its monuments	Bayana	Bharatpur
35.	Jahangir's Gateway	Bayana	Bharatpur
36.	Jhajri	Bayana	Bharatpur
37.	Lodhi's Minar	Bayana	Bharatpur
38.	Sarai Sad-ul-lah	Bayana	Bharatpur
39.	Usa Mandir	Bayana	Bharatpur
40.	Delhi Gate out side the Bharatpur fort	Bharatpur	Bharatpur
41.	Fateh Burj near Anah Gate	Bharatpur	Bharatpur
42.	Fort walls including Chowburja gate and Approach Bridges at the Chowburja and Ashtadhatu Gates	Bharatpur	Bharatpur
43.	Jawahar Burj and Ashtadhatu Gateway inside the Bharatpur fort	Bharatpur	Bharatpur
44.	Moat surrounding the fort wall	Bharatpur	Bharatpur
45.	Brahmabad Idgah	Brahmabad (Bayana)	Bharatpur
46.	Islam Shah's gate	Bayana	Bharatpur
47.	Deeg Bhawans (Palaces)	Deeg	Bharatpur
48.	Looted Gun	Deeg	Bharatpur
49.	Marble Jhoola	Deeg	Bharatpur
50.	Chaurasi Khamba Temple	Kaman	Bharatpur
51.	Ancient Mound	Malah	Bharatpur
52.	Ancient Mound	Noh	Bharatpur
53.	Colossal Image of Yaksha	Noh	Bharatpur
54.	Lal Mahal	Rupvas	Bharatpur
55.	Mahakal and two other temples	Bijolia	Bhilwara
56.	Rock inscription (12th century)	Bijolia	Bhilwara
57.	Rock Inscription within the Paraswanath Temple compound (12th C.A.D.)	Bijolia	Bhilwara
58.	Ancient Temple known as Kaner-ki-Putti	Khadipur village	Bhilwara
59.	Bhandasar Jain Temple	Bikaner	Bikaner
60.	Jain Temple of Susani goddess	Morkhana	Bikaner
61.	Wall Paintings of Hardoti School in the Palace	Bundi	Bundi
62.	Ancient Mound	Keshawrai Patan	Bundi

1	2	3	4
63.	Ancient Mound	Nainwa	Bundi
64.	Ghateshwar Temple	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
65.	Kund	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
66.	Shrinagar Chawri	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
67.	Temple of Ashtamata	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
68.	Temple of Ganesh	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
69.	Temple of Seshashayan	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
70.	Temple of Shiva and Kund	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
71.	Temple of Trimurti	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
72.	Temple of Vamanavatar known as Narad Temple	Badoli	Chittaurgarh
73.	Fort of a Chittaur as a whole	Chittaur-garh	Chittaurgarh
74.	Menal (Mahanal) Temple and Math	Menal	Chittaurgarh
75.	Ancient Site and Remains together with adjacent area	Nagari	Chittaurgarh
76.	Hathiwada enclosure with Inscription together with adjacent land	-do-	Chittaurgarh
77.	Archaeological Sites and Remains at Jeora	Nilodh/Jeora	Chittaurgarh
78.	Ancient Mound	Abaneri	Dausa
79.	Baori	Abaneri	Dausa
80.	Harsat Mata-ka-Mandir	Abaneri	Dausa
81.	Banjaron-ki-Chhatni containing two pillars similar to, the railing pillars of Bharhut Stupa	Lalsot	Dausa
82.	Ancient Mound	Maheshra	Dausa
83.	Ancient Mound	Raniwas	Dausa
84.	Ancient Mound	Sikrai	Dausa
85.	Babur's Garden (Charbagh)	Jhor (Dholpur)	Dholpur
86.	Jogni-Jogna Temple	Sone-ka-Gurja (Dholpur)	Dholpur
87.	Sher Garh Fort	Dholpur	Dholpur
88.	Jain Temple Inscription	Baroda	Dungarpur
89.	Somnath Temple	Deo Somnath	Dungarpur
90.	Ancient Mound	Baror	Ganganagar
91.	Ancient Mounds	Bhannar-Theri	Ganganagar
92.	Two Ancient Mounds	Binjor	Ganganagar

1	2	3	4
93.	Ancient Mound	Chak-86	Ganganagar
94.	Two Ancient Mounds	Mathula	Ganganagar
95.	Ancient Mounds	Rang Mahal	Ganganagar
96.	Ancient Mound	Tarkhanwala Dera	Ganganagar
97.	Ancient Mounds	Badopal	Hanumangarh
98.	Ancient Mounds	Bhadrakali	Hanumangarh
99.	Ancient Mounds	Dhokal	Hanumangarh
100.	Fort Bhatner	Hanumangarh	Hanumangarh
101.	Three Ancient Mounds	Kalibangan	Hanumangarh
102.	Ancient Mounds	Manak	Hanumangarh
103.	Ancient Mounds	Munda	Hanumangarh
104.	Ancient Mounds	Peer Sultan	Hanumangarh
105.	Ancient Mound	Pilibangan	Hanumangarh
106.	Jama Masjid	Amber	Jaipur
107.	Laxmi Narain's Temple	Amber	Jaipur
108.	Sri Jagat Siromaniji Temple	Amber	Jaipur
109.	Sun Temple	Amber	Jaipur
110.	Excavated site	Bairat (Viratnagar)	Jaipur
111.	Pundenkji-ki-Haveli-Paintings in a room	Brahmpuri (Jaipur)	Jaipur
112.	Temple containing Fresco Paintings	Guttaji (Jaipur)	Jaipur
113.	Excavated site	Sambhar	Jaipur
114.	Fort including Ancient Temples	Jaisalmer	Jaisalmer
115.	Ancient Site	Lodruva Patan	Jaisalmer
116.	Buddhist Caves and Pillar	Binnayaga (Dag)	Jhalawar
117.	Caves of Niranjani etc.	Binnayaga (Dag)	Jhalawar
118.	Ancient Ruins	Dalsagar (Gangadhar)	Jhalawar
119.	Ancient Ruins	Dhudhaliya (Dag)	Jhalawar
120.	Buddhist Caves	Hathiagor	Jhalawar
121.	Old Temples near the Chandrabhaga	Jhalrapatan	Jhalawar
122.	Buddhist Caves, Pillars & Idols	Kolvi (Dag)	Jhalawar
123.	Fort	Mandor	Jodhpur

1	2	3	4
124.	Wall Paintings on the palace of maharaja Gopal Lal	Karauli	Karauli
125.	Siva Temple & two unpublished Gupta Inscriptions	Charchoma	Kota
126.	Temple, Fortwall & Statues	Darraor (Mukundara)	Kota
127.	Temple with Inscription	Kanswa	Kota
128.	Archaeological Site and Remains	Gilund (Bhagawanpura)	Rajasamand
129.	Fort of Kumbhalgarh as a whole	Kumbhal-garh	Rajasamand
130.	Ghat with Inscriptions, Pavilions and Toranas	Nav Chowki	Rajasamand
131.	Chetak Samadhi	Nathadwara	Rajasamand
132.	Badshahi Bagh	Khamner	Rajasamand
133.	Haldighati	Khamner	Rajasamand
134.	Rakta Talai	Khamnor	Rajasamand
135.	Ranthambhor Fort	Rantham-bhor	Sawai Madhopur
136.	Jain Temple	Alanpur (Sawai Madhopur)	Sawai Madhopur
137.	Persian Inscription in a Baori	Alanpur (Sawai Madhopur)	Sawai Madhopur
138.	Harshnath Temple	Sikar	Sikar
139.	Bisal Deoji's Temple	Bisalpur	Tonk
140.	Ancient Mound	Bundwali Doongari	Tonk
141.	Ancient Mound	Gariagarh (Newai)	Tonk
142.	Devapura Barodia Mounds	Jhalai	Tonk
143.	Hathi Bhata	Khera (Kakor)	Tonk
144.	Ancient Mound	Nagar	Tonk
145.	Excavated Site	Nagar	Tonk
146.	Mand Kila Tal Inscription	Nagar	Tonk
147.	Yupa Pillars in Bichpuria Temple	Nagar	Tonk
148.	Inscriptions in fort	Nagar	Tonk
149.	Inscription	Panwar	Tonk
150.	Excavated site	Rairh (Newai)	Tonk
151.	Kala Pahar Temple	Todaraish singh	Tonk
152.	Kalyanraji's Temple	Todaraish singh	Tonk
153.	Laxmi Narainji's Temple locally known as Gopinathji's Temple	Todaraish singh	Tonk
154.	Pipaji's Temple	Todaraish singh	Tonk

1	2	3	4
155.	Old Baori locally known as Hadi-Rani-ka-Kund	Todara's Singh	Tonk
156.	Ancient Ruins	Kalyanpur	Udaipur
157.	Sas Bahu Temple	Nagda	Udaipur
158.	Pratap Samadhi-Ruined Palace of Maharana Pratap	Sarada Chavand	Udaipur
159.	Hawa Mahal known as Roothi Rani ka Mahal	Veerpura (Jaisamand)	Udaipur
160.	Mahal known as Hawa Mahal	Veerpura (Jaisamand)	Udaipur
161.	Magazine Building in Akbar Fort	Ajmer	Ajmer

50 Seater Aircraft Service for Tripura

3721. SHRI RANEN BARMAN:

SHRI NARAHARI MAHATO:

SHRI HITEN BARMAN:

SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the people of Tripura, particularly the students from Tripura pursuing studies in other States of the North-East are facing great troubles for not having air-flights between Agartala and Silchar and Agartala and Imphal;

(b) if so, whether 50 seater aircraft will be deployed at least twice a week in the above sectors with an immediate effect;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Alliance Air, a subsidiary of National Aviation Company of India Limited, under an MOU with North-East Council (NEC) operates a fleet of four ATR (48 seater) aircraft in the North East Region exclusively. The routes and schedule of these aircraft are decided with the approval of NEC. At present, Alliance Air operates thrice weekly

service on Silchar-Agartala-Silchar route with ATR aircraft and IndiGo airlines operates 4 flights per week on Kolkata-Agartala-Imphal-Kolkata sector and 3 flights per week on Kolkata-Imphal-Agartala-Kolkata sector.

(d) Does not arise.

Funds for DPL

3722. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total budget for Delhi Public Library (DPL) for the last 10 years;

(b) the amount spent by the DPL on books and reading materials during the above period; and

(c) the reaction of the Government towards the low expenditure on reading materials by DPL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) The total budget for Delhi Public Library, for the last 10 years and the amount spent by DPL on books and reading materials for the above period may be seen in the enclosed statement.

(c) The Book Advisory Committees could not meet regularly during that period. Now, since 2007, the Book Advisory Committees have held regular selection meetings.

Statement*Total Budget of DPL for the last 10 years (Plan & Non-Plan)*

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Plan	Non-Plan	Total
1998-99	75,80,000.00	4,83,00,000.00	5,58,80,000.00
1999-2000	80,00,000.00	4,00,00,000.00	4,80,00,000.00
2000-01	86,00,000.00	4,70,00,000.00	5,56,00,000.00
2001-02	56,00,000.00	5,00,00,000.00	5,56,00,000.00
2002-03	1,00,00,000.00	5,00,00,000.00	6,00,00,000.00
2003-04	1,19,16,116.00	4,75,00,000.00	5,94,16,116.00
2004-05	1,50,00,000.00	5,62,00,000.00	7,12,00,000.00
2005-06	1,50,00,000.00	5,80,00,000.00	7,30,00,000.00
2006-07	2,00,00,000.00	6,35,00,000.00	8,35,00,000.00
2007-08	1,00,00,000.00	6,45,62,879.00	7,45,62,879.00

Amount Spent by DPL on Books and Reading Material for the last 10 Years

Rs. In Lakhs

Year	Plan (Books)	Non-Plan (Newspapers & Periodicals)	Total
1998-99	56,71,463.00	4,70,486.80	61,41,949.80
1999-2000	38,88,502.00	3,03,183.18	41,91,685.18
2000-01	2,55,888.00	4,95,769.04	7,51,657.04
2001-02	41,93,560.00	3,31,995.85	45,25,555.85
2002-03	31,35,433.00	4,79,681.08	36,15,114.08
2003-04	9,22,403.00	3,63,670.75	12,86,073.75
2004-05	5,95,383.00	4,35,814.00	10,31,197.00
2005-06	96,00,950.00	3,91,795.00	99,92,745.00
2006-07	99,99,443.00	6,45,000.00	1,06,44,443.00
2007-08	1,03,35,436.00	6,03,274.00	1,09,38,710.00

*[Translation]***Construction of Railway Station**

3723. SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to construct a station between Laxmibai Nagar and Mangalla railway stations on the Indore-Devas-Ujjain section of Western Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No such proposal has been received in this regard.

Air Services from Small Airports

3724. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:
SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:
SHRI AJIT JOGI:
SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government to start air services from small airports of the country;

(b) the names of the small airports from where air services has been started during the last three years alongwith the names of the sectors on which such services have been started; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to start air service from Disa Airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) 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, upto 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. To increase the air connectivity between smaller cities, Government has now introduced the concept of scheduled regional airlines with a view to promote air connectivity within a region, expand air travel services for Tier II and Tier III cities and between specific regions. There are four regions identified as North, South, West, East/North-East coinciding with the Flight Information Regions (FIRs) as defined by the Airports Authority of India (AAI). The regional airlines are not permitted to operate on category I routes. However, the regional airlines of the southern region which has 3 metros would be allowed to operate between the metros within the southern region namely Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad.

(b) At present, scheduled air services are available to/from following 79 cities: Agartala, Agartla, Agra, Ahmedabad, Aizwal, Allahabad, Amritsar, Aurangabad, Bagdogra, Bangalore, Belgaum, Bhavnagar, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Bhub, Calicut, Chandigarh, Chennai, Cochin, Coimbatore, Dehradun, Delhi, Dharamshala, Dibrugarh, Dimapur, Diu, Goa, Gorakhpur, Guwahati, Gwalior, Hubli, Hyderabad, Imphal, Indore, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Jammu, Jamnagar, Jamshedpur, Jodhpur, Jorhat, Kandla, Kanpur, Khajuraho, Kolhapur, Kolkata, Kullu, Leh, Lilabari, Lucknow, Madurai, Mangalore, Mumbai, Napur, Pathankot, Patna, Porbandar, Port Blair, Pune, Raipur, Rajamundry, Rajkot, Ranchi, Shillong, Shimla, Silchar, Srinagar, Surat, Thane, Tirupati, Trichi, Trivandrum, Tuticorin, Udaipur, Vadodara, Varanasi, Vidyanagar, Vijayawada, Vizag. The information regarding names of the small airports from where air services has been started during the last three years alongwith the names of the sectors on which such services have been started are being collected.

(c) At present, No Scheduled airline is operating any air service to/from Disa airport. However, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.

*[English]***Sale of Natural Compressed Gas by IGL**

3725. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI:

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

(a) the rate at which IGL is buying and selling Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) in the NCT Delhi;

(b) whether IGL is making huge profit margin to the tune of about 57%;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reasons for making such huge profit by IGL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) is buying natural gas from GAIL (India) Limited @ Rs. 5220/MSCM (thousand standard cubic metres) at calorific value of 8422 Kcal/SCM. The selling price of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) is fixed after considering various costs viz., gas cost, compression charges, operation and maintenance cost, safety related cost, selling and distribution cost, depreciation and income tax. At Present, IGL is selling CNG in NCT of Delhi @ Rs. 18.90/kg, which is inclusive of excise duty of Rs. 2.38/kg.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

New Parameters for Off Take of Urea from Overseas Joint Ventures

3726. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes new parameters for off take of urea from overseas joint ventures;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the reasons for introducing new parameters; and

(d) the extent to which new norms will bridge the gap in demand and supply of indigenous urea?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) Government is in the process of finalizing a policy for attracting new investments in the fertilizer sector both within the country and abroad. At this stage, the Government is looking into various options for offtake of urea from joint venture abroad, with an aim to encourage setting up of Joint Venture capacities abroad.

[Translation]

Railway Projects in Madhya Pradesh

3727. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the railway projects under construction in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether these projects are running behind the schedule;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps taken by the Railway for early completion of these projects;

(e) whether the Railways have given approval to raise the height of various railway platforms in Madhya Pradesh; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The details of ongoing projects falling partly/fully in Madhya Pradesh are as under:

Sl.No.	Name of the Project	Year of inclusion in the Budget	Length (in kms)	Anticipated Cost (Rs. in crore)	Expenditure upto 31.3.2007 (Rs. in crore)	Budget Outlay 2008-09 (Rs. in crore)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
New Line						
1.	Guna-Etawah via Shivpur-Gwalior-Bhind	1985-86	348.25	540.96	388.64	50
2.	Lalitpur-Satna, Rewa-Singrauli & Mahoba-Khajuraho	1997-98	541	925.00	176.8	60

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Dahod-Indore via Sardarpur, Jhabao & Dhar	1989-90	200.97	678.56	56.07	20
4.	Ramganj Mandi-Bhopal	2000-01	262	726.05	67.38	30
5.	Chhota Udepur-Dhar	2007-08	157	570	0	14
Gauge Conversion						
1.	Jabalpur-Gondia incl. Balaghat-Katangi	1996-97	285	511.86	240	60
2.	Chhindwara-Nagpur	2005-06	149.52	618	13.38	80
3.	Ratlam-Mhow-Khandwa-Akola	2008-09	472.64	1421.25	0	32.94
Doubling/3rd Line						
1.	Kalapipal-Phanda	1990-91	41.49	125.77	92.7	4.99
2.	Akodia-Mohemed Khera-Shujapur	2003-04	13.15	34.4	10.67	5
3.	Bhopal-Bina 3rd Line	2008-09	143	428	0	50
Railway Electrification						
1.	Bina-Kota	2006-07	3003	168.49	0.5	33.84
2.	Ujjain-Indore & Dewas-Maksi	2006-07 (Suppl.)	115	67.36	0	27.68

Actual expenditure incurred during 2007-08 will be known after finalization of the yearly accounts. The works are being progressed as per the availability of resources. Bhind-Etawah section of Guna-Etawah new line is delayed due to delay in clearance of Wild Life Sanctuary land. The land has been obtained recently after clearance of Central Empowered Committee. Mahoba-Khajuraho was targeted for completion by March 2008 and the same has been delayed due to failure of contracts and no response in risk & cost tender. The works are being expedited for early completion.

(e) and (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Tabel of the Sabha.

[English]

Bid for Operating Stake in small Onshore Blocks

3728. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appeared in "Business Line" on January 19, 2008 captioned "GAIL" eyes operating stake in small onshore blocks"; and

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

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

PATEL): (a) and (b) Under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), launched in 1997, the Government of India adopted international competitive bidding system for offering acreages for exploration and production of oil & gas in the country. NELP has provided a level playing field wherein bids are invited from private public sector companies both Indian as well as foreign. No National Oil Company including GAIL (India) Ltd. etc. is awarded blocks on nomination basis as they have to compete with other private/public sector companies under NELP. Evaluation of bids is carried out by adopting a transparent and quantitative bid evaluation criteria. 57 blocks (29 onland consisting 9 "S" type blocks i.e. small size less than 200 sq. km. and remaining 20 A & B type onland blocks, 19 Deep water blocks and 9 Shallow water blocks) are on offer under Seventh round of NELP (NELP-VII) for exploration oil and gas. The bids for NELP-VII are due for submission on 25th April, 2008.

Comprehensive Aviation Emission Study

3729. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to carry out a detailed and comprehensive aviation emission study to gauge the level of harmful gases and environmental impact arising from its rapidly-expanding aviation sector;

(b) if so, whether a meeting was held in the month of February, 2008 in this regard;

(c) if so, the details and the outcome of the meeting;

(d) whether any final decision has been taken in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

(c) to (e) The Government has decided to undertake a baseline study for ascertaining emissions from civil aviation in India. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency under the Ministry of Power has been mandated to carry out the study. The Terms of Reference of the Study are being worked out in consultation with the stakeholders.

Permission of Railway Crossings for Various Purposes

3730. DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA:
SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY:
SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:
SHRI RAJU RANA:
SHRI GANESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of proposals for permission of railway crossings for various purposes including water supply projects are pending with railway authorities in various divisions and Bhavnagar division in particular;

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

(c) the time by when the clearance will accorded?

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

[Translation]

Domestic and International Flights from Maharashtra

3731. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to introduce direct domestic flights to other States of the country as well as international flights to foreign countries from Aurangabad, Pune and Nagpur in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for introducing the said domestic flights from Aurangabad, Pune and Nagpur?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) While the National Aviation Company of India Limited does not have immediate plans to introduce more air services from Aurangabad, Pune and Nagpur due to non availability of spare capacity, Lufthansa airlines of Germany have proposed operations on Pune-Frankfurt route with an all Business class A-319 aircraft.

*[English]***Prices of Steel**

3732. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the steel prices of varieties have increased by more than 40% in the last one month;

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

(c) the action taken by the Government to bring down these prices;

(d) whether the Government proposes to reduce or withdraw the custom duties to ease the imports of steel; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) The retail prices of representative category of steel items at four metros on 1st March 2008 and 11th April 2008 is given in the enclosed statement. The data in the table indicates that there is a wide fluctuation in price movement of different steel products.

(b) The rise in price of steel is attributable to various factors both in the supply side as well as the demand side. On the supply side, rise in price of steel can be attributed to a steep rise in the price of critical input materials such as iron ore, coking coal and metcoke in domestic and international markets. On the demand side the mismatch in demand and supply is the main reason for the rise in steel prices.

(c) In a liberalized scenario the price of steel is determined by the interplay of the market forces. Nonetheless, the Government has taken the following measures for stabilizing the steel prices in the domestic market.

(i) The Government has over the years reduced the import duty on steel to the current level of 5%.

(ii) The import duties on steel making inputs have also been reduced over the years and also exempted in case of coking coal. In case of iron ore it has been reduced to 2%.

(iii) In the Union Budget Proposal 2008-09, the import duty on melting scrap has been reduced from 5% to NIL.

(iv) In order to ease the supply of iron ore to domestic steel producers Government has imposed an export duty at the rate of Rs. 300 per tonne on export of all varieties iron ore lumps. Export duty has also been imposed at the rate of Rs. 300 per tonne on export of iron ore fines with more than 62% Fe content and at the rate of Rs. 50 per tonne on export of iron ore fines with less than 62% Fe content.

(v) General Rate of Excise Duty has also been reduced from 16% to 14% in the Union Budget Proposal 2008-09.

(vi) DEPB benefits on export of various categories of steel products have been withdrawn w.e.f. 27.03.2008.

(d) and (e) The Government is closely monitoring the movement in steel prices and will take appropriate fiscal measures, if necessary.

Statement*Market Price Inclusive of Taxes & Duties**(Rs./Tonne)*

	Pig Iron LM Gr. IV	TMT 10 mm	Wire Rods 8 mm	Rounds 16 mm	Plates 12 mm	HR Coils 0.63 mm	CR Coils	GP Sheets 0.63 mm	Pencil Ingot
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Kolkata									
11th April 2008	31475	43525	44000	40175	45175	45375	50000	51500	31400
1st April 2008	33300	45625	455500	44125	46000	44625	47750	49250	34000
1st March 2008	25775	36625	37750	36675	39750	39750	42750	48000	30250

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Delhi									
11th April 2008	34500	48325	4400	44500	46700	48500	52000	51500	38600
1st April 2008	34000	51600	50000	49000	48900	48000	51000	51800	41700
1st March 2008	27250	41975	41000	41000	38050	37400	40800	46400	37500
Mumbai									
11th April 2008	34000	47700	43250	45050	NA	44350	49300	52000	38600
1st April 2008	29100	49000	42500	44000	42750	42250	45250	49000	38250
1st March 2008	22775	38750	35350	37450	37450	38475	39775	45750	30100
Chennai									
11th April 2008	35530	48963	48100	45763	47650	46275	52000	58750	36400
1st April 2008	28700	49750	43700	46000	46000	45500	46000	48500	40500
1st March 2008	21000	39250	37000	38250	37500	37500	41000	49000	29000

Helicopter Services

3733. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether helicopter services especially in the activities of tourism and adventure sports in the country has improved compared to the last three years; ,

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether helicopters are to be pressed into service to cater to the short distance fliers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any study has been made to improve tourism by deploying more helicopters in the country; and

(f) if so, the details and the guidelines issued by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) At present, Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. (PHHL) is providing helicopter on the long term lease to Govt. of Meghalaya, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Nagaland, Andaman

and Nicobar Island, and Lakshadweep Administration. The regular passenger services are being run under the aegis of the respective State Govts./Administrations as per their requirements. PHHL also provides helicopters to private parties during Amarnath Dham yatra season. PHHL has been recently awarded the contract by Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Shrine Board of deployment of 2 Bell helicopter for running passenger services on Katra-Sanjichhat-Katra sector.

Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. (PHHL) also operate passenger services from Augustmuni to Kedarnath & Badrinath Dham twice in a year and also plans to further connect to important adjoining tourists/religious places in Uttaranchal such as Ghagharia, Hemkund Sahib, Shirdi from Mumbai/Pune in Maharashtra etc. In addition, some non-scheduled operators viz. Jagson Airlines, Deccan Aviation, Prabhatam Aviation, Himalayan Helisking, etc. are also carrying out operations with helicopters and M/s. Himalayan Helisking is engaged in adventure sports also.

(c) and (d) Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. (PHHL) has plan to construct heliport at Delhi, NOIDA and Gurgaon, subject to allotment of land by the concerned State Govt. for providing short distance services by helicopters.

(e) and (f) Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. (PHHL) has engaged the services of a Consultant to make Business Plan for Pawan Hans covering Evaluation of PHHL's current position in Indian Helicopter Industry, developing a business strategy for next 10 years including requirement for financial and human resources and the funding plan.

Joint Venture between ONGC and British Gas

3734. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is assessing the proposal of Oil and Natural Gas for the joint venture with British gas company;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of benefits likely to be achieved there from?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) The Government has not approved the proposal of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) for alliance with British Gas Exploration & Production India Limited (BGEPI) for exploration and development of three deep water blocks in the Krishna Godavari basin. The farm-in strategic alliance proposal in respect of BGEPI was not adequately responsive in comparison to terms being offered during the open bidding process under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Therefore, Government decided that it would not be appropriate to accept the proposal at such a stage when our NELP process has achieved good credibility and support worldwide based on a transparent open bid system and speedy decision making process. The above blocks could be offered in the upcoming rounds of NELP as and when their exploration tenures come to an end. The Government has consistently been following a fully transparent and open methodology for awarding exploration blocks under NELP, and this has enhanced the image of Government among global investors.

[Translation]

Food Processing Industries in Marathwara

3735. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGEPATIL: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal from Marathwara Agriculture University regarding setting up of food park in Parbhani;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken so far regarding approval of the said proposal and the outcome thereof till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) has received a proposal from Marathwada Agricultural University for establishment of Food Park at Parbhani, in April 2008. MFPI had been providing financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid for setting up of Food Park under its Plan scheme during 10th Five Year Plan @25% of project cost in general areas and 33.33% of project cost in difficult areas, subject to maximum of Rs. 400 crore for creation of common facilities such as power supply, water supply, cold storage, warehousing facilities, effluent treatment plant, food testing analytical laboratories, common processing facilities etc. 10th Plan period has come to an end on 31st March, 2007, and MFPI has developed a revamped scheme for providing financial assistance for establishment of Mega Food Parks in the country during 11th Five Year Plan. The applicant organization is being requested to submit a fresh proposal conforming to the guidelines of the new Mega Food Park scheme.

[English]

Service Protection Clause

3736. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government had inserted service protection clause at the time of formation of Airports Authority of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government has inserted service protection clause at the time of privatization of Delhi and Mumbai Airports;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps taken by the Union Government to protect the services of Delhi and Mumbai Airports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Section of Airports Authority of India (AAI) Act, 1994 provides the necessary service protection to every officer or other or other employee of AAI.

(c) to (f) Yes, Sir. Operation, Management and Development Agreements (OMDA) have been signed between AAI and the two Joint Venture Companies (JVCs) to whom Delhi and Mumbai airports were handed over on 03.05.2006. These JVCs have to absorb a minimum of 60% of the general employees (below DGM level) and make offer on terms that are no less attractive in terms of salary position etc. than the current employment terms to be determined on cost to cost to company basis. Those not absorbed or not willing to be absorbed in the JVC will continue to be AAI employee and would be re-deployed at other units of AAI.

Development of Tourism Infrastructure

3737. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated any plan to develop tourism infrastructures in economically backward States having abundant tourism potential; and

(b) if so, the details of States identified for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Development of tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. Ministry of Tourism, however, provides financial assistance to States/Union Territories on the basis of project proposals received from them in accordance with scheme guidelines subject to availability of funds and inter-se priority. State-wise details of projects sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism for development and promotion of tourism during 2007-08 are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Projects Sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism during 2007-08

(Rs. in Lakh)

Sl.No.	State/UT	Number of Projects Sanctioned	Amount Sanctioned
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	9	2629.48
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	10	3330.12
3.	Assam	5	1271.90
4.	Bihar	3	1194.75
5.	Chandigarh	2	20.00
6.	Chhattisgarh	4	1274.09
7.	Delhi	7	749.08
8.	Gujarat	5	576.58
9.	Haryana	11	2260.27
10.	Himachal Pradesh	12	2286.22
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	36	6851.15
12.	Jharkhand	7	1130.47
13.	Kerala	10	3124.31
14.	Karnataka	5	2004.71
15.	Lakshadweep	1	782.73
16.	Maharashtra	5	1279.44
17.	Manipur	5	1110.77
18.	Meghalaya	2	674.40
19.	Mizoram	5	1692.94
20.	Madhya Pradesh	16	3952.66
21.	Nagaland	21	2241.35
22.	Orissa	12	2376.30
23.	Puducherry	6	1610.88
24.	Punjab	1	397.89

1	2	3	4
25.	Rajasthan	2	1554.46
26.	Sikkim	27	6036.48
27.	Tamil Nadu	13	2831.80
28.	Tripura	11	1110.76
29.	Uttar Pradesh	7	2833.03
30.	Uttarakhand	5	2081.04
31.	West Bengal	12	3243.17
Total		277	64513.23

Promotion of Buddhist Tourism

3738. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken steps to

promote the places of Buddhist interest in the country;

(b) if so, the financial assistance given to various States during the last three years, till date; and

(c) the infrastructures developed in Lalitgiri, Udaygiri and Ratnagiri in Orissa to facilitate Buddhist pilgrims and tourists at those places?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Ministry of Tourism is promoting India as a country of diverse attractions including Buddhist heritage sites. The Ministry undertakes campaigns in the print, internet and electronic media in domestic and overseas markets for this purpose.

(b) State-wise details of projects sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for development and promotion of tourism during the last three years are given in the statement.

(c) The following projects have been sanctioned for development/upgradation of infrastructure at Lalitgiri, Udaygiri and Ratnagiri in Orissa.

(Rs. in lakh)

Year	Project	Amount sanctioned
2004-05	Integrated development of Buddhist circuit of Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Udaygiri and Langudi	740.67
2005-06	Integrated development of Bhubaneshwar-Dhauhi-Puri-Konark circuit including Khandagiri-Udaygiri Caves	720.09

Statement

The Projects Sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism from 2005-06 to 2007-08.

(Rs. In Lakh)

S.No.	State/UT	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
		No of projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	No of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	7	2615.82	3	1540.56	9	2629.48
2.	Assam	10	2,140.00	9	2453.39	5	1271.90
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	10	2240.16	12	1887.80	10	3330.12

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4.	Bihar	3	1212.23	2	1937.29	3	1194.75
5.	Chhattiegarh	7	1775.59	16	3540.17	4	1274.09
6.	Goa	1	10.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
7.	Gujarat	5	2011.58	7	443.65	5	576.58
8.	Haryana	7	639.71	5	1836.16	11	2260.27
9.	Himachal Pradesh	6	1645.00	8	1871.00	12	2286.22
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	22	6,656.01	29	5233.82	36	6851.15
11.	Jharkhand	5	1227.27	3	956.35	7	1130.47
12.	Karnataka	8	1706.52	4	1323.89	5	2004.71
13.	Kerala	13	4858.88	18	4474.02	10	3124.31
14.	Madhya Pradesh	12	3047.39	10	3668.47	16	3952.66
15.	Maharashtra	9	2075.04	13	2839.05	5	1279.44
16.	Manipur	2	49.80	9	939.35	5	1110.77
17.	Meghalaya	1	5.00	9	1435.29	2	674.40
18.	Mizoram	10	2273.41	9	2613.38	5	1692.94
19.	Nagaland	9	2528.97	8	2340.32	21	2241.35
20.	Orissa	10	2309.61	13	2826.84	12	2376.30
21.	Punjab	5	1437.67	13	3223.37	1	397.89
22.	Rajasthan	7	2591.87	8	953.84	2	1554.46
23.	Sikkim	14	2844.56	13	2609.42	27	6036.48
24.	Tamil Nadu	19	4264.62	11	1866.41	13	2831.80
25.	Tripura	3	716.26	4	291.27	11	1110.76
26.	Uttaranchal	13	2738.00	16	1907.50	5	2081.04
27.	Uttar Pradesh	18	3905.23	7	3329.06	7	2833.03
28.	West Bengal	5	989.35	10	2978.32	12	3243.17
29.	Andaman and Nicobar	1	6.25	0	0.00	0	0.00
30.	Chandigarh	1	13.70	2	15.00	2	20.00
31.	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	2	29.79	0	0.00	0	0.00
32.	Delhi	2	20.00	5	2400.09	7	749.08
33.	Daman and Diu	4	262.28	0	0.00	0	0.00
34.	Lakshadweep	0	0	1	7.00	1	782.73
35.	Pondicherry	2	469.39	1	500.00	6	1610.88
Total		253	61316.96	278	64242.08	277	64513.23

Land Encroached at Sahara Village

3739. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India raised the unauthorized wall on S.No. 26 H. No. 1 CTS No. 153 and S.No. 26 H. No. 3 CTS No. 154 of Sahara Village, Andheri while the land did not belong to it; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to erase the said wall on the encroached land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Food Processing Industries in Karnataka

3740. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal to develop and promote food processing industries in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the funds provided during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. During the last three years, namely, 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08, 99 proposals seeking grant from the Ministry for development and promotion of food processing industries in Karnataka have been received. 88 approved grant of Rs. 1455.09 lakhs.

Power Plants of ONGC in Karnataka

3741. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of power plants of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) especially in Karnataka;

(b) the profit earned by each plant during the last three years;

(c) whether there were any slow ups in any plant; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) does not have any commercial power plants operating especially in Karnataka. ONGC has captive power plants meeting the internal requirements of different plants and work centers, from which no profit is earned.

[Translation]

CPSUs in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar

3742. SHRI CHANDRA DEV PRASAD RAJBHAR: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) functioning in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar;

(b) the percentage of CPSUs situated in the said States;

(c) whether the Government has set up any CPSUs in the said States during the last five years;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the CPSUs likely to be set up in the said States in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA): (a) and (b) Registered office-wise names of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in the States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are given in the enclosed statement. Total 94 CPSEs and 58 CPSEs alongwith a gross block of Rs. 53253 crore and Rs. 18081 crore respectively were having their presence in these states. The % of gross block in these states was 6.81% and 2.31% respectively of the total gross block of Rs. 782992 crore of all CPSEs as on 31.3.2007. The state-wise and enterprise-wise details of gross block in CPSEs are given in Statement 13 off Volume I of the Public Enterprises Survey, 2006-07, which was laid in the Parliament on 28.2.2008.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

(e) The decisions to set up CPSEs are taken by the concerned administrative Ministries/Departments in consultation with various stakeholders and with the approval of the competent authority.

Statement

List of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) functioning in State of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar

Uttar Pradesh

1. Artificial Limbs Mfg. Corporation of India
2. Bharat Immunologicals & Biologicals Corporation Ltd.
3. Bharat Pumps & Compressors Ltd.
4. Bharat Yantra Nigam Ltd.
5. British India Corporation Ltd.
6. Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Ltd.
7. Brushware Ltd.
8. National Handloom Development Corporation Ltd.
9. Scooters India Ltd.
10. Triveni Structurals Ltd.

Bihar

1. Bharat Wagon & Engineering Company Ltd.
2. Bihar Drugs & Organic Chemicals Ltd.
3. Pyrites Phsophates & Chemicals Ltd.

[English]

Safe Operation from Bangalore Airport

3743. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the air traffic controllers have held that the new Bangalore International Airport is ready for safe operations as reported in The Hindu dated March 9, 2008;

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

(c) whether adequate steps have been made for safe landing and departure of flights in the proposed new airport;

(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) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) New Bangalore International Airport is under construction and not yet licenced for public use. All necessary arrangements, including CNS/ATM facilities, would be in place for safe landing and departure of flights before the licence is issued to the airport.

Welfare of Older Persons

3744. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated for the programme of 'welfare of older people' during the last three years;

(b) whether the amount allocated for the purpose has not been fully utilized and the unutilized amount have been diverted to various other schemes;

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

(d) the steps taken by the Government for the purposeful utilization of the amount allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) The details of amount allocated and expenditure incurred during the last three years under the scheme of "An Integrated Programme for Older Persons" are given below:-

Year	B.E. (Rs. in crores)	Expenditure (Rs. in crores)
2005-06	19.80	14.00
2006-07	28.00	12.53
2007-08	22.00	16.12

Since it is a demand driven scheme, the disbursement of grant-in-aid depends upon the timely receipt of complete proposals.

(d) A system of State wise National allocation of funds and State level GIA Committee has been introduced to ensure optimum utilization of allocated funds in the respective States.

Security Threats in the Railways

3745. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any deliberations took place among various concerned Ministries in December 2007 regarding the entire gamut of Railway security including the safety of passenger and property; and

(b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, on 13.1.08, a high level meeting between Home Minister and Railway Minister was held in the Ministry of Railways to review overall security system in Railways, which was attended by senior officials of Home and Railway Ministries and following decisions were taken:-

1. There is a need for better cooperation and coordination between RPF, GRP, State Police and IB. To ensure these objectives, Ministry of Railways will nominate State-wise Nodal Officers. List of such nodal officers will be sent by Railways to IB.
2. Present set up of Intelligence and coordination among various stakeholders is not proper. Therefore, a mechanism will be set up for intelligence sharing and dissemination among them especially Intelligence Bureau, Railway Protection Force and State Police.
3. RPF will accord top most priority to the security of passengers among its charter of duties.
4. Owing to increase in the charter of responsibilities after amendments in the Railways Act and the RPF Act, which give the responsibility of the security of Railway property, passengers and passenger area to the RPF,

there is a definite need to proportionately increase the strength of RPF.

5. In view of increased responsibility on the face of high vulnerability of Railways & travelling public, legal empowerment of RPF is essential for providing effective security to passengers & passenger area. This should be examined and necessary amendments in the Act and rules may be resorted to.
6. Suitable measures be taken to remove stagnation in RPF Officers' Cadre duly ensuring that their promotional & Career prospects are brought at par with other Group 'A' services of Indian Railways.
7. Concepts of Security should be in built in the Railway project, especially in disturbed regions, at the time of inception of the project.
8. It was agreed that RPF needs to be provided with appropriate security gadgets and electronic surveillance equipment. Adequate budgetary provision will be made available for this at the appropriate state.

Ban on Selling of Tank Bottom Sludge

3746. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total value of orders given to TERI in last five years by ONGC and details/value of orders given on nomination basis without inviting tender;

(b) whether there is any ban on selling of tank bottom sludge by petroleum producing and refining companies like ONGC, OIC;

(c) if so, the quantity of tank bottom sludge sold by these companies to vendors in last ten years;

(d) whether there is any list of vendors is approved by M/o Environment and Forests (MOEF) for handling of tank bottom sludge; and

(e) if so, the reasons for not selling the tank bottom sludge, which is a valuable raw material for recovering wax and oil by ONGC to MOEF approved vendors and destroying the same by paying huge amount to TERI or other agencies at very high cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (e) Under the provisions of The Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 189, Tank Bottom Sludge comes under the category of hazardous waste and Oil Companies are complying with all obligations for safe disposal of tank Bottom Sludge as per provisions of these rules. While there is a list of approved vendors for selling of the Tank Bottom Sludge, due to certain reports of improper and spurious use of the said products by certain vendors, ONGC being responsible corporate took a deliberate and conscious decision of not selling the Tank Bottom Sludge and decided that sludge at all installations be disposed through bio-remediation/incineration or any standard procedure. Through bioremediation wherein the indigenous microflora is used to degrade the oily waste into harmless constituents like carbon dioxide and water along with incremental beneficial microflora is generated. With this objective ONGC has entered into an agreement with TERI and under that agreement the process of bio-remediation through the use of Oil-Zapper a patented technology, is being practiced all over ONGC for the safe disposal of oily sludge/oil contaminated soil etc. Internationally multinational oil companies are using bio-remediation for treatment of such products.

In the case of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, Digboi Refinery with the approval of Assam State Pollution Control Board has been selling Tank Bottom Sludge to local small scale industries. Year-wise break up of quantity them sold by Digboi Refining is given below:

2001-02	18.984 MT
2002-03	678.637 MT
2003-04	389.148 MT
2004-05	839.898 MT
2005-06	847.603 MT
2006-07	79.480 MT
2007-08	154.400 MT

Also, Gujarat Refinery, Vadodara had sold one lot of ETP sludge of 2000 MT in March, 2000. However, present practice in other refineries is to recover maximum oil from the oily sludge through melting pits/centrifuge etc. The residual sludge contains less than 10% of oil which is bio-degraded in the refinery premises through

bio-remediation process developed jointly by M/s TERI & IOCL (R&D).

Welfare Schemes for Minorities

3747. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the schemes proposed to be launched by the Government for the welfare of the minorities in the State/UTs including Gujarat;

(b) the salient features of these schemes;

(c) the status of implementation of the existing schemes, State-wise;

(d) the actual benefits accrued to the minorities, State-wise;

(e) the complaints/suggestions received so far in respect of such schemes, State-wise; and

(f) the steps taken/being taken by the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) and (b) The Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities was announced in June, 2006. Among the important schemes included in the programme are the following:-

- (i) Merit-cum-means based scholarship for technical and professional courses at undergraduate and post-graduate level,
- (ii) Post-matric scholarship scheme,
- (iii) Pre-matric scholarship scheme,
- (iv) Free coaching and allied scheme,
- (v) Schemes of Maulana Azad Education Foundation,
- (vi) Schemes of National Minorities Development Corporation.

The Programme also envisages earmarking of benefits for minorities in schemes considered amenable to such earmarking. The details of the programme are available on the website www.minorityaffairs.gov.in

(c) and (d) Scheme-wise and state-wise details of funds released and number of beneficiaries are given in the enclosed statement.

(e) No complaints have been received in respect of these schemes.

(f) Does not arise.

Statement

Scheme-wise and State-wise details of funds released and number of beneficiaries for 2007-08

(i) Merit-cum-means based scholarship for technical and professional course at undergraduate and post-graduate level

S.No.	State/UT	No. of Students	Total amount released (in rupees)
1	2	3	4
1.	Karnataka	879	24644578
2.	Orissa	81	2234970
3.	Kerala	1786	39685717
4.	Tamil Nadu	1311	35127534
5.	Bihar	1595	37281737
6.	Madhya Pradesh	393	10386896
7.	Goa	29	756715
8.	Himachal Pradesh	11	257951
9.	Delhi	178	4611319
10.	Chhattisgarh	11	764550
11.	Assam	504	13316841
12.	Andhra Pradesh	889	22291573
13.	Meghalaya	3	678835
14.	Rajasthan	550	13468007
15.	Manipur	83	3112352
16.	Mizoram	88	4019500
17.	Maharashtra	1126	28838525
18.	West Bengal	1897	50365129

1	2	3	4
19.	Gujarat	123	2010508
20.	Uttar Pradesh	3539	70284508
21.	Tripura	2	60000
22.	Uttarakhand	24	580705
23.	Punjab	528	15239000
24.	Jharkhand	399	10225345
25.	Puducherry	4	90915
26.	Haryana	132	2987222
27.	Jammu and Kashmir	1012	14645520
Total		17177	407986452

(ii) Post-Matric scholarship scheme for the year 2007-08

S.No.	State/UT	No. of students	Total amount released (in rupees)
1.	Delhi	453	17,40,345
2.	Haryana	255	13,52,837
3.	Himachal Pradesh	61	4,48,435
4.	Karnataka	2960	1,51,49,190
	Karnataka Additional	2761	
5.	Kerala	4309	83,59,310
6.	Madhya Pradesh	1613	61,56,734
7.	Maharashtra	5166	2,22,51,700
8.	Meghalaya	008	1,85,763
9.	Mizoram additional	682	41,81,200
10.	Orissa	123	6,30,150
11.	Puducherry	31	84,573
12.	Punjab	1583	58,53,190
13.	Rajasthan	1899	63,76,640
14.	Tamil Nadu	2846	96,28,486
15.	Tripura	66	1,28,882
Total		24,816	9,63,24,255

(iii) Pre-matric scholarship scheme

The scheme is being implemented w.e.f. 2008-09.

(iv) Free coaching and allied scheme for the year

2007-08

S.No.	State	No of Institutes Sanctioned for financial assistance	No. of students/candidates to be coached	Total amount released (in rupees)
1.	Assam	4	90	1347500
2.	Andhra Pradesh	3	185	3206875
3.	Chhattisgarh	1	80	1311800
4.	Delhi Total	6	243	4128174
5.	Karnataka Total	7	450	7557375
6.	Orissa Total	3	190	3033800
7.	Rajasthan	12	1004	15295310
8.	Madhya Pradesh	2	90	1255870
9.	Manipur	3	160	1567750
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	1	240	920115
11.	Mizoram Total	2	250	5358500
12.	Punjab	2	210	2898875
13.	Haryana	1	50	140000
14.	Uttar Pradesh	13	675	10206525
Grand Total		60	3917	58228469

(v) Schemes of Maulana Azad Education Foundation

S.No.	State/UT	No. of beneficiaries (NGOs)	Total amount released (in rupees)
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1	3000000
2.	Bihar	0	0
3.	Delhi	1	250000
4.	Gujarat	0	0
5.	Haryana	0	0
6.	Jammu and Kashmir	1	1000000

1	2	3	4
7.	Jharkhand	1	2000000
8.	Karnataka	0	0
9.	Kerala	1	3000000
10.	Madhya Pradesh	0	0
11.	Maharashtra	4	4500000
12.	Manipur	2	2500000
13.	Rajasthan	0	0
14.	Tamil Nadu	3	6300000
15.	Uttar Pradesh	10	9000000
Total		24	31550000

(vi) Scheme of National Minorities Development Corporation

S.No.	State/UT	No. of beneficiaries	Total amount released (in rupees)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2631	888.70
2.	Assam	654	134.00
3.	Bihar	893	204.50
4.	Chandigarh	13	5.00
5.	Chhattisgarh	0	0.00
6.	Delhi	107	21.25
7.	Gujarat	474	200.00
8.	Himachal Pradesh	375	150.00
9.	Haryana	1073	450.00
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	1350	387.72
11.	Jharkhand	218	54.44
12.	Kerala	10250	3150.00
13.	Karnataka	1234	525.00
14.	Madhya Pradesh	0	0.00
15.	Maharashtra	1933	800.00
16.	Manipur	80	1.80
17.	Meghalaya	62	3.60
18.	Mizoram	1000	400.00
19.	Nagaland	1681	712.50
20.	Orissa	0	0.00
21.	Punjab	1875	750.00
22.	Pondicherry	57	22.50
23.	Rajasthan	626	252.25
24.	Tamil Nadu	8042	1516.00
25.	Tripura	75	30.00
26.	Uttar Pradesh	615	45.00
27.	Uttaranchal	0	0.00
28.	West Bengal	12415	3707.74
Total		47733	14412.00

Airports in West Bengal

3748. SHRI RANEN BARMAN:
SHRI NARAHARI MAHATO:
SHRI HITEN BARMAN:
SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to start and make operational some small airports in the State of West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these airports are likely to start operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Development of the following airports in West Bengal has been planned/undertaken by Airports Authority of India (AAI):

Behala—The strengthening of existing runway is in progress for activation of Behala Flying Club. Further, there are plans for extension of runway to 4500 ft. for ATR type of aircraft operation subject to availability of land by the State Government.

Malda—Additional land requirement has been projected to the State Government under an MOU for development/operationalization of the airport for ATR type of aircraft.

Cooch Behar—This airport has been developed and declared operational w.e.f. from 15th August, 2007 for ATR type of aircraft operations.

Complaints against Director, Delhi Public Library

3749. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:
SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE:
SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any complaint from the staff, employees union/SC-ST, welfare association of DPL against the Director;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of employees suspended/dismissed/re-instated, again suspended/dismissed after re/institution during the last ten years;

(d) the number of staff denied promotion and ACP benefits and the ground for their deprivation of the promotion and other service benefits; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Investment by IOC in Research and Development Sector

3750. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) proposes to invest Rs. 500 crore in Research and Development sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether IOC thrust areas for research to achieve energy independence in the country has been identified by the IOC; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) proposed to invest in the following areas:

(i) Consolidation of ongoing research activities in the areas of lubricants, refinery processes and catalyst.

(ii) Development research in the existing areas as well as new areas of research such as petrochemicals, nano-technologies, bio-technology and alternate fuels.

(c) and (d) IOC has identified alternative energy sources, viz, bio-fuels, bio-diesel and hydrogen as thrust areas and significant research is being conducted in these fields.

Induction of CPL Holders

3751. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:
SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has asked the airlines to induct and train Indian commercial pilot licence holders;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the reaction of private airlines thereto;

(c) the number of Indian Commercial Pilot Licence holders facing hardship to get a job in the country; and

(d) the extent to which such Indian CPL holders will get benefit of this new orders of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per Para 3(ii) of Civil Aviation Requirements Section 7, Flight Crew Standard, Series G Part II, validation of foreign pilot's licence is done only for Pilot in Command (PIC) or Co-Pilot. For Co-pilot functions, Indian pilots should be trained and employed as co-pilots by the operator. In case, the flight is required to be operated by foreign pilots, acting together as PIC and Co-Pilots, an Indian pilot is required to be on board for the training/supernumerary flying.

(c) and (d) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has not received any such complaints. However, DGCA has decided that foreign co-pilots will normally not be given authorisation after 31.05.2008 unless adequate justification is provided by the operator. This measure would be a help to phase out foreign pilots to act as co-pilots and enable absorption of India co-pilots.

Railway Protection Force Mitra Scheme

3752. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Protection Force Mitra Scheme intended to involve the individual in boosting the safety and security of the Indian Railways, is still a distant dream from achieving its core objectives;

(b) if so, whether the welfare part of the scheme has helped the RPF reunite around 100 missing children with their parents, with the help from NGOs;

(c) whether people who frequently use the railway facilities have been associated with it in a special way are selected by the different zones;

(d) if so, to what extent this scheme has so far been helpful and beneficial; and

(e) the steps taken by the Railways to publicise the objectives and benefits of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. The Railway Protection Force Mitra Yojana has been launched over Indian Railways and efforts are continued to involve Railway passengers in controlling criminal activities on Railways.

(b) Yes, Sir. Hundreds of missing children have been rescued from various Railway stations and restored to their parents with the help of NGOs.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Railway passengers/public who have been helped by RPF at some point of time are being identified and enlisted in the scheme. In addition, more categories of persons/organizations like NGOs are also being enlisted in the scheme over various Zonal Railways. Positive response is being received from such persons/NGOs at various levels in achieving the objectives of the scheme.

(e) Wide publicity is being given by distributing brochures amongst the beneficiaries/public, duly incorporating the objectives of the scheme and organizing periodical meetings between beneficiaries/persons/NGOs, included in the scheme.

[Translation]

Strike by Airport Staff

3753. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently Indian Air Force has been deployed to deal with the strike of airport staff;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has warned to take action under Essential Services Maintenance Act against staff on strike;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken in light of orders issued by Union Government to the State Governments to deal with strike at their level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Air Headquarters was requested to augment the safety services and manpower were deployed by Indian Air Force (IAF) at some Airports to deal with the strike of airport staff.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Gazette Notification dated 25.2.2008 was issued by the Lt. Governor of NCT of Delhi declaring all the services under the Airports Authority of India (AAI) Act, 1994 as Essential Services under ESMA, 1974 and instructions were issued to AAI.

(e) Chief Secretaries/Administrators of all the States/ Union Territories were advised to issue appropriate instructions to all local authorities including District Magistrates and Police Authorities for making necessary provision of electricity, water, fire brigade, security etc. to the local Airports so that normal operations at the airports are not hindered in any manner.

[English]

Aviation Facilities in West Bengal

3754. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of airports in the country are likely to be privatised;

(b) the details of the construction work at Asansol airport nearby Durgapur; and

(c) the time by which the modernisation work at Dum Dum will take place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) There are no plans to privatise any existing airport in the country.

(b) Feasibility report has not yet been received from the promoters of Asansol/Durgapur airport project.

(c) The modernisation of Dum Dum airport (Kolkata airport) is likely to be completed by June 2010.

Cooperation between India and Namibia

3755. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Namibia has sought Indian cooperation to build and upgrade its railway infrastructure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by the Union Government on the request Namibian Government thereon;

(d) whether any MoU has been signed with the Namibian Government thereon; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Co-operation of Indian Railways has been sought to upgrade the railway system in Namibia. Mr. N. Kaapanda, Hon'ble Minister of Works, Transport and Communication, Government of Namibia along with a delegation visited India in February, 2008 on the invitation of Minister of Railways, Government of India to explore the possibility of co-operation in the rail sector. RITES and IRCON International Limited, Public Sector Undertakings of Indian Railways have shown interest in railway expansion plans in the areas of new Railway lines, upgradation of present railway lines, development of dry port & container terminals, training of railway engineers etc.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Production of Ethanol

3756. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation has planned to enter ethanol production and cultivation of plants like Jatropha to be used for blending with Diesel for expanding its business in bio-fuel category;

(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 PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) IOC is planning cultivation of Jatropha and other energy crops for the production of bio-diesel for blending with diesel. IOC has signed MoU with Government of Chhattisgarh on 19th November 2007 for entering into bio-diesel business in the State. In Madhya Pradesh IOC has applied for 30000 hectares of non-forest wasteland for energy crop plantation. So far 2000 hectares have been allotted.

(c) A Joint Venture Company is proposed to be formed between IOC and Government of Chhattisgarh and JVC would initiate the crop plantation in the State.

Railway Zones

3757. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to restructure the existing zones;

(b) if so, whether any new division proposed to be included in or deleted from East Cost Zones; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Improvement of the Airport in Karnataka

3758. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Karnataka has requested the Union Government to take up the improvement of terminal building and security measures of the Belgaum and other airports in Karnataka;

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

(c) the estimated cost of the proposed work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The work for modification and extension of existing Terminal Building and perimeter road at Belgaum airport has been started on 12.01.2008 and PDC is 12.11.2008. The construction of compound wall and raising of existing wall has been completed on 20.3.2008 as per Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) norms. The estimated cost for modification of terminal building is Rs. 2.37 crores and for construction of compound wall and raising of existing wall is Rs. 1.32 crores.

HAL airport, Bangalore, expansion and modification of international terminal building and domestic terminal building was taken up at an estimated cost of Rs. 18.28 crores and has since been completed. The terminal building equipped to handle 1400 domestic and 600 international passengers at a time.

At Mysore airport, the work for construction of terminal building, technical block cum control tower cum fire station, residential quarters, ancillary buildings and associated works including electrical, HVAC & fire protection system has been taken up at a cost of Rs. 29.01 crores and is likely to be completed in December, 2008.

At Mangalore airport, the construction of a new integrated terminal building for 500 passengers at a time with all modern facilities including aerobridges has been taken up at a cost of Rs. 147.00 crores.

Modern Railway Station in India

3759. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of railway stations upgraded/modernised during the last three years and proposed to be upgraded during the current year, zone-wise;

(b) whether the ongoing construction of new modern railway stations in Delhi and other parts of the country have missed the targeted dates of completion;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, division-wise; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Railways for early completion of the ongoing construction?

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

New Railway Lines in Gujarat

3760. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:
SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received any proposals from the State Government of Gujarat for starting of new railway lines and gauge conversion of some railway lines in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government have allocated sufficient funds for these projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which all the projects are likely to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) As per available records, requests have been received from Government of Gujarat for allotment of adequate funds for completion of following ongoing projects:-

	Project	Outlay proposed during 2008-09	Status and Target date for completion, wherever fixed
	1	2	3
(i)	Veraval-Somnath new line and Wansajalia-Jetalsar gauge conversion of Rajkot-Veraval gauge conversion	Rs. 80 crore	Veraval-Somnath new line completed. Wansajalia-Jetalsar gauge conversion targeted for March, 2009.

	1	2	3
(ii)	Connecting Gandhinagar with Ahmedabad-Delhi Broad Gauge line	Rs. 1 crore	Gandhinagar-Kalol new line completed.
(iii)	Surendranagar-Dhrangadhara section of Surendranagar-Pipavav gauge conversion project	Rs. 1 crore	Main line work completed. Surendranagar-Dhrangadhara target not yet fixed.
(iv)	Viramgam-Mahesana-Patan gauge conversion and Patan-Bhildi new line	Rs. 40 crore	Gauge conversion completed. New line between Patan-Bhildi will take about 3 years.
(v)	Bharuch-Dahej gauge conversion	Rs. 5 crore	Project is to be implemented through Special Purpose Vehicle for which share holder agreement signed. Concession agreement is under process. Target date for completion is 2009-10.
(vi)	Rajpipla-Ankleshwar	Rs. 15 crore	
(vii)	Pratapnagar-Chhota Udepur	Rs. 55 crore	2008-09
(viii)	Ahmedabad-Himmatnagar-Udaipur	Rs. 0.01 crore	New work included in Budget 2008-09, will taken up once budget is passed.

Necessary funds have been provided for various projects keeping in view availability of resources and priority of project.

Board of Management, National Library, Kolkata

3761. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:
SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE:
SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a board of management has been set up for National Library, Kolkata;

(b) if so, the objectives and the terms of reference of the board;

(c) the criteria for nominating the members of the board and its present composition;

(d) whether the present members of the board of management are stationed at Delhi (including the Chairman);

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the number of meetings of the board held so far and the total amount of expenditure for these meetings incurred as on date;

(g) the achievements of the Ministry through this board and the improvement of the National Library and the benefits derived by holding such meetings;

(h) whether the board has constituted any further sub-committees; and

(i) if so, the details of the composition of such sub-committees and their role in the development of the National Library?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The objectives and terms of reference of the Board are to formulate and monitor the Annual Action Plan for the National Library and report to the Advisory Board for National Library and Dept. of Culture, Govt. of India on a quarterly basis.

(c) There are no laid down criteria for nominating the members of the Board.

The present composition is as follows:

1. Chairman
2. Member
3. Member
4. Member
5. Joint Secretary-Dept. Nominee
6. Director, National-Library-Member-Secretary

(d) Yes, Sir, except for Director, National Library who is the Member-Secretary of the Board stationed at Kolkata. All other members are in Delhi.

- (e) (i) Dr. O.P. Kejariwal, Chairman, New Delhi.
 (ii) Prof. P.B. Mangla, Member, New Delhi.
 (iii) Dr. H.K. Kaul, Member, New Delhi.
 (iv) Prof. R.P. Kaushik, New Delhi.
 (v). Shri Lov Verma, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

(f) Since its constitution, 19 (nineteen) meetings have been held. The expenditure for these meetings have been to the tune of Rs. 15.25 lakhs approximately.

(g) This Board reviews, monitors and guides the working of the National Library, Kolkata, and makes valuable recommendations to improve its functioning.

(h) and (i) Yes. The Board has constituted various sub-committees: They are as follows:

(a) Selection Committee for Books and Journals:

1. O.P. Kejariwal, Chairman
2. Prof. Basudev Chatterjee
3. Prof. Sukanta Chowdhury
4. Prof. Shyamal Chakraborty
5. Dr. B.B. Das
6. Director, National Library

(b) Technical Committee

1. Dr. H.K.Kaul

2. Dr. Harish Chandra
3. Dr. Santosh Sarkar
4. Prof. Amitabha Chatterjee
5. Miss. Indrani Bhattacharya
6. Dr. R. Ramachandran

(c) Vision Document Committee

Prof. P.B. Mangla, Chairman.

The committees have offered constructive suggestions to improve the performance and functioning of the National Library in their respective fields.

Environmental Clearances for exploration by ONGC

3762. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is required to take environmental clearances before taking up its activities; and

(b) the number of projects/activities/during of wells costing more than 100 crores completed in last five years (2001-06) by ONGC, alongwith full details of date of approval of the projects, date of start and completion of the projects, date of application for environmental clearance and date of issue of EC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Jurisdiction of Environmental Impact Assessment of development projects notification dated 27th January, 1994 issued by Ministry of Environment and Forest is applicable upto Indian territorial water only. The said notification has been notified under THE ENVIRONMENT (PROTECTION) ACT, 1986, which also extends to the whole of India upto Territorial water only.

ONGC's offshore operations are mostly in Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) area where obtaining Environmental Clearance as per the said notification is not applicable.

ONGC, has been submitting applications for grant of Environmental Clearance to Ministry of Environment & Forests as required by the notification. The details of projects/activities/drilling of wells costing more than Rs. 100 crores completed in last 5 years (2001-2006) are available with ONGC.

Promotion of Tourism Industry

3763. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the tourism sector has managed to clock an impressive rate of growth in the past few years and is recognized as a means of achieving higher economic growth;

(b) if so, the details of the vision document formulated for promoting the tourism industry as also the roadmap to be implemented for the fullest exploitation of the potential in this field/sector; and

(c) the incentives and measures offered to the various States to boost the tourism industry?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Tourism sector has been recognized as an instrument of economic development all over the world. In India, foreign tourist arrivals have witnessed a growth rate of 13.3%, 13.5% and 12.4% during 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively.

(b) and (c) Development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations. However, the Ministry of Tourism extends financial assistance to them for tourism related projects which are identified in consultation and interaction with them under the schemes for Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits, Assistance for Large Revenue Generating Projects, etc. During the 10th Five Year Plan, the Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned Rs. 2012.02 crore for 1160 projects to State Governments/UT Administrations.

To facilitate development of tourism in a systematic and wholistic manner, the Ministry of Tourism had commissioned 20-year Perspective Plans for States/Union Territories at the beginning of the 10th Five Year Plan. These perspective plans, which give action plans for tourism development in the short term and long term, were sent to the State Governments/UT Administrations

to guide them in initiating action for development and promotion of tourism.

Prices of Steel

3764. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has issued any directives to steel manufactures to control price of steel in the country;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the action so far taken by the steel manufacturers in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (c) The steel sector in the country is deregulated and therefore the prices are determined by the interplay of market forces. However, with a view to manage the rising inflation in the country, the Government has held extensive discussions with major steel producers as well as secondary steel producers recently. As a result of these deliberations, the following main conclusions have emerged:

- (i) The major steel producers agreed to increase the allocation of steel to small and medium enterprises by 20% from 4.9 lakh tonnes to 6 lakh tonnes for financial year 2008-09, through the State Small Scale Industries Corporations (SSICs) and National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC)
- (ii) The major steel producers have agreed to bear Rs. 400 per tonne towards defraying the cost of transportation, to SMEs through SSICs/NSIC.
- (iii) Price contracts for deliveries to SMEs will be made for at least three months subject to mutual agreement.
- (iv) The companies decided to exercise self-restraint on export of steel products, which are in demand domestically.
- (v) All the steel majors agreed to follow a transparent pricing system through regularly updated web based price list. The secondary steel producers on their part have agreed to reduce the prices of bars and rods to the extent possible.

Cumulative effect of all these efforts so far has been that price of different long products which includes bars, roads and structurals, used by even the common man for housing, came down in the range of Rs. 4000-5000 per tonne during 25th March to 12th April 2008. In percentage terms, such decrease amounts to about 10%.

Penalties for Adulteration

3765. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the penalties for adulteration in fuel by dealer/petrol pump operators have been reduced/weakened under new guidelines;

(b) the penalties for adulteration earlier and now; and

(c) the reasons for reducing them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The new Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG), 2005, effective from 1.08.2005, provide for the penalty of termination of dealerships for proven cases of adulteration at the first instance itself. The earlier guidelines of 2001, provided for a fine of Rs. 20,000/- and suspension of sales and supplies of products for a period of 30 days at the first instance of proven cases of adulteration, and the penalty of termination of dealership in proven cases of adulteration at the second instance.

(c) Does not arise in view of the reply to (a) and (b) above.

Pradeep Refinery-cum-Petrochemicals Project

3766. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Government of Orissa has requested the Union Government and Indian Oil Corporation for completion of Pradeep Refinery-cum-Petrochemicals projects by 2008-09;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Union Government has taken any action to complete the project by 2008-09; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Orissa Government and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) on 16.2.2004 for setting up of 9 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) capacity grass roots refinery at Paradip by 2009-10. It was also envisaged in the MoU that if favourable market conditions emerge in the country allowing higher level of domestic sale of products as compared to earlier estimate, IOCL would endeavour to complete the project in 2008-09.

To improve the economic viability of the project, feasibility of an integrated refinery-cum-petrochemical complex at Paradip as against stand-alone refinery as planned earlier was examined alongwith review of refining capacity. Based on the Detailed Feasibility Report (DFR), Board of Directors of IOCL in its meeting held on 25.3.2006 accorded in principle approval for setting up a 15 MMTPA refinery integrated with petrochemicals at Paradip with completion schedule as October, 2011.

[Translation]

Inconvenience to Passengers due to Disruption in the Operation of Trains

3767. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether recent failure of power grid in the country has increased inconvenience of railway passengers due to disrupted operation of trains on many routes which results in heavy loss to the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the effective steps taken by the Railways to check such incidents and ensure alternative operation of trains at the time of electricity failure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. Failure of power grid led to abnormal detention to 55 Mail/Express trains for an average of 5 hours 30 minutes per train, on the Northern and North Central Railway.

(b) Train services were disrupted from 0256 hrs. to 1040 hrs. to 7.3.2008 over Northern Railway, North Central Railway and from 0550 hrs. to 1100 hrs. of 9.3.2008 over North Central Railway.

(c) A course of action has been decided upon pursuant to an emergency meeting called by Secretary (Power) with the concerned agencies including Railways. Accordingly, steps have been taken to follow the guidelines from Ministry of Power, as applicable to the Railways.

[English]

Export Price of Steel

3768. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the steel is being exported at a price lower than the prices of steel in the domestic market;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (c) In view of the high prices prevailing in the international steel market it is unlikely for export realizations to be lower than the domestic realization. In fact, Government has withdrawn DEPB benefits on export of a large variety of steel items w.e.f. 27th March 2008 with a view to reduce export realization in steel and disincentivise steel export.

Creation of Library Cell

3769. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE:
SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Library Cell has been working in the Ministry of Culture as a cadre controlling authority to look into the problems of libraries working in the Central Government Ministries and departments.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the present strength of the Cell and number of library professionals and other officers and staff working in the Cell;

(d) whether the Government constituted the Indian Library and Information Service (ILIS) as recommended by the Fifth Central Pay Commission;

(e) if so, the progress so far has been made and the status of the ILIS creation;

(f) if not, the time by which the service would be created and the action taken in this regard; and

(g) the number of recommendations accepted and implemented by the Government in respect of library staff out of the total recommendations made by Fifth Central Pay Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) Though an ad-hoc Cell has functioned in the past, at present no such Cell is working in the Ministry of Culture.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Does not arise as no final decision as to the constitution of such a service has been taken.

(g) A recommendation relating to upgradation of the pay scale of Library Information Assistant (LIA) has been implemented.

Corruption and Mismanagement in Delhi Public Library

3770. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE:
SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the instances of mismanagement and corruption cases in Delhi Public Library (DPL) as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated August 9, 2007 and 'The Times of India' dated May 13, 2007 and July 25, 2005 have come to the notice of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has conducted any probe in this regard;

(d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and

(e) the action taken by the Government against the officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Tourist Task Force

3771. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:
SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:
DR. M. JAGANNATH:
SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is formulating an action plan to ensure safety of the foreign women tourists in view of the rising number of sexual attacks on them;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to constitute a tourist friendly special task force;

(d) if so, the steps taken to implement the said scheme; and

(e) the time by which such force will start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. As such, the prevention of crime, including crimes against women tourists, is the primary responsibility of State Governments/Union Territories. However, Ministry of Tourism in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence and State Governments/Union Territories is in the process of framing guidelines for formation of a Tourist Security Organization comprising mainly of Ex-Servicemen for the safety and security of tourists.

Increase in Demand of Diesel

3772. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the demand of diesel is increasing day by day in the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Government proposes to import the diesel to meet such increasing demand;

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

(e) the rate at which the Government is importing diesel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of consumption of Diesel during the last three years are given below:

Year	Qty (IMT)
2005-06	40191
2006-07	42884
2007-08 (Apr-Feb) (P)	43274

(c) and (d) To meet the demand of Diesel, oil PSUs have imported 2316 TMT of Diesel during 2007-08 (April 07-Feb 08). However, during the same period, oil PSUs have also exported 1489 TMT of Diesel with the result that the net import of Diesel by PSUs was only 827 TMT during 2007-08 (April 07-Feb 08).

(e) The average rate of Diesel import during April 2007 to February 2008 was Rs. 30538/Metric Tonne.

Losses suffered by ONGC

3773. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has suffered a huge loss in finalization of contracts for Mumbai High Redevelopment Plan;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Government has made any investigation into the matter;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) the action taken by the Government against the persons responsible therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) No Sir. In fact, as on January 01, 2008, the cumulative incremental oil gain since commencement of production from redevelopment wells of Mumbai High is around 21.88 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) against the target of 21.37 MMT.

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

Technology for Blending Ethanol with Petrol

3774. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government shares the technology for blending ethanol with petrol and the related technology with Brazil;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether consultants appointed for the said purpose have submitted their findings;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the details of action so far taken by the Government on such findings; and

(f) the time by which MoU signed with Brazil in 2002 in this regard will be operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (f) A team of BPCL visited Brazil in September 2006 to explore the possibilities of acquiring sugarcane acreage and putting up ethanol manufacturing units in Brazil. The team's report was discussed during the meeting of Monitoring Committee of Ethanol on 15.11.2006 chaired by Secretary, P&NG, when it was decided that following action be taken by the Industry with BPCL as the coordinator;

- (i) Feasibility study for Ethanol operations in/from Brazil: the experience of private companies including Reliance Industries may be shared.
- (ii) Industry task force comprising of all three Oil PSUs VIZ BPC/IOC/HPC to be constituted to finalize the various related modalities.

(iii) The Ethanol project in Brazil may be implemented by forming a joint venture with public sector oil marketing companies, viz, IOC, BPCL and HPCL (with equal shares) and a local partner engaged in the sugar/ethanol industry.

Based on the above, an industry task force comprising of the three PSU OMCs i.e. BPC, IOC & HPC was formed in December, 2006 and a feasibility study for ethanol investment in Brazil was commissioned in January 2007 for which report was finalized in May 2007. The consultant concluded in their feasibility report that Ethanol investments in Brazil are feasible, attractive, and highly strategic for Indian Oil Industry. The major findings of the Feasibility Study interalia are as under:

- (i) Brazil is highly suited for ethanol investments due to its leadership in ethanol production driven by structural advantages like ideal weather, soil & water conditions for sugar cane growing, abundant availability of arable land, improved productivity & technology in ethanol/sugar industry and also the high domestic demand for fuel ethanol.
- (ii) The recommended investment strategy comprising of a mix of Greenfield & Acquisition investment delivers most attractive financial pay offs.

The Oil Industry team subsequently carried out a Partner Search Study in November 2007 to identify suitable local partners in Brazil. Following the discussions held with top partnership candidates as identified in the study, broad MOUs were signed.

Indian Oil Industry is presently considering the possibility of acquiring a Sugar mill and setting up a Greenfield distillery along with a Brazilian partner for Ethanol production in Brazil. This is subject to necessary approvals.

Additionally an MOU with Brazil's National Company, Petroleo Brasileiro S.A-Petrobras was also signed by BPCL on 30.8.2007 at the HQ of M/s. Petrobras in Rio-de-Janeiro. Under the objects of MOU both the parties endeavor jointly undertake studies in matters related to:-

- The use and trading of fuel Ethanol globally.
- Cooperation in areas of ethanol plant investments in Brazil in order to meet global demand of fuel ethanol.

- Extending cooperation to biodiesel production and manufacturing process as well as R&D technology, including transfer of technology for ethanol.

Conduct joint studies on efficient means of transportation and joint investment in Logistics Infrastructure for ethanol in Brazil.

Use of Liquor

3775. SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- whether the use of liquor all over the country is increasing day by day;
- if so, whether liquor business brings a great revenue to the Government;
- if so, the details thereof; and
- the steps taken to check the increasing fund in use of liquor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) Total domestic production plus import of alcohol (both industrial and potable) has increased nearly by 20% from year 2000-01 to year 2005-06 i.e. in 6 years, which comes to more than 3% increase per annum. All India annual consumption of all liquors in 2004-05 was 3,281 lakh cases with per 100 capita consumption of 34 cases (excluding prohibition States/UTs). States collected revenue of more than Rs. 27,865 Crores including Sales Tax on manufacture and sale of liquor with annual per capita tax of Rs. 282. The overall liquor consumption registered a CAGR of 5.40% from 02-03 to 04-05, which is higher than the growth rate of population but lower than the growth rate of economy. Revenue, however, registered a higher CAGR of 8.7%, which is higher than the growth in volume as well as in the economy.

(d) Liquor is universally recognized as a socially negative product. Alcohol is recognized for its revenue generating potential. Most effective measures in reducing the use of liquor includes restriction on physical availability, minimum age law, monopoly and licensing

system, liquor taxes and restriction on discounting and policies such as maximum Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) law etc. Raising rates beyond the threshold would lead to evasion of taxes, smuggling and illicit distillation instead of generating higher revenue and discouraging consumption. Therefore, the efforts should be to rationalize tax and policy regime so as to plug leakages and realize the revenue due to the states from controlled, legitimate and responsible drinking.

Joint Venture Agreement between SAIL and Tata Steel

3776. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

- whether the Steel Authority of India Limited and Tata Steel have signed a joint venture agreement on mining of coal as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated January 04, 2008;
- if so, the facts and the details thereof;
- the details of terms and conditions of the said agreement; and
- the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred in each of such projects by SAIL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (KUNWAR JITIN PRASADA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and Tata Steel have signed a Joint Venture Agreement for mining of coal on 3rd January, 2008.

(c) Major terms and conditions of the said Agreement are given below:

- Shareholding—SAIL: Tata Steel :: 50 : 50
- Initial authorized capital: Rs. 2 Crores (Rs. 1 Crore from each partner) However, initial paid-up capital would be Rs. 5 Lakhs only (Rs. 2.5 Lakhs from each partner).
- Board of Joint Venture Company will have 6 Directors. Chairman will be from among the three nominated Directors of SAIL and Managing Director will be from among the three nominated Directors of Tata Steel. In addition, Chief Financial Officer shall be appointed by SAIL.

(d) As mentioned above, each partner will initially contribute Rs. One Crore to establish the proposed Joint Venture Company. Initially four medium coking coal blocks in Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) command area have been identified for development subject to allocation of the same by the Government. On allocation of coal blocks, likely capital expenditure will be estimated and necessary finances will be raised by the Joint venture Company/Partners to undertake development of the mine.

Concession for Railway employees suffering from chronic illness

3777. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any concession in favour of patients suffering from chronic illnesses is provided while performing rail journey;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the percentage of concession;

(c) the details of the categories who are eligible for same concession while travelling with attendants;

(d) whether the Railways propose to extend this concession to the patients of AIDS and leprosy also;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(d) to (f) Due to financial constraints, there is no proposal to extend concession to escorts accompanying AIDS and leprosy patients.

Statement

Details of categories of patients suffering from various diseases, along with element of concession, are as under:

- (i) Cancer patients: 50% concession in AC 2-Tier and AC first class and 75% in other classes is admissible to these patients when called by recognised hospital for treatment or check-up and return.
- (ii) Thalassemia patients: 50% concession in AC 2-Tier and AC first class and 75% in other

classes is admissible to these patients when called by recognised hospital for treatment or check-up and return.

- (iii) Heart patients: 50% concession in AC 2-Tier and AC first class and 75% in other classes is admissible to these patients, when called by recognised hospital for heart surgery and return.
- (iv) Kidney patients: 50% concession in AC 2-Tier and AC first class and 75% in other classes is admissible to these patients, when called by recognised hospital for kidney transplant operation or dialysis and return.
- (v) Hemophilia patients: 75% concession in Second, Sleeper, First, AC Chair Car and AC 3-tier classes is admissible to patients suffering from severe/moderate form of hemophilia, when called by recognised hospital for treatment or check up and return.
- (vi) T.B./Lupas Valgaris patients: 75% concession in Second, Sleeper & First Classes is admissible to these patients, when called by recognised hospital for treatment or check-up and return.
- (vii) Non-infectious Leprosy patients: 75% concession in Second, Sleeper & First classes is admissible to these patients, when called by recognised hospital for treatment or check-up and return.
- (viii) AIDS patients: 50% concession in Second class admissible to these patients, when called by nominated Anti Retroviral Therapy (ART) centres for treatment and return.

Concession to AIDS patients has been extended from 1.4.2008. These concessions are admissible to every one irrespective of whether the patient is a railway employee or not.

Except the Leprosy and AIDS patients, one escort with every patient is eligible for same concession.

Temples in Bankura, West Bengal

3778. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 'No Objection Certificate' as well consent letters from the present owners of the Brindaban Chandra and Radha Damodar temples village & post Bon-Birsingha under Patrasayer P.S. in the district of Bankura, West Bengal have been submitted for the requirement of ASI protection;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to protect and renovate the temples?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Proposals for the protection of Brindaban Chandra and Radha Damodar temples have been received by Archaeological Survey of India along with the consent of the owners. The matter is under consideration. Necessary steps to protect, conserve and renovate the temples will be taken in the event of their protection as monuments of national importance.

Books Art Objects

3779. SHRI RANEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of Books Art Objects presented to the foreign guest during the last three years;

(b) the details of the same alongwith names of the countries; and

(c) whether there is any authorized committee for its selection alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Papers to be laid on the Table.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record anything.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Item no. 2 - Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev.

*Not recorded.

12.01 hra.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Outcome Budget (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises for the year 2008-2009.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT - 8531/08]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): On behalf of my colleague, Shri Naranbhai Rathwa, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Indian Railways (Open Lines) General (Amendment) Rules, 2008 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 116 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 29th February, 2008 under section 199 of the Railways Act, 1989.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT - 8532/08]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): I beg to lay on the Table -

- (1) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, under sub-section (2) of Section (64) of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT - 8533/08]

- (2) A copy of the Action Taken Report (Hindi and English versions) on the recommendations contained in the Annual Report of the Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT - 8534/08]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): I beg to lay on the Table -

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):

- (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, for the year 2008-2009.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT – 8535/08]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Oil India Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, for the year 2008-2009.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT – 8536/08]

- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Biecco Lawrie Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, for the year 2008-2009.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT – 8537/08]

- (iv) Memorandum of Understanding between the Balmer Lawrie and Company Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, for the year 2008-2009.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT – 8538/08]

- (2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 62 of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006:-

- (i) The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (Appointment of Consultants) Regulations, 2007 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 36 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 17th January, 2008.
- (ii) The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (Authorizing Entities to Lay, Build, Operate or Expand City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks) Regulations, 2008 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 196 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 19th March, 2008.
- (iii) The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (Determination of Network Tariff for City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks and Compression Charge for CNG) Regulations, 2008 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 197 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 19th March, 2008.
- (iv) The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (Exclusivity for City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Network) Regulations, 2008 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 198 (E)

in Gazette of India dated the 19th March, 2008.

[Placed in Library, *See* No. LT – 8539/08]

12.02 hrs.

ASSENT TO BILLS

[*English*]

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I lay on the Table the following 11 Bills passed by the Houses of Parliament during the first part of Thirteenth Session of Fourteenth Lok Sabha and assented to by the President since a report was last made to the House on the 26th February, 2008:-

1. The Appropriation (Railways) Vote on Account Bill, 2008;
2. The Appropriation (Railways) Bill, 2008;
3. The Appropriation (Railways) No.2 Bill, 2008;
4. The Sugar Development Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2008;
5. The Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 2008;
6. The Appropriation Bill, 2008;
7. The Karnataka Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 2008;
8. The Karnataka Appropriation Bill, 2008;
9. The Food Safety and Standards (Amendment) Bill, 2008;
10. The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2008; and
11. The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2008.

12.02½ hrs.

RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE

7th and 8th Reports

[*English*]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): I beg to present the following Action Taken Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Railway Convention Committee:-

- (1) Seventh Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in the Third Report of Railway Convention Committee (2004) on "Extension of concessions available on construction of new lines on strategic consideration to gauge conversion works taken up on strategic consideration."
- (2) Eighth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Fourth Report of Railway Convention Committee (2004) on "Revival of Capital Fund from 2005-06."

12.03 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR

27th Report

[English]

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY (Nalgonda): I beg to present the Twenty-seventh Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Labour on the "Sickness/Closure of Textile Mills".

Statements

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY: I beg to lay on the table the following statements (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Labour:

- (1) Statement showing further action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in Twenty-third Report of the Standing Committee on Labour (2007-2008) on the recommendations contained in Twentieth Report on Demands for Grants (2007-2008) of the Ministry of Labour & Employment; and
 - (2) Statement showing further action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in Twenty-fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Labour (2007-2008) on the recommendations contained in Twenty-First Report on Demands for Grants (2007-2008) of the Ministry of Textiles.
-

12.03¹/₂ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT

29th and 30th Reports

[English]

MD. SALIM (Calcutta – North East): I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Urban Development:

- (1) Twenty-ninth Report of the Committee on action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 23rd Report of the Standing Committee on Urban Development on the subject "Directorate of Estates" of the Ministry of Urban Development.
 - (2) Thirtieth Report of the Committee on action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 25th Report of the Standing Committee on Urban Development on the subject "Integrated Low Cost Sanitation Scheme (ILCS)" of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation.
-

12.03³/₄ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

35th to 38th Reports

[English]

SHRI SANDEEP DIKSHIT (East Delhi): I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Rural Development:

- (1) Thirty-fifth Report on Demands for Grants (2008-09) of the Department of Rural Development (Ministry of Rural Development);
- (2) Thirty-sixth Report on Demands for Grants (2008-09) of the Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development);
- (3) Thirty-seventh Report on Demands for Grants (2008-09) of the Department of Drinking Water Supply (Ministry of Rural Development); and

- (4) Thirty-eighth Report on Demands for Grants (2008-09) of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

12.04 hrs.

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

206th and 207th Reports

[English]

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (Inner Manipur): I beg to lay on the Table the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of Standing Committee on Human Resource Development:

- (1) 206th Report on Demands for Grants 2008-2009 (Demand no. 57) of the Department of School Education and Literacy; and
- (2) 207th Report Demands for Grants 2008-2009 (Demand no. 58) of the Department of Higher Education.

12.04 $\frac{1}{4}$ hrs.

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT,
TOURISM AND CULTURE**

132nd to 134th Reports

[English]

DR. P.P. KOYA (Lakshadweep): I beg to lay on the table the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture:-

- (1) One Hundred and Thirty-second Report of the Committee on the Indian Maritime University Bill, 2007;
- (2) One Hundred and Thirty-third Report of the Committee on the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India Bill, 2007; and

- (3) One Hundred and Thirty-fourth Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2008-2009) of the Department of Shipping.

12.04 $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

48th Report

[English]

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): Sir, I beg to present the Forty-Eighth Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

12.05 hrs.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): With your permission, Sir, I rise to announce that Government Business during the week commencing Monday, the 21st April, 2008, will consist of:-

1. Consideration of any item of Government Business carried over from today's Order Paper.
2. Discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants for 2008-09 under the control of the Ministries of:-
 - (a) Home Affairs
 - (b) Defence
 - (c) Rural Development
 - (d) Information and Broadcasting
 - (e) Youth Affairs and Sports
3. Submission to the Vote of the House outstanding Demands for Grants in respect of Budget (General) for 2008-09 at 6.00 p.m. on Thursday, 24th April, 2008.

- 4 Introduction, consideration and passing of the Appropriation (No.2) Bill, 2008.
5. Consideration and passing of the Finance Bill, 2008.

[Translation]

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): Sir, the following items may be included in the next week's list of Business:

1. Need to set up a tourist centre at Ropad district in Punjab which has immense potential for promoting tourism by providing a special package.
2. Need to set up an I.T. hub at Mohali district in Punjab which has immense scope for industrial development to check unemployment to a certain extent.

[English]

DR. COL. (RETD.) DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla): Sir, the following subjects may be included in the next week's List of Business:

1. As a result of climatic change causing many diseases including natural calamities to the fruits and vegetables in Himachal Pradesh, there is a need to bring such crops under the ambit of National Insurance cover to provide succor to fruit and vegetable growers. A special package may be given to apple growers for damage caused during the recent hailstorm in Upper Shimla Region.
2. The Defence forces are faced with acute shortage of manpower particularly, among officer cadre. There is a need to deliberate this issue in the Parliament keeping in view the natural interest.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): Sir, the following issues may be allowed to be included in the next week's List of Business:-

1. Establishment of Indian Institute of Technology in Gujarat.
2. Establishment of Indian Institute of Science Education in Gujarat.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Sir, the following items may be included in the next week's List of Business:

1. Need to bring uniformity in the toll tax as there is a variation in the rate of toll tax charged at various places on Jaipur-Delhi national highways and Haryana has increased toll tax manifold.
2. Need to provide more funds to Rajasthan like other backward States under Gadgil formula. As per Gadgil formula Rajasthan is the largest State from view point of area presently. Most of the population of Rajasthan is Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and living in hilly areas. There is a desert in the entire Rajasthan. Availability of water is also dependent on rain only.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no issue pertaining to Jaipur has left, it seems all have been raised.

SHRI ANANT GUDHE (Amravati): Sir, the following items may be included in the next week's Agenda:

Need to ensure following provisions for providing unemployment allowance to educated unemployed people. Rs. 500 per month to 12th pass, Rs. 1000 per month to the graduates and Rs. 1500 per month to the post graduates.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri C.K. Chandrappan – Not present.

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA (Rajkot): Sir, the following items may be included in the next week's Agenda:

1. Discussion on use of Unconventional Energy Resources for development of the country.
2. Discussion regarding need to attract NRI investment especially in Health, Education and Industries for overall development of the country.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): Sir, the following items may be included in the next week's agenda:

- (1) Need to revise the norms of Central Calamity Relief Fund according to the specific needs of States and Union Territories in the country.

- (2) Need to provide urgent Central assistance to States affected by out-of-season heavy summer rain which has caused widespread damage and destruction of agricultural crops.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Sir, the following items may be included in the next week's List of Business:

- (1) Need to restore the Central allotment of APL rice to the State of Kerala which was discriminately curtailed from 1,13,420 MTs per month to 17,056 MTs per month, that is, nearly 85 per cent has been curtailed in spite of 100 per cent lifting of allotment and the best procurement of paddy in the State giving high remunerative price in the country, that is, Rs.1,000 per quintal.
- (2) Need to provide Central assistance to the State of Kerala which has suffered devastating crop damages in the recent unexpected, unprecedented and unseasoned torrential summer rainfall in which the damages were estimated to be around Rs.1.450 crore.

[*Translation*]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Sir, the following items may be included in the next week's List of Business:

1. Need to complete construction work of Ajmer-Pushkar rail line expeditiously.
2. Need to provide special funds for development and upgradation of "Indira Gandhi Canal" (Rajasthan Canal) which is called "Maruganga" of Rajasthan by treating a national scheme.

12.11 hrs.

MOTION RE: FORTY-SEVENTH REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[*English*]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, I beg to move the following:

"That this House do agree with the Forty-seventh Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 16th April, 2008."

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That this House do agree with the Forty-seventh Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 16th April, 2008."

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri): Sir, I have a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: This is referred to Forty-seventh Report of the Business Advisory Committee. Sir, in Item No.4, which has been circulated to us, it has been said that the Committee further recommends that the sitting of the House fixed for Thursday, the 20th March, 2008 may be cancelled. What is this? We have already done it for 20th March. Unfortunately, it is not 20th March.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: It is 2nd May.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: It may be rectified.

MR. SPEAKER: I appreciate your alertness. Hon. Member, you are right.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: I am just drawing your attention.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I am little disturbed how this mistake has come in. It should be 2nd May.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: It is also not Thursday. Both are wrong.

MR. SPEAKER: But you are not opposing the holiday.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Sir, I am not. I am just pointing this mistake.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Forty-seventh Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 16th April, 2008."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER: It is adopted, as amended thanks to the alertness of hon. Member, Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy.

No, I am sorry I do not blame. I am wrong in blaming because at that time it was done. This was of the earlier one. However, this correction is made.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: It has already been circulated.

MR. SPEAKER: All right. But in any event I appreciate your kind concern.

(English)

MR. SPEAKER: Now, I come to important matters.

Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Yerrannaidu, this is not the way. I will not allow this.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Only Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav's observation will be recorded.

... *(Interruptions)*"

MR. SPEAKER: It is not now. Mr. Yerrannaidu, it is not at your sweet will. You are now wasting your energy and breath. I would not allow you. Some discipline has to be maintained.

(Translation)

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government towards a heartrending incident that took place at Bamankheri village of district Amroha in my Parliamentary constituency in which seven members of a Muslim family were brutally killed. The head of that family was a teacher in the local Inter college. His elder son was a computer engineer at Jalandhar and he was also at home on that fateful day. Younger son was doing B-Tech at Meerut. There were seven members in the family including wife of the elder son, his daughter and niece. They all were asleep on the first floor of their house. They all were killed at night. Only one daughter was survived who was on the roof top of the house. This case is related to minority. A large number of persons belonging to minority community in the area are in panic. I demand the union Government to ensure that they do not live in fear. They do not hope to get justice from the administration there. This case should be investigated by

*Not recorded.

the Central Bureau of Investigation. The Union Government should give compensation of five lakh rupees to all members of that minority family and send a team there to build confidence among the people
... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not give notice in the Zero Hour generally. Since I have mistakenly given a notice, kindly allow me to speak for two minutes. I have never given notice in the Zero Hour. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow you to speak at proper time. Have patience for a while.

... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in Delhi for the last few days the incidents of murder, rape, kidnapping and dacoity are taking place on such a large scale that Delhi is becoming crime capital of India. In the morning, newspapers in Delhi are replete with the news of gruesome crimes. News channels also telecast such scenes all the day. In a single day i.e. only yesterday itself five-seven incidents of gruesome crimes have taken place. Under the following headlines:

(English)

"Woman shot at and injured in daylight Delhi robbery
Robbers kill 35-year-old, loot house in Bindapur
Woman shot dead in West Delhi home
34 lakh looted from bank van in W. Delhi
Man killed for protesting against obscene SMS"

(Translation)

Newspapers carry reports of skirmishes between ill-equipped and ill-prepared police forces and the daredevil deeds of the criminals.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, every year five lakh people come to Delhi but the strength of police force has not been increased. Most of the police force is deployed for the security and movement of the V.I.Ps. Nearly 15 thousand police personnel have been deployed to protect the "Olympic Torch" which has arrived in Delhi. No separate arrangements have been made to contain crimes taking place in all over Delhi. Whole of Delhi has been giving the look of a cantonment. Torch always signifies happiness, enthusiasm and participation of people. But it is being welcomed in such an atmosphere of fear that the whole Delhi is appearing like a cantonment. If all the police personnel are deployed for a single purpose, then

who will take care of the crimes? The number of police personnel has not been increased. I demand that number of police personnel should be increased and they should be given more facilities like state-of-the-art equipments. The population of Delhi has increased ten times but the number of police personnel is the same, I mean it is not as per the requirement. The law and order of Delhi is directly under the control of the Minister of Home Affairs. If he is not able to check crimes and cannot provide protection to people of Delhi then he should resign from his post or he should contain crime. I think it is a matter of great shame. Despite Delhi being the capital city, such a situation is developing here.

[*English*]

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (Madras North): Sir, Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) is engaged in mining of lignite and production of thermal power. There are about 16,000 contract workers working in NLC through various contractors. They are engaged in all the areas of work of NLC. Yet the pay and perks drawn by them are far below the permanent workers. They are at the mercy of the contractors and the role of NLC as the principal employer is very limited. This is not the case only with Neyveli Lignite Corporation; in fact, an almost identical situation is prevailing in all Central Public Sector Undertakings.

Even after working for several years, services of contract workers are not regularised. The demands of contract workers of NLC are regularization of their employment, provision of housing and medical facilities, transport allowance and bonus. It is highly unjustified that contract workers are not treated at par with the permanent workers in according them welfare measures, such as medical facilities. In view of the serious situation arising out of the recent strike by the contract workers of NLC, hon. Electricity Minister of Tamil Nadu has announced in the Assembly recently that the Government of Tamil Nadu has advised the NLC management to resolve the issue amicably. Hence, I urge upon the Minister of Coal to intervene in the matter and direct the NLC Management to look into the genuine demands and grievances of the contract workers and take necessary steps to resolve their grievances.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, since the Standing Committee on Labour has thoroughly examined the Bill pertaining to the welfare of the workforce in the unorganized sector, millions of our people belonging to this sector, who constitute more than 98 per cent of the total workforce in the country, have been eagerly waiting for this very important Bill to be passed.

The second phase of the Budget Session is scheduled to end on May 9, if not earlier. I would urge upon the Government to see to it that the Bill, as modified on the basis of unanimous recommendation of the concerned Standing Committee, be brought before this House for discussion, and consideration and passing.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia associates.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You associate with him.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, this is a very important issue concerning 37 crore workers under unorganized sector. The Standing Committee has unanimously redrafted the Bill and their Report was submitted in the month of December. We demand that in this Session, the Government should bring the Bill and we pass it in the current Session of Parliament. ... (*Interruptions*) We want to bring it to the notice of the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs that this is a very important Bill. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Acharia, you know this thing very well. You are here for 30 years and you know that this is not done.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Prabodh Panda associate on this matter. Those Members who wish to associate, may send slips.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy, Shri A.V. Bellarmin and Shri Mohan Rawale associate themselves on this issue.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Sir, I want to express my views with extreme sorrow and concern. ... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): Sir, I have also given a notice to raise a very important matter. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I will call you. If you disturb the proceedings, I will not call you.

Shri Mohan Singh.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Sir, I want to express my anguish with deep sorrow and concern. Today, the entire New Delhi has been converted into a heavily guarded cantonment. Over 15,000 policemen have been deployed at different places. All the offices have been vacated and the para military forces are guarding from the roof tops of all the offices with their beyonets flashed. Previously, I was informed that today roads would be closed from 1 pm onwards. But, I faced difficulties yesterday also while reaching my residence. All roads have been sealed. I had to take a whole round of Connaught Place and even today I faced difficulties when I was coming here from my residence. It is a matter of concern that the Olympic Torch which promotes the message of brotherhood all over the world, became a torch which was guarded by policemen only. It is a very gloomy situation. Any Tibetan who tried to enter into that security ring was arrested. At present, around 150 Tibetan youths are behind the bars and they are being tortured. I believe that we are an Independent Country where everyone has got a right to express his views freely in a democratic manner. But it is all the more deplorable that the review of our internal law and order position and police administration is being made by an Ambassador of another country. I would like to tell the Government of India, through you, that the Method of Opposition through democratic means prevailing in this country should not be crushed by using police force. The metro train service, which was scheduled to close at 1 pm was stopped from the very morning. I think that the Government of India has done injustice to the people of the capital city of India, Delhi by putting them behind the doors. I condemn it. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: We are also in favour of Olympics, I believe.

Shri S.K. Kharventhan.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Sandeep Dikshit has associated himself with this issue.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. Nothing will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. Please do not disturb the proceedings.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Only Shri Kharventhan's speech will go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Sir, the waste cotton is nothing but a salvage of cotton derived from the spinning units. The waste cotton alone is being used as a raw material to manufacture coarse variety of cotton yarns varying from 2 counts to 20 counts by Open End Spinning Mills. The yarns made from waste cotton are used as raw material for handloom sectors for producing bed-sheets, towels and other variety of products. The textile mills in this country are exporting the waste cotton. As a result, the open-end mills are at the verge of closure and naturally, the handlooms and powerlooms are totally affected. It has resulted in lakhs and lakhs of labourers losing their jobs. So, they are undergoing agitation in Tamil Nadu, particularly in Chennimalai, and some parts of my district. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to ban the export of waste cotton by the spinning mills.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL (Dibrugarh): Sir, as you know, the Digboi Refinery is the world's oldest refinery, which is located in Tinsukia district. On 14 October 1981, the Government of India took over the shares of the Burmah Oil Company in Oil India and Assam Oil Company Limited. In turn, the Union Cabinet took a decision to vest its shares in the Assam Oil Company with Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), but gave written instruction that its separate identity and logo should be maintained. Thereby, a separate Division, namely, the Assam Oil Division was created in IOC.

You will appreciate that while giving this instruction the Union Cabinet took into consideration the historical legacy of Assam Oil Company Limited as well as the sentiments of the people of the North-East. The birth of the Indian Oil Industry took place in Digboi, which still has the world's oldest refinery operating for over hundred

*Not recorded.

years. The Assam oil brand and logo has proved to be much more than a dependable marketing support. Brand Assam Oil represented by the silhouette of the charging Rhino symbolizes the pride and aspirations of all people and cultures that are native to the North-East. Since the first oil-well was dug in Digboi more than 100 years ago, a strong legacy of emotional bonding has resulted among different areas and people of the region. Indeed, the entire North-East regards Assam Oil as a heritage institution.

We, now, understand that on the pretext of controlling costs and achieving synergy, IOC is trying to merge and eliminate the separate identity of the Assam Oil Division.

MR. SPEAKER: It cannot be a big statement. What is happening these days?

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: The purpose of controlling cost could still be achieved by merging IOC's Marketing Division in the North-East with the Assam Oil Division, which is much larger in that area and continuing with the Marketing Headquarters at Digboi for whole of the North East with the same reporting relationship as existed prior to the implementation of IOC's new structure.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we have to edit these statements. It cannot be allowed. It cannot be a two-page statement.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: In this day and age, when we talk of global villages, there can be no disadvantage in having IOC's Marketing Headquarters for the North-East in Digboi. Sir, I am coming to the last point.

MR. SPEAKER: The last point cannot be the 20th point.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Sir you will definitely appreciate that the balance sheet National Integration is far more important than the balance sheet of a Public Sector Company like the Indian Oil Corporation.

I appeal, through you, to the hon. Minister of Petroleum to instruct Indian Oil Corporation to restore the *status quo-ante*. If the controlling cost is so important, then merge its Marketing Division in the North-East with the Assam Oil Division under the emblem of the charging Rhino. Thank you, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: In future, I would not allow statements to be read during this time. It cannot be a two-page statement.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Sir, I would like to associate with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, your name will be associated with it.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI (Udaipur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government towards a very important issue.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Hence I have called you.

[*Translation*]

Issues raised by all the hon. Members are important.

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. It is a very important issue concerning my parliamentary constituency. It was our long standing demand from the Government that it should establish a Doordarshan Kendra in Udaipur. The Government had assured that a Doordarshan Kendra would be established there. We had also written a letter to the Union Minister in this regard. In his reply he had assured us to establish a Doordarshan Kendra in Udaipur during the 11th Plan period. Now, the 11th plan has commenced, but nothing has been said till date whether the Kendra would be established or not. Udaipur is a tribal area. With the establishment of a Doordarshan Kendra at that place, the local artists, and people working in handicrafts would benefit a lot from it. Further, this Kendra would also be beneficial for entire Rajasthan. Therefore, I demand from the Government, through you, to seriously consider upon establishing a Doordarshan Kendra in Udaipur and accord approval to it at the earliest.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, I give the floor to Dr. K.S. Manoj.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Half-an-hour is over. I am only following your own decision.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Sir, I may be allowed to speak. ... (*Interruptions*)

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Sir, entral financial assistance is sought for the devastating crop damage caused by the unprecedented rainfall in Kerala. There was a heavy rainfall during the 1st week of March, 2008.

On March 16, on a single day, there was a rainfall of 118 mm of water. The entire paddy field got submerged in water and water-logging had caused the loss of the entire crop. The crop got germinated and became inconsumable.

In Kuttanad alone, paddy crops in around 30,000 hectares were damaged. The tragedy of the situation is that the paddy crops were ready to be harvested. In Kuttanad alone, damage to the crops is estimated to be around Rs. 63 crore, and the estimated damage of paddy crops in the entire State of Kerala is Rs. 161 crore.

MR. SPEAKER: You have to be brief and pointed. It cannot be a long statement.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: The total damage is estimated to be around Rs. 1,450 crore. The Central team has visited the State for on-the-spot estimation of the damages, but till now, no relief has been given to the State. Besides the damage caused to the farmers, the agricultural labourers lost their daily wages.

Sir, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan has submitted a report to the Central Government on ecological sustainability of Kuttanad. If the recommendations have been accepted by the Government and implemented, this devastating damage would not have happened. I would urge upon the Government to release immediately the Central assistance to the State of Kerala and also implement the recommendations contained in Dr. Swaminathan Commission's Report.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Suresh Kurup can associate himself. He has sent a notice. I will not allow these impromptu interventions. I have been telling you repeatedly that I would not allow this. You have to give proper notice in time.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur): Can we associate, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: By sending the slips, you can associate without creating any problem for the House.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat): Sir, I associate myself with what the hon. Member has stated.

MR. SPEAKER: Please send your slips.

ADV. SURESH KURUP (Kottayam): Sir, an all-party delegation under the leadership of the Kerala Chief Minister came here and submitted a memorandum before

the Prime Minister. The Central aid is yet to be released. What the Central Government should do is to immediately release the Central aid because crops worth crores of rupees have been damaged. You should read it in connection with the reduction of the Central allotment of rice to Kerala. Kerala is faced with an unprecedented situation because of this. The Central aid should be released immediately. We want a response from the Government.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): Sir, not only paddy, even pepper, coffee and other crops have been destroyed.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Madhusudan Mistry, please go to your seat and speak on the issue relating to calamity relief.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Gujarat was hit by a big cyclonic storm recently which resulted in destruction of wheat grains piled in the fields of the villages and only husk remained there. Further, the storm took with it self temporary roofs including the tin roofs etc. and massive damage was caused. I am constrained to say that the Agriculture Minister of the State has said that not a single paisa would be paid as compensation. Around Rs. 600 crore is lying with the state as natural Calamity Relief Fund. 75 percent grant is given from by the Central Government under National Calamity Relief Fund. Full compensation should be paid and out of that 75 percent money to those farmers whose property has been destroyed and damaged.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you bringing all this confrontation? Please mention the issue which is more important.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY: The Central Government should direct the State Government to make payment. The state cannot decide on the National Calamity Relief Fund and it cannot say that money would not be given to farmers, whereas the fact is that the money received under National Calamity Relief Fund is lying unutilized in the state exchequer. ... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to mention, through you, that recently

crops worth crores of rupees have been lost due to cold wave, storm and hailstorm in Rajasthan.

MR. SPEAKER: Please speak patiently so that we could understand it properly.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, crops have been damaged on a large scale due to severe cold, cold wave and untimely rain in Rajasthan. As per the principles of CRF and the norms formulated in the 12th Commission of NCCF, cold wave and frost are not included for payment of compensation. No compensation has been paid to farmers for the loss of their crops. I would request the Government of India, through you, to amend the rules to make such provision in CRF and NCCF so that relief and compensation could be given to farmers of Rajasthan.

MR. SPEAKER: You have raised a relevant issue.

[*English*]

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH (Jhalawar): Sir, I associate with Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat on this issue.

[*Translation*]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the views expressed by Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat.

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Sir, I also associate myself with the subject. ... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Everybody associates. Now Shri Bellarmin.

... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed 15 hon'ble. Members to speak.

[*English*]

No more issues now. Either you have to wait till the end of the day or you have to take your chance tomorrow. That will depend on the hon. Presiding Officer.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: What is the method of raising issues, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER: You have to depend, right or wrong, on the Presiding Officer. Sorry, not today. We had all unanimously agreed to allow five issues. The House is running smoothly. Seven questions have been taken up with your cooperation.

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN (Nagercoil): Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government the precarious condition of patients affected by the dreadful disease Haemophilia when the world is observing Haemophilia Day today. The disease is caused due to a genetic disorder symptomatic of spontaneous bleeding with no sign of clotting. The patients of this disease are put to untold distress. It is a good augury that the Government has come forward to offer treatment for patients of this disease at three selected hospitals in Delhi. The serum used for the treatment is not only too costly that a common man cannot afford it, but also not easily available. I, therefore, request the Government to come forward to help the Haemophiliacs by facilitating them to avail of treatment at all the District Headquarters hospitals with the prescribed medicines being made available to them either free of cost or at a subsidized and affordable price. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: We now take up Item No.16. Hon. Members, thank you for your kind cooperation. I do not wish to shut out anybody but I have to apply some judgment. Tripathiji, you know it that I respect you very much.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Listen to me, Sir. Please give me two-three minutes.

MR. SPEAKER: Please, not today. We will take it up on Monday.

The House now takes up Item No. 16. Demands for Grants (Railways). Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh will speak.

I am obliged to you Tripathiji, thank you very much.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: This is an injustice to the State of Orissa, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: No, no. I am fond of your State and you know that. Every year I go there.

12.38 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (RAILWAYS)— 2008-09—*Contd.*

[*Translation*]

SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget (2008-2009). As you are well aware that while the hon. Minister of Railways was presenting the Railway Budget of 2008-09, people from every nook and corner of the country were appreciating him, because whereas on the one hand, the Minister of Railways contemplated increasing income of the railways and devised ways and means for it, on the other he made provisions for extending facilities to the common man, the physically challenged persons and the students.

[Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh]

12.39 hrs.

[SHRI MOHAN SINGH *in the Chair*]

Sir, you are aware that whereas some people were making a hue and cry during the speech of the hon. Minister of Railways, he was busy in making new announcement regarding introducing new trains and laying new rail lines in adequate number in all the states. On the whole one can find that the railways is earning huge profits. There is a reason behind it. All these achievements have been made due to the efficient management of the hon. Minister of Railways. Hon'ble Members of the BJP have been criticizing that the Minister of Railways has presented a populist budget. However, it is not so. It is not a populist budget. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Minister, let the hon'ble Member speak.

SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH: The Members of the B.J.P. and the N.D.A. have never appreciated the railway budget. I would like to ask them if the railways was in profit during their regime? Never, not at all. The Railways incurred loss during that period but the hon'ble Minister has made it a profit making enterprise and brought it on world map. All regions have different problems. I would like to say something about my area. The Hon'ble Minister has announced to provide rail link from Beahat to Anugrahnarayan Road and the foundation stone was also laid for it. Funds were also allocated to undertake this work. A provision has been made in the budget to provide funds for doubling of railway lines between Patna and Gaya. He has announced to lay railway lines between Islampur and Gaya. The work of doubling of railway line and laying of new railway line should be expedited. There are also some problems in the constituency of my colleague, Shri Sita Ram Singh. The work in Motihari, Shivhar and Sitamarhi is required to be expedited. Survey in this regard should be completed. There is a problem of ROB. It needs to be solved. With these words while supporting the demands for grants, I conclude my speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Members who want to lay their speeches, are permitted to do so. All the hon'ble Members have to support the Railway Budget. Hence, they should lay their speeches. There will be no lunch hour today. Those who want to go for lunch may kindly lay their speeches.

[*English*]

SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN (Coimbatore): Sir, I am glad and thankful for this opportunity.

This Railway Budget is just a mixed bag. Let me at the outset say that the reduction in passenger fares is a welcome step. In a situation where people are suffering from all round price rise, the reduction in passenger fares provides some relief. The appointment of licensed porters as gunmen and other Group 'D' posts is a positive step. But more initiatives should be taken to fill up the vacancies of over 1.5 lakh in Railways, and initiatives should be taken to also absorb the contract workers working in various projects.

The fact is that railways are becoming a target of terrorist attacks. The high number of railway accidents and the ever increasing number of crimes against women are adequately addressed. The proposed privatisation of container trains and depots, outsourcing of railway services and privatisation of railway property in the name of Private-Public Partnership (PPP) causes a deep concern. Such drive towards privatization is obnoxious for the industry. This in general, with regard to Tamil Nadu in particular, the overall allocation will hardly enable completion of the projects in progress. The immediate and the most necessary requirements of the southern districts of Tamil Nadu are not addressed in the proposals. To explain a few, let me say that the proposed Mayiladuthurai-Tiruvapur-Karaikudi new railway line is estimated to cost Rs 404 crore. Sir, Rs 50 crore is allotted in this Budget, in addition to the last year's allocation of Rs 10 crore. This leaves a huge gap of Rs.344 crore. This shortfall raises fears about the completion of the project even before 2010.

The allocations made for the laying of new broad gauge lines and gauge conversion work fall too short to meet the actual estimated requirement. The already commenced projects between Villuppuram and Katpadi, Tiruchi-Nagore-Karaikal, Manamadurai-Virudunagar etc., and the proposed Nellore-Thenkasi and Madurai-Bodi gauge conversion, cannot be completed because of the insufficient budgetary support. For example, the estimated cost of gauge conversion between Villuppuram and Katpadi is Rs. 276 Crore and the allocation is mere Rs. 121 crore. Tiruchi-Nagore-Karaikal project, completed upto Tiruvapur has received Rs.50 crore now, in addition to last year's Rs.281crore. It still falls short of around Rs. 120 crore. The Manamadurai-Virudunagar project completion requires additional allotment of Rs. 84 crore more than the offered support of Rs. 60 crore.

Besides, there is a deliberate exclusion of the Coimbatore region. Except a few sops such as the newly introduced 'Garib Rath' and the extension of the

Kumbakonam-Coimbatore janashtabdi that would benefit the people of Tiruppur and Coimbatore, if 'Garib Rath' halts at the Coimbatore and Tiruppur stations, nothing encouraging is proposed.

The budgetary support for the Coimbatore-Dindigul gauge conversion project of 224.88 kms stretch is very disheartening. The allotment of Rs.1 crore in the year 2006, Rs.30 crore in 2007 and the announcement of a very meagre support of Rs.65 crore in this Budget will no doubt, render the project incomplete. The project cost is estimated at Rs. 613.61 crore and the allocation in comparison is just a peanut.

Having made these observations, I would like to place the following proposals to be considered for inclusion.

The work of doubling of track between Coimbatore North junction and Irugur may be expedited with sufficient financial support.

Circular track around the city of Coimbatore and shuttle train services between Coimbatore and Tiruppur and commuter services in the Pollachi- Palakkad-Mettupalayam line should be introduced to address the growing traffic congestion.

Tiruppur is identified in the world map as the 'dollar city' with its fast growing hosiery and garment exports. A new railway link between Tiruppur and Karur through Kangeyam and Vellakoil will provide a short distance route between Tiruppur and Thoothukudi port. This will help in facilitating a free commercial freight and an effective commuter facility.

A Railway Over Bridge replacing the level crossing of Eachanari on the NH209 and a ROB at Avarampalayam Railway level crossing may be considered.

New trains for Coimbatore and Tiruppur have become an increasing necessity due to the enormous growth attracting employment from various districts of the State. Frequent or hourly train services between Coimbatore-Erode, Coimbatore- Mettupalayam, Coimbatore- Palakkad, Podanur-Pollachi should be introduced.

New passenger train services connecting Coimbatore with Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Pudukkottai, Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram, passenger services to Tirupathi and Tiruvananthapuram from Coimbatore, exclusive night train from Coimbatore to Bangalore may

be considered immediately. Coimbatore Junction, Coimbatore North Junction, Peelamedu station, Singanallur station and Podanur junction may be brought under the Master Plan development strategy. A state of the art infrastructure facility should be provided at all the important railway junctions in the State particularly in Coimbatore station with extension of platforms, special ticket counters, additional waiting rooms, more subways and refreshment rooms.

In conclusion, I submit that the basic principle of the Indian Railways to connect the nook and corner of the country, to ensure nationwide rail connectivity, still remains a distant dream even after 60 years of freedom. The guiding factor to make the Indian Railways the vital contributor of the overall socio-economic growth is still missing. The Budget largely reflects the philosophy of privatization and liberalization.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may conclude now. Please lay the remaining part of the speech.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members should keep in mind that the hon'ble Minister has to reply at half past two of the clock and I have a long list of Members who want to speak. Therefore, kindly read half of your speech and lay the remaining part thereof.

*SHRI GANESH SINGH (Satna): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on the Demands for the Grants the Railways. I oppose the motion moved in the House on the demands for grants pertaining to the Ministry of Railways for the year 2008-09 because the railways has not undertaken equitable development in the country. Hon'ble Members of Parliament have been complaining about inequitable development of the railways in this House but the Minister for Railways has continuously been adopting discriminatory policy. Even the profit earning areas of the country are being neglected. The Ministry of Railways has been grossly neglecting Satna, Maihar, Katani, Jaitwara, Madganwa, Manikpur, Chitrakut, Karvi, Uchehara, Vaghai, Reewa, Amadara, Mukehi, Khutaha and other railway stations, falling under the Central Railways, Jabalpur for the last 49 years whereas the Railways earns a revenue of Rs. 7000 crore through transportation only

*The speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Ganesh Singh]

from Satana, Turki Maihar and Mukhi. Crores of Passengers travel by trains from Chitrakut, Maihar and Satna stations, every year. In Chitrakut lord Rama had undertaken penance for 11 years. Similarly, Ma Sharda's Shaktipeeth is located in Mehar. Moreover, Sadhnasthali of famous musician Baba Ala-ud-din is also there. Crores of people visit these places round the year.

There is abundance of lime stone in Satna district. As such, many big cement factories have already been set up there. One-third quantity of cement required in the country is supplied from this area only but from the railway point of view negligible development has been carried out in this area. Trains going to Mumbai from Bihar, West Bengal, Assam and Uttar Pradesh pass through Satana. There was VIP reservation quota in various passenger trains from Satna station but now it has been scrapped. Therefore, I demand that VIP reservation quota in all up and down trains, which halt at Satana should be restored. A new train should be introduced from Satana to Mumbai.

I have been persistently demanding to change the time scheudle of Mahakoshal Express running between Jabalpur and Nizamuddin and of another train running between Reewa and New Delhi in such a manner that they reach Delhi at 9.00 O'clock in the Morning but unfortunately, the hon'ble Minister of Railways has paid no attention to it till date. These two trains run indefinitely late. The distance of 700 k.m. is not covered even 20 hours.

The former Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar had announced to extend Rajkot Express upto Satana but it has not been implemented till date. The work of doubling of railway track from Katni to Allahabad and from Reeva to Manikpur is still incomplete. Even the electrification of these routes has not been done. So, these works should be completed without any further delay.

Almost all the stations of this zone including Satna, Katni and Maihar Railway stations are extremely unclean. There is also an acute shortage of drinking water at these stations. These problems have not yet been resolved permanently. A shuttle train should be run between Maihar and Chitrakut. The number of bogies should be increased in all classes of Rewanchal Express running between Bhopal and Reeva. Moreover, Rewanchal Express should be extended upto Habibganj.

Construction work of railway line from Lalitpur to Singrauli should be completed immediately. Besides,

construction of rail line from Satna to Reeva, Mirzapur should also be completed immediately. A fourth platform with exit towards the railway colony should be constructed at Satna Railway Station. As Satna is a big cement-producing district, a cement sleeper-manufacturing factory should be set up there. Mahakaushal Express should be run between Satna and Delhi.

Sir, I have been constantly raising the problems related to railways in Madhya Pradesh and in my constituency in every rail budget but unfortunately none of my demands has been met by the Ministry of Railways. Hence, all the demands including those raised earlier should be met. I have always been drawing the attention of the Ministry of Railways towards the safety of passengers, grave irregularities in the catering services and bedroll and laid stressed to bring improvement therein. The railway track running from Satna to Allahabad and from Manikpur to Mahasi is not safe. Incidents of manhandling, looting, robbery and giving sedatives to passengers have become the order of the day. Hence, concrete steps are required to be taken to check such incidents. During the previous session of the Lok Sabha, I had raised this issue also and subsequently, the Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh police launched an operation. Consequently, Satna Railway Police nabbed a gang involved in looting and robbery in the trains. Hence, my demand is that Satna Railway Police should be suitably rewarded.

The Hon'ble Minister of Railways is claiming manufacturing of a large number of passenger bogies but the bogies of many passenger trains such as Mahakaushal Express, Reeva-Delhi Express, Samath Express, Reeva-Bhopal Express, Howrah-Mumbai Mail Express, Janata Express, Kashi Express and Kamayani Express are ramshackled, which may lead to an accident anytime.

So, new coaches of all the classes should be provided in all these trains and upgradation should be done from Karvi station.

Alongwith widening the main gate of Satna Railway Station, parking area should also be increased and a green park should be developed near Satna Railway station.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH (Rajgarh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, with your permission, I would like to speak on the Appropriation Bill No. 3 introduced by the honourable

Minister alongwith the budget. It would have been better, had all the matters been incorporated in the Appropriation Bill No. 1 itself instead of introducing this Appropriation Bill No. 3. Introducing such Bills namely Appropriation Bill No. 1, Appropriation Bill No. 2 and Appropriation Bill No. 3 separately not only wastes the parliamentary time but also delays the ongoing railway projects. Consequently, the cost of these projects overruns. Hence, it would have been better to include all the matters in a single bill. Discussion is going on as to why railway budget should be presented separately. Why should the railway budget not be presented alongwith the General Budget? If you allow me, I would like to quote a few lines from an article published in The Economic Times, dated 21st March 2008. It has been reported in that article that:

[English]

"Today many other Departments of the Government are comparable to the Indian Railways and deserve equal importance for the revenue contributions. In fact, it is time to re-examine the historical supremacy of Indian Railways and discontinue the ritual of a separate Railway Budget before the Union Budget every year."

[Translation]

Today such things are being said and the reason behind it is that. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: All the writers of such articles are not scholars.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: Sir, I also am not a scholar. The view is cropping up that the railways is making profit which I appreciate, but somewhere a milieu or view is evolving in the country that politics is also being played in the name of the Railways. It is being reported that it is not only a railway budget but it is taking the form of a railway regional budget. I am not against Bihar. I have my maternal home in Bihar. While preparing the Railway Budget we should take the entire country into account. At the same time, we should make efforts to bring the Railways at par with international standards alongwith giving due regard to national interest.

Sir, we have been presenting a separate railway budget for the last 60 years. If we assess how much

length of railways we have added in these 60 years, we will find that we have been able to construct only half kilometre of railway line a day. Hence, all these things are required to be considered.

By the target years 2011 and 2012, Rs. 40,000 crore have to be mobilized through joint venture and public-private partnership under Dedicated Freight Corridor Project. That is commoendable. The honourable Minister has himself made a statement that the department has so much money that it can get an East Corridor constructed itself with the railway funds and it does not need to mobilize money from other sources. Through you, I would like to suggest to the honourable Minister that if National Highways are not constructed alongwith DFC, which is an ambitious project and through which employment can be provided to the people, the same would not be viable. Has the honourable Minister of Railways talked to the Minister of National Highways, Shri T.R. Baalu. If so, what are the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor. If the honourable Minister of Railways looks at his own state, he will find that only 13 kilometres of National Highways have been constructed along with DFC. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: In how many days?

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: There was a question regarding the National Highways which unfortunately could not be taken up but in reply to that question, it was stated that only 13 kilometres of road had been constructed in Bihar. Hence, attention has to be paid to all the things.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we talk about railway safety for which funds have being sought through Railway Appropriation Bill. I do not oppose it. Nothing else can be important but the railway safety. But has he noticed the quantum of amount being spent on the railway employees? You can find from the figures that the number of accidents which was 1013 in the year 1980-81 has reduced to 195 in the year 2006-07. It is a good thing but out of these 195 accidents 164 incidents occurred due to human error. It is an important thing to note. Hence, more money should be spent on the training of personnel. Money should be spent to send our staff and officers abroad for training, if possible.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Ministry of Railways has constituted a special safety fund of Rs. 17,000 crore in the 10th Five Year Plan. Out of this, 45 per cent amount

[Shri Lakshman Singh]

was allotted for the renewal of tracks. I do not know whether money from this fund has been spent or not? But all the ongoing works have to be completed by March 2008. Now that the month of April is in progress and the Government is seeking money today in the House. That is why I think that his projects are incomplete and are not going to be completed. I would like that the Minister of Railways should inform the House. If you look at the figures of laying new railway lines in the 10th Five Year Plan, you will come to know that our target was for laying 1310 kilometres but till now only 920 kilometre long line has been laid. The Government says that delay in land acquisition, results in non-availability of land in time. Because of that the work is incomplete. I would like to know, through you, the reason for this delay and for the dependence of the Ministry of Railways on the State Governments when the House has given the right of acquisition of land to the Ministry of Railways, then why this delay is taking place. There are many States where they cannot acquire land because of various reasons; for example, Ramganj Mandi-Bhopal railway line has been sanctioned in my constituency in my own State Madhya Pradesh.

13.00 hrs.

The Railways have given the compensation amount, but there was some delay on the part of the State Government because Patwaries went on strike. The State Governments have limited resources and the backward States have very limited resources. So, delay is taking place in it. Why don't you go there and do essential work like acquiring land, distributing the compensation amount there itself and start laying the railway line as early as possible?

MR. CHAIRMAN: They were given this right ten days ago.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: Then, they should use it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now they will use it.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: They should use it and try to complete the railway line as its cost is rising due to this delay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude your speech.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will take two minutes more.

Sir, the doubling target of railway lines was 1575 kilometres in Tenth Five Year Plan, but the achievement is only 1299 kilometers. They have not achieved their target even in that area. What is the reason for it? Praise is being showered but there is also a need to pay attention to the loopholes. However, he has not mentioned about it anywhere in his Budget and the Appropriation Bill. He has mentioned about technology upgradation but no mention has been made about the efforts to bring about energy efficiency and fuel efficiency in the railways. There is no mention about it in his budget speech. I hope that during the reply, he will tell the country about the efforts which he is going to make for bringing about fuel efficiency and energy efficiency in the railways.

Since, you have asked me to conclude, so while concluding my speech I would like to say that you should pay attention to the shortcomings also which have been pointed out by other hon'ble Members regarding railways. This Government has not got the guts to refuse the demands of Lalu ji. So, while pointing out these flaws I support this Appropriation Bill.

SHRI MADAN LAL SHARMA (Jammu): Sir, at the outset, I congratulate the hon'ble Minister of Railways, Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav. I congratulate him for the reforms that he brought in the railways during the last four and a half years and for the dynamic developmental activities constantly going on in the railways in every region and state of the country. I rise to support the Demands for Grants for the year 2008-09.

It is true that while on the one hand he never increased railway fare in any of his budgets on the other he gave various concessions and facilities to different categories of people of the country. Lakshman Singh Ji is not present in the House. I want to tell him that when I joined this House as a new Member of Parliament, I used to observe that the Members from the opposition did not pay any heed to the speech of Laluji. He brought large-scale reforms in the railways. I think that he also changed the content of the meetings of the opposition. Today, they have no points to raise in their meetings. This indicates the achievements of our UPA Government and the result of their good work, which has been initiated by the Ministry of Railways, headed by Lalu Ji. He took care of every class of people. Our children used to go to other places for their studies and the poor parents were not in a position to bear the expense incurred on their studies and to and fro journey of their wards. He

has given a concession to these classes of people also. Some days ago he was in Jammu. He told a story about his visit of Mumbai. A very old coolie met him there who was weeping. He was bald and he could not keep his neck erect. When the Minister asked him about the reason of his grief, he told that he made his daughters educated by doing hard work as a coolie. But, the negotiations for that coolie's well educated daughter's marriage used to result in futility when the groom's family knew about the profession of the old man. I think that this is the ground reality. Perhaps, there would be lacs of coolies in our country. I was witness to that scene in Jammu and Kashmir when he went there some days ago. The coolies were so happy that they were dancing in ecstasy. I think this is a great phenomenon. This is a small event, but he did a great job by winning the hearts of the coolies who carry loads of other people.

Sir, he got metre gauge lines converted into broad gauge. In his budget, he included the demands of the people of such areas where there is no railway line. Development activities and work are going on but fares have not been increased. Many concessions and facilities are being given and I think a great event is taking place, which will be marked in history. Several railway budgets have been presented in the 60 years but he employed innovative ways and has won hearts of every section of the society. So, I congratulate him specially for doing so many novel things.

Sir, I would like to raise a few points related to the entire state in general and to my parliamentary constituency, particularly Jammu and Poonch Parliamentary constituency. I thank him that on my request he made a provision of survey of railway line to Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch via Akhnoor. But, I would like to say that the ground survey work should start at the earliest. It has its importance because Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, Poonch Rawla Court Road are such areas where people from Pakistan come and our people go to Pakistan. People from Pakistan come to Jammu and Kashmir and to other places of the country to meet their relatives. When these railway lines would be ready, the people will come in large numbers because they will get a lot of facilities. There are various army divisions stationed in our area along the line of control. Huge losses were suffered during the influx of militants in the past who triggered IED blasts; many buses and trucks of the army were blown up. So, I think that construction of the railway line would facilitate the security personnel from all over India who are positioned here and save our country, as they will enjoy

smooth journey in this area. A new road named Mughal road is being constructed from Poonch and it will connect with Kashmir, which will become the shortest route. I think a short track should be laid from Kashmir to Kazhikund Baramulla road which will prove economically viable for railways.

Sir, our Railway Division is in Ferozepur. I have demanded it several times and it may be under consideration. It is necessary to establish an independent Division at Jammu which has become essential because distance between Ferozepur and Jammu and between Jammu and Baramulla is more than hundreds of miles. It will benefit the employees of the department of railways as well as the public. Ferozepur is far away and we find it difficult to co-ordinate with them. Lacs of devotees go to Vaishno Devi Shrine and I am thankful to him for introducing Garib Rath from Jammu to Kathgodam. He inaugurated the train. Our people have demanded that Nainital, Dehradun and Haridwar should also be connected to that line because Jammu is a good place from tourism point of view also. I understand that it will not be possible immediately but these demands may kindly be registered.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, another Garib Rath may kindly be introduced next year from Jammu via Haridwar, Nainital to Dehradun. This Garib Rath will benefit our area a lot due to its religious and tourism interests. I have only these 3-4 demands. At the end I once again thank Shri Lalu Prasad ji and all the employees of his department who during the past four and half years. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, the Government has not completed four and a half years. It is still one month left to 4 years.

SHRI MADAN LAL SHARMA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, during the past four years he and his department have laboured continuously to earn a good name to railways and concessions and facilities have been given to the people of this courts. Under the leadership of Laluji railways have done this marvelous work. Thanks.

SHRI SHANKHLAL MAJHI (Akbarpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me time to speak on Supplementary Budget of Railways. I congratulate the capable Minister of Railways who has got his name registered as 'Vikaas Purush' in the 60 year long history of Railways. Railway was a sick organisation when he took charge. He not only revived it but also made it functional in the most praiseworthy style. During his tenure of past four years railway fares have not been increased

[Shri Shankhlal Majhi]

and still he has provided all types of facilities to the poor, the students, the handicapped, and the elderly people. He has given new vigour and strength to Railways.

Sir, I had made him aware about a grave problem of our area when hon. Minister was delivering his rail budget speech. At Akbarpur Railway station there is a railway crossing 83A. It has been closed due to construction of an overbridge on it. There is no footpath on that overbridge. Heavily loaded trucks and lorries pass through that overbridge while going to Azamgarh from Bahraich through state highway and pedestrians face problems in crossing that overbridge because there is no footpath. Due to the closure of 83A crossing, children miss their schools. People who visit bank or court have to face difficulties and they have no option but to use this crowded overbridge. It has only been four months since it was opened and four people have already lost their lives in these four months.

Sir, we have visited hon. Minister's office. Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri R. Veluri was present there. We have informed him that accidents keep taking place very frequently over there and if this continued then more major accident could take place any day. Therefore, 83A crossing should be opened for pedestrians. When the schools are closed for the day, thousands of children walk on foot towards their homes by using that overbridge. If some day an accident takes place due to overturning of a lorry, then hundreds of children may lose their lives because so far four pedestrians have already lost their lives on that bridge. Therefore, we had requested that 83A crossing should be opened. If it cannot be opened then an underground subway may be constructed next to the crossing so that pedestrians are not compelled to use the overbridge. But, so far no action has been taken. I fear that a major accident will occur over there any day. Therefore, I would once again like to request the hon. Minister that 83A crossing under that overbridge should be opened immediately or a subway should be constructed next to it so that the lives of pedestrians could be saved.

Sir, last time also I had requested the hon. Minister that there is no direct route for people from Sidharth Nagar, Sant Nagar and Ambedkar Nagar for reaching Allahabad where the High Court and the sacred Sangam are located and where lacs of people come every year. They have to travel upto 400 and 500 kilometers via Gorakhpur and Varanasi for going there. If one goes via

Lucknow, then it is a journey of 500-600 kilometers. Previously there was a rail route from Akbarpur to Tanda. If Tanda is connected directly with then the distance between the two towns is only 40-45 kms. Last time I had said that the distance from Sultanpur to Akbarpur is only 40 kms. Thus, if a total of 85 km. rail link is provided then people of Sidharth Nagar, Sant Kabir Nagar, Ambedkar Nagar will have more convenience in reaching the Sangam city Allahabad, High Court and South India. It will also help in increasing income of railways. I know that the remaining tenure of this Government is short, but I would like to humbly request the hon. Minister that at least assessment for the same should be conducted and he should make such arrangements so as to provide that facility to the people of that area. The people of Magadh, the land of Sant Kabir Nagar, Sidharth Nagar, the land of Gautam Budha and Ambedkar Nagar, the land of Lohia will be benefited by that. Kaifiyat Express linking Akbarpur to Delhi starts from old Delhi. In addition to that one more train from there run upto Delhi. I demand that Kaifiyat Express should be started from New Delhi instead of Old Delhi Railway Station as there is no train from New Delhi. There is shortage of booking windows at Akbarpur railway station. Because of that there is long queue from 8 AM to 8 PM. There is no shelter for passengers. The number of employees working there is also less than the sanctioned strength. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister that alongwith opening of additional booking windows required number of employees should be posted there.

Secondly, platform no. 2 and 3 cannot accommodate 25 bogies, as their length is not adequate. There is neither any arrangement for shelter nor any overbridge to connect the three platforms no. 1, 2 and 3. So, there is risk of accident at the time of arrival of trains. I request the hon. Minister that length and height of platform nos. 2 and 3 should be increased so that it may accommodate 25 bogies as presently youngsters are able to get down the train but elderly people often fall while alighting down. Besides, there is no arrangement for A.C. retiring room. Ambedkar Nagar is the district head quarters of Akbarpur. The weavers are a majority at this place. There are NTC and sugar mills at this place. Officers, official and businessmen visit this place frequently. I demand that at least one A.C. retiring room should be provided there. I thank you for giving me time to speak. I conclude my speech appreciating hon. Minister of Railways once again for his wonderful and commendable work for the progress of railways.

[*English*]

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Sambalpur): I am not going to deliberate upon any major policy decision of the Railways, but I would just like to put forth two or three important points relating to Railways. A new problem has arisen of late. As you know, in the country, since last six or seven years, from the time of the NDA Government under the Prime Minister's Gram Sadak Yojana, hundreds and thousands of kilometers of roads are being constructed in the country. Even the inner part of the country is being connected to other areas by this PMGSY, that is, Prime Minister's Gram Sadak Yojana. What I have observed is that in some places, the Railways have come as a constraint in the construction under the Prime Minister's Gram Sadak Yojana.

I would like to cite one or two points for the information of the hon. Railway Minister. When a road construction work is going on and if it happens to cross a railway line, the Railways is coming and stopping the work on the plea that they are not in a position to construct any new manned or unmanned level crossing check gate. For that reason particularly in my own constituency more than one road construction work has been stopped by the Railways forcefully. Even the Railway authorities are threatening the officials of the Department of Rural Development of arrest and other legal action if they go on with the construction of the road. I understand that as a matter of principle the Railways has decided to man all the unmanned level crossing check gates. That is a most welcome step. But is it a fact that simultaneously the Railways has also decided not to go in for any unmanned check gate notwithstanding the fact that the road work has been stopped? The Railways is an organ of the Government of India and likewise the Rural Development Ministry is also a part of the Government of India. If two Ministries of the Government of India are clashing on this point, then certainly it is going to hamper the development work. So, I would urge upon the Railway Ministry and also the Rural Development Ministry to sit together and sort out this problem.

I would like to cite one particular instance which happened in my constituency. In the East Coast Railway, at railway km. 1613/10 & 11 on the Sambalpur-Titlagarh Section of the Sambalpur Railway Division one road construction work being undertaken under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana has been forcefully stopped by the Railway Ministry on the plea that the road cannot cross the railway line. I would like to inform the House

that more than 50 villages are there on the other side of the railway line and they are disconnected from the district headquarter and from other important points of the district. This is a very important point and I am sure such problems might have arisen in other parts of the country also, but it is the duty of the Railway Ministry to sort out this problem.

Sir, I would like to point out one more thing. Wherever there is a sign board put up by the Railways as in the case of railway stations, the sign board is in English, Hindi and the concerned regional language. It is a welcome thing. Sign boards have to be there in regional languages, but the Railways have no right to insult the regional languages. In many places in my State Orissa where the Railways have displayed sign boards written in Oriya, I have seen that it is written in such a distorted manner that it is a sheer insult to the language and this has to be stopped. If they write Nowrangpur as 'Nawa Ranga Pur' and if they write Bargarh as 'Bada Gada' in my language, there is nothing more insulting than this. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards this matter. This has been raised in this House on many occasions, but nothing has been done so far. Either you stop writing in regional languages or you stop insulting regional languages. The correct wording should be there on the sign board because it is touching the sentiments of the local people. It is not a small thing. It is a question of sentiment and emotion of the people of that area. Therefore, this mistake has to be rectified.

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Gandhiji had said that we should not look at bad things.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: How can we neglect the bad points in Railways but we can improve them.

[*English*]

Sir, I would like to point out another thing and I am sure the Railway Minister would not mind this. He is a leader of national stature, no doubt. But while formulating the Railway Budget I am afraid he is taking a parochial attitude because when we are talking of the under-developed States and when we are talking of States or places where most of the population belongs to the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes or other deprived sections of the society, is it not the duty of the Railways

[Shri Prasanna Acharya]

to give more attention to that area? In my State, one proposal for construction of a new railway line from Bargarh to Nawapara via Badampur in KBK area is pending since 1977. The whole country knows that the KBK area is one of the most backward areas of this country. This railway line will not only link the KBK area, but it will also facilitate transport of coal and iron ore from Orissa to Central India at a much lesser cost.

Sir, the rate of return, as per the survey, is 19 per cent. So far as I know, 10 per cent is not a smaller percentage, but I do not know why the under-developed areas are not taken care of. Many Railway Budgets have been passed in this House, many Railway Ministers have come and have given full assurance that these under-developed areas will be taken care of. But this new line has not been sanctioned by the Railway Ministry. So, I would urge upon the Railway Minister to, at least, give special consideration to such under-developed areas. So, I would like to submit that this new proposed rail line from Bargad to Nabapara in KBK district via Padampur should be given special care by the Railway Ministry and the hon. Railway Minister.

Recently, there has been a recruitment drive by the Railways and interviews were held for the Group 'D' and lower class of employees. One was held at my district Headquarters, Sambalpur, in my constituency and another was held at Bhubaneswar, the State capital of Orissa. I know that in Karnataka and some other places, interviews were held. But, surprisingly, when interviews are held and thousands of youngsters queue up to appear for the interview, boys from a particular State are given preference. I would like to know whether it is a fact that boys and youngsters of a particular State in India are much qualified than boys of other States. You go to Karnataka and that has happened, you go to Orissa and that has happened. Sir, my submission to the hon. Railway Minister is that recruitment for group 'D' and other lower classes should be made on the regional basis so that people from those States get equal chance.

Sir, there has been some observation of the Supreme Court and I am aware of that observation that interview should be held on all India level. But on the plea of the observation of the Supreme Court, we cannot go on ignoring the interests of the people of under-developed States in the case of employment in the Railways. As you know, Railways has the highest potentiality of employing the highest number of unemployed young people in this country.

So, I would urge upon the Railway Minister that if necessary he should come out with a special law and

try to eradicate this injustice being meted out to under-developed States, to the young unemployed people of such States. This is a very sensitive matter. So, the recruitment policy of the Railways has to be changed.

Lastly, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Railway Minister some smaller points. Today itself, in a place called Attavira by the side of National Highway 6, people are holding up the trains by staging rail-roko agitation because they want one-minute or two-minute stoppage of trains at that place. So, my submission to the hon. Railway Minister is to direct the authorities to ensure that at Attavira there is a stoppage of one-minute or two-minute of all the inter-city expresses, which are running within the State of Orissa. I would like to inform the House that Attavira gives the maximum paddy procurement in the State of Orissa. It is a greenery area and many agro-products are being exported, many people from that place commute to different places of this country everyday. So, that is my submission.

Sir, as far as the Khurda Road-Puri doubling of rail line is concerned, we expected that in this year's Budget also enough provision will be made. But, unfortunately, that has not been made.

Sir, Sambalpur is an important town of Eastern India and Orissa, but the platform and the retiring rooms at the Sambalpur Station are in a very hazardous condition. That should be improvised.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[*Translation*]

SHRI TAPIR GAO (Arunachal Pradesh): Sir, I take part in Demands for Grants of Railways every year and I was hoping that under the leadership of Shri Laluji, the Railways will make some progress in the North-east. I want to confine my speech to that point only. I would like to tell Shri Laluji in particular how important is the Railways for the North-eastern states. I talked about Arunachal Pradesh in the main budget, but I would like to make a mention about N.F. Railways in particular. The Railways have undertaken various national projects since 1992-93 till date. I have a book with me which is about N.F. Railways and from that book I will read out something for the Railway Minister. This book was printed on 4th April 2008. Much progress has been made by the Railways. I will associate myself with our countrymen in this achievement. Mr. Chairman, Sir, if we look at the North-eastern states, we will see as to how much the national projects have progressed. For Rail-cum-Road Bridge, Bogie bill bridge project, an amount of Rs. 1767.36 crore was sanctioned in the year 1997-98. This year in

this railway budget, a paltry sum of Rs. 249.30 crore only has been allocated and its progress so far is 49 per cent only. Its targeted completion date is expiring in December 2008. This shows how much the Railway Minister is concerned about the North-eastern states.

New line from Ziribam to Tupul is another project for which an amount of Rs. 727.56 crore was approved in 2003-04 but in this railway Budget only Rs. 19 crore have been given for this project. Its progress is merely 3.5 per cent. Its targeted date is the year 2011. This way, how will you ensure growth in north-eastern states? There is one more national project from Ajara to Bimyhaat, for which an amount of Rs. 200 crore was approved in the year 2006-07. But in this railway budget, this has got zero budgetary allocation. This way, how do you propose to connect the North-Eastern states with Railways. There is another national project from Dimapur to Kohima new broad-gauge line. An amount of Rs. 850 crore was approved in the year 2006-07 for this project. This has been allocated one lakh rupees only in this financial year. There is a project from new Manyaguri to Jagighopa. For this, Rs. 894 crore were approved in the year 2000-2001. This has been given Rs. 34 crore this year. Its progress level is 20 per cent only. Its target year is 2012. Approval of Rs. 160 crore were given for Harmuti to Etanagar new broadgauge line in the year 1996-97. In this railway budget, only Rs. 4 crore have been given for this project and no target has been fixed for its completion. This was the only line to connect Arunachal Pradesh with Railways. It will be nice if hon'ble Railway Minister, Shri Laluji listens to me.

Dunai to Mendipathar new broadgauge line was given approval of Rs. 22 crore in the year 1992-93. A sum of rupees one lakh only has been given for this project in this year's budget. Its target has also not been fixed.

For Arariya to Galgaiya new broadgauge line, Rs. 300 crore were approved in the year 2006-07 and only Rs. two lakh have been given for this in this year's budget.

An amount of Rs. 912 crore was approved for gauge conversion project from Rangia to Murkagasaiek in the year 2003-04. For this, Rs. 2.94 crore have been given in this railway budget. Its target year is 2012.

Likewise there are other many national projects. I am telling you about the allocation for the national projects because for them targets have been fixed, but in this year's railway budget, hon'ble Railway Minister has neglected the national projects meant for the North-Eastern states. For survey and investigation purposes, no mention

regarding the targeted completion date has been made in this year's railway budget, that is why I want that the railways should get connected with the north-eastern states, for this is the only means to bring prosperity in that region.

[English]

this is the only source; and this is the only means to get the development of the North-eastern region.

[Translation]

If national projects are neglected, and only announcements are made in their name and nothing happens on the ground and no fund is given for the purpose then, how will you provide railway connectivity to the north-eastern states? That's why I submit this demand to the Railway Minister again on this occasion while debating these demands for grants that the north-eastern states should be connected with railways because our north-eastern states are such states where we can easily generate hydro-power, but in the absence of railway connectivity how can we take men and material there. So, railways are very much needed there. Bogie-vill bridge is the lifeline between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Tender for construction of pillars for this bridge has been cancelled three times by the Railway Board. I want to know the reasons for which this tender has been cancelled? We, the people of north-eastern states want to know the time when you will approve the tender for this pillar-work. We have one more big problem. There is only one Rajdhani Express between Delhi and north-eastern states which goes upto Dibrugarh but the most astonishing fact is that at times northeast bound trains are added with such outdated railway bogies in which water taps are usually dry and Rajdhani is no exception. Be it Sampark Kranti or North-east Express or Brahmaputra Express or any other north-east bound train all the unserviceable bogies are run in these north-east bound trains. I would request the Railway Minister to give new and comfortable bogies to the north-east bound trains. Like you provide bogies for main lines, you should provide same bogies for this line also. At the same time, all the national projects declared by the UPA Government, should be given sufficient fund for their execution or else these would turn out to be false promises. We should at least, feel that Railways are really earning profit under Shri Laluji. The share of that profit should also reach North-Eastern and states importance should be given to these national projects. I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak.

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (Inner Manipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants in respect of Ministry of Railways for the year 2008-09.

"Mr. Chairman Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants, Railways for the year 2008-09. I would like to join the Hon. Members of this House in congratulating the Hon. Minister Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and other two Hon. Ministers of the Railways for their commendable achievements. In fact we have to appreciate the good works done by the Railways in the last four years or so. Frankly speaking the UPA Chairperson and the Hon. Prime Minister have chosen the right person for this Ministry. We have to thank both of them for this. These days everybody is saying that our Railway Minister is a management wizard. This has been acknowledged by various institutions of repute. And he has been invited to deliver lectures on management inside and outside the country.

Hon. Members sitting in the opposition benches may not agree with me but it is a fact that in the last four years the Railways have earned huge profits. These profits were made without increasing the passenger fares and freight charges. Therefore, Sir, it is not a mean achievement.

Chairman Sir, I am from the North-Eastern State of Manipur. There is no rail linkage. As a matter of fact the number of rail-heads in the North-Eastern region is very few and the total length of railways is about 500 Km or so. The size of the entire Northeast is 1/10 of the whole country. Therefore the development and expansion of Railways in the region is very much necessary. Half of the existing rail-lines in the Northeast were constructed by the Britishers. That means in the last 60 years we have constructed hardly 250 Km of rail-lines in the region. It is high time to take care of this region and speedy expansion of Railways is the need of the hour.

Sir, one more thing I would like to mention here is that whenever we send a proposal for railway project to the Ministry the normal reply we get from the Ministry is that "the project is not economically viable". This is not the right attitude. I have very strong reservation of this attitude of the Railway Ministry. Because Railways are not only for profit making but also to provide transportation to the disadvantaged people in the remote areas for their development and progress. At the same time it is also to

strengthen the unity and integrity of the country. Unity in diversity is the reality of the country. And Indian Railways play a very crucial role to unify the nation.

In fact, all the State capitals in the Northeast except Guwahati / Dispur have no rail connection. It is a long pending demand to connect all the State Capitals by train. But this has not been done in the North-Eastern region. My appeal to the Hon. Minister is that the remaining seven State Capitals should be connected by rail without any further delay.

Hon. Railway Minister has recently announced some national projects for Jammu & Kashmir, North-East and other remote areas. To name a few, Srinagar-Udhampur-Baramulla line in Kashmir and Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal, Dhimapur-Kohima and Kumarghat-Agartala in the Northeast. We are grateful to the Hon. Minister for taking up these projects.

Sir, Jiribam-Tupul-Imphal project is stated to be completed by 2010. My request to the Hon. Minister is that this line should be completed in time. Because this is going to be a very important line. It is going to be extended to Myanmar and further to other South-East Asian countries. In the times to come this line will help us to tap the rich mineral and natural resources of the entire South-East Asia. And at the same time it will encourage us to utilize the available human resources in the right direction for our economic development and progress.

Railways provide huge job opportunities. I would like to mention that whenever there is railway recruitment some kind of preference should be given to the local candidates or recruitment may be conducted on regional basis. I am talking about the recruitment of Group 'C' & 'D' employees. At least 50% should be recruited from the region or the zone itself. If it is done a kind of unity will come about among the people. And that will further strengthen national integration.

We all know that Railways have provided jobs to a large number of people. However it is sorry to learn that a handful of people from the Northeast are employed in the Railways. I urge upon the Hon. Minister to recruit more people from the region.

It is important to note that in the last 4 years the number of train accidents have come down. I congratulate the Hon. Railway Minister for his careful and tactful management. Still I strongly feel that something more needs to be done for the safety and security of the

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Manipuri.

passengers. Hence the Railway Safety Fund should be augmented.

Once again I fully support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways. With these few words I conclude my speech.

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI (Shahabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I support the Demands for Grants presented by the Railway Minister. There is no doubt that our colleague Railway Minister Shri Laluji has made a lot of contribution making Indian Railways a profit making organization. But I would like to say in this context that profit earned by Railways should be spent on the growth of Railways. A number of proposals therefore have been given by me and my other colleagues. I do not want to know as to how the Railways have earned this profit. I want to quote a couplet of Ghalib:

"Hamko Malum Hai Jannat Ki Hakikat
Lekin Dil Ke Behlane Ko Ghalib Yeh Khayal Achha Hai."

13.46 hrs.

[DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY *in the Chair*]

Last year Laluji had announced the gauge-conversion of Lucknow-Bareilly railway line via Sitapur Lakhimpur-Khiri-Pilibheet but it has got no mention in the railway budget of this year.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: The work done earlier is not to be repeated.

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI: But no gauge conversion has taken place. If it had been executed earlier, I would not have mentioned it here. Some work has been done on that line. But I would like to know the time by which the gauge conversion of the railway line would be completed? This railway line is the life line of that entire terai region, hence, this work is very essential for the development of this area as this line interlinks the entire terai area with one another. There is Shahabad railway station, one year ago you had approved installation of a PRS there. For that I had run from pillar to post throughout the year only then this PRS was approved. But till now that work has not been done. I request you to install it there without any further delay.

Sitapur-Shahjahanpur railway line is in my constituency, which connects the area with Bihar. A number of fast trains from Bihar to Delhi and Punjab run on that track. The public of this area has been demanding

since long that one Delhi bound train should have halt at Jangbahadur railway station and one Punjab bound train should have halt at Maigalganj station. Lakhimpur-Khiri is terai area largely populated by Sikhs who are directly linked with Punjab. If you provide halt at Maigalganj to a train originating from Bihar, the people over there will be much benefited. There is no technical problem in it and you will also get many passengers. You have got lot of funds so kindly provide for construction of sheds on platforms of these two railway stations, which is a public need.

I express my gratitude to you that you announced to make the Azamgarh railway station a model station by addressing me in the railway budget speech alongwith introducing a new train from here. I appreciate that model station cannot be converted overnight, however, as always been a major source of labour supply across the world. Islands from across Mauritius to Trinidad and West Indies have been inhabited by the people from the Eastern region and today they are ruling there. Such in this area of the eastern region and your district Gopalganj is also included in it. This area continuously supplies labour the world over. People in lakhs have migrated to Mumbai and the Gulf from here. You have introduced one train for Mumbai which starts from Chhapra. However, it does not meet the requirement of our area. So, it is requested that the assurance of introducing one train from Azamgarh to Mumbai should be fulfilled. I would even request that there was a famous learned man of international acclaim in Azamgarh named Shibli Numani and Shibi College the biggest college of UP has been named after him, if you name the train as Shibli Numani Express then I can claim that you would become more popular in Azamgarh than in Gopalganj and Chhapra.

Secondly, the Godan Express train introduced by you from Chhapra has become the backbone of the development of the Eastern region and hence a pantry car should be attached to it, which I have been demanding for the last two years. It is a very long train and the passengers in the middle bogies do get something to eat, however, the passengers in the bogies in front or at the end have to wait for the train to halt at any station to eat something. So, a pantry car is very necessary. If the proposed new train Shibli-Numani Express is equipped with a pantry car from the beginning then, we shall all feel obliged and I shall throw a wonderful reception particularly in my constituency Azamgarh. I conclude by quoting a couplet in your honour:

"Jahan Rahega Wahin Roshani lutayega
Kisi Chirag Ka apna mukam nahin hota."

[English]

SHRI ALAKESH DAS (Nabadwip): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to congratulate our beloved hon. Railway Minister for his performance in the railway sector. More and more people are becoming the beneficiaries of the policies of the Railways. It is a matter of fact that Railways have achieved a lot, but I would request hon. Railway Minister that he should remove the bottlenecks of the system more and give emphasis on speeding up modernization of the railway system as a whole. We have seen in the Railway Budget that stress was there on doubling, but new lines, gauge conversion, signalling and electrification have been scaled down in the Budget. I feel and think that the Railways should give more emphasis on these parameters – new lines, gauge conversion, signaling and electrification.

We are seeing that many new lines are unused while there are also many old lines which are actually saturated. The Railways should explore to introduce new trains in the new lines so that congestion, which is becoming more and more due to increment of traffic, can be arrested.

We saw in the Railway Budget that it was estimated to utilise Rs. 550 crore for constructing railway over-bridges, but I saw in the statistics that only Rs. 148.15 crore have been spent. The system of 50 per cent of the cost being given by the Railway and 50 per cent of the cost being borne by the State Government is not running well. Therefore, the Railways should change this policy. I also spoke on the Railway Budget discussion earlier and gave the suggestion that 75 per cent of the cost for the Railway Over-Bridge (ROB) should be borne by the Railways and 25 per cent of the cost should be borne by the State Government. I think that ROB's will run smoothly with the implementation of this policy.

As regards Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in the Railways, I think that the Railways should have a well thought-out policy before going in for this agreement, and there should be some safeguards and parameters in it. The Railways should not entertain PPP in its core sectors, and the Railways should do its best to implement the policy on its own terms.

I would also like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister to the fact that the food quality in the Railway sector is becoming very bad. Railways should not give contract purely on commercial basis. Further, some new contractors are coming in this line, and they are not safeguarding the interest of the old workers. These new

contractors should safeguard the interest of these old workers, and the Railways should make some policy for this also.

Railways should give more emphasis on passenger amenities also. It is very true that there is shortage of staff in the Railways. As per the statistics, there were 22,000 appointments in 2006-2007, and 20,000 appointments in 2007-2008. But during this time nearly 40,000 employees of the Railways had retired. Therefore, the position remains the same, that is, 42,000 personnel were appointed and 40,000 personnel had retired. Therefore, Railways should explore some mechanism to fill-up these vacancies because there is shortage in RPF personnel, signalling staff, locomotive staff, etc. If there is shortage of Railway personnel in these sectors, then accidents will occur.

Another point to which I want to draw the attention of the Railway Minister is that Braithwaite and Burn Standard are the two Public Sector Companies, and the other three have been undertaken by the Railways. I would like to emphasise the point that the production capacity of Braithwaite and Burn Standard — wagon manufacturing factory — should be utilised by the Railways, and it should be undertaken.

Another very sensitive issue concerns the hawkers. Many people came to West Bengal due to partition of Bengal, and they were helpless at that time. Hence, they took to the profession of hawkers. They used to sell their products in the Railway compartments, and sometimes in the Railway stations also.

14.00 hrs.

Railways should give licence to these hawkers. Due to the developmental works undertaken by the Railways, some hawkers are being ousted. Some facilities should be provided to them, like forming cooperatives, etc.

In Bandel Station, there is a subway and water-logging is a very serious problem there. Hon. Member of Parliament Shri Rupchand Pal also brought this to the notice of the Railway Minister. A satisfactory solution should be to solve this problem.

Coming to gauge conversion, Nabadwip has become famous because of Lord Sri Chaitanya. The existing narrow-gauge line between Nabadwip to Santipur should be converted into a broad-gauge line. This gauge conversion work finds a mention in the Railway Budget.

After some modifications, it should be implemented and more funds should be allocated for the same.

Coming to Chartala line, the Railway Minister visited this place five to six months back. No funds have been allocated for this line. The Railway Minister should keep his promise.

Between Bakura and Dhanbad, the Railways should introduce a MEMU train, which is a pressing demand.

Another new train should be introduced between Kalyani and Haringhat. It is a very important demand and I would like to press for the same.

A halt at Cooper's Camp was a very important demand. The work to be undertaken by the Railways is very minimal and I think the Railway Minister will consider this.

In conclusion, I wish to say that I have placed all the demands and I think the Railway Minister will consider them favourably.

[Translation]

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to express my gratitude to the hon. Lalu Prasadji for introducing Swatantrata Sangram Senani Express from Jhansi to Barackpore before the budget. It is a good train and getting large number of passengers, however, if it is given a stoppage at the junction then it would definitely increase the income of the Railways. Besides, if this Express train which is plying once a week is run thrice a week then more passengers would be benefited further increasing the income of Railways. Hon. Minister has reduced the fares before the budget. I hail from the Jhansi division of North Central railway and I have seen there that there has been no change in the previous fares. The ticket which used to cost Rs. 35 is still at Rs. 35. Old tickets are being sold there. I have come to know through papers that be it Et station or any other station, tickets are being sold at old rates. I would like to bring it to the cognizance of the hon. Minister to take action and issue instructions. Concession has been given after fixing new rates from April 1, passengers should get ticket at that rate so as to benefit them. It should be given at station. Be it Et, Moth Station of Kalpi where computer facility has been sanctioned but these have not been installed so far. If computerized reservation is provided then, new tickets will be issued dispelling all rumours.

There is shuttle service for Konch and Et. I have raised this demand several times and the issue of discontinuing this shuttle service has also been raised many times. I demand that if Jhansi and Kanpur line from Parauna to Konch and Konch to Et has to be linked then Konch Station should be linked to the main line. The small shuttle of four bogies would accommodate Guard, Driver and lot of employees and Kouch Station would be linked with the main line.

The hon. Minister had conducted a survey from Bhind to Madhavgarh via Orai and Mahoba. The work on places of survey should definitely be started. I remember it very well that in the year 1977 when Janata Party was in the Government then lines from Konch to Bhind, Jalaun, Hadrukh, Kuthod, Divyapur via Oraiya were connected. If this line is connected then the people of this area would definitely be benefited. I demand that if a new railway line is laid from Gwalior to Mauth, Erach, Gursarai, Mahoba via Garautha then the people there would be benefited since they have never seen a railway line and more and more people would be able to travel from there.

Mr. Chairman Sir, there is a mail train from Gwalior to Barauni. This train is regularly late by eight and nine hours or even ten to eleven hours for the last one and a half years. This train is always late by at least seven hours in its arrival. For how long the passengers who have bought the tickets would wait, maximum for one, two or three hours.. The train scheduled for 4 pm arrives late at 10 or 11 pm. The hon. Minister would definitely take cognizance of it and make efforts for the timely departure of the train plying eight hours late.

An overbridge is being constructed at Pukhray station in Jhansi Division of North Central railway. That overbridge crossing platform No. 1 reaches platform No. 3. However, half of the cluster is on one side of platform number one and the other half on other side of platform No. 3. If that bridge is opened for public from outside then the people can definitely cross the platform and walk down to the other side. Every other day people cross the line since there is no other way out. The fear of an accident is always lurking while crossing the line. I hope that the hon. Minister would definitely pay attention towards it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are Udyognagari, Udyogkarmi and Poona Express trains from Lucknow, Kanpur. The distance between Kanpur and Jhansi is two hundred kilometers. These trains should halt at Orai which is our industrial city. These are long distance trains, if these are

[Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma]

not given stoppage even after hundred kilometers from their starting point then how the people would travel upto Pune, Mumbai etc. So, this train should be given a halt at Orai station. One Puja Intercity Express plies from Jhansi to Kanpur. It is our demand that it should have stoppage at Mauth station so that people of Santhar, Gursarai and other areas could be benefited. An A.C. Chair car has been sanctioned, however, it has not been attached so far. I would like to apprise the hon. Minister that an A.C. Chair car should be immediately attached to it, so that the people could travel in it.

Shramshakti Express starts from Delhi and reaches Kanpur in the morning. It is a very good train. It is the demand of people of our area to ply such a fast train even from Kanpur. Shramshakti Express halts in Kanpur and remains there for 17 hours. I would request the hon. Minister to extend it upto Jhansi, I had made this demand even on last occasion. If this train is introduced from Jhansi then the two hundred kilometer route can be directly connected with Delhi.

There is heavy traffic jam on Rath road near Orai for hours together. I demand the construction of an overbridge there. With these words I conclude.

[English]

*DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I rise in support of Appropriation (Railway) Bill and would like to start my speech by congratulating Hon'ble Rail Minister who has created a History by making a turn around in Railway.

It has sheer intelligence and common sense that Indian Railway is approaching to become a number one rail network in the world.

Without increasing passenger fair in last four years, he has rather decreased focus in all classes of travellers be it AC-II, AC-III, II Sleeper classes.

I express my gratitude for making provision in budget for doubling of travel between my Constituency Alwar and Rewari. The doubling needs to be done at a fast pace. Alwar needs lot more trains for Delhi. I request for extending the RD trains up to Alwar from Rewari.

Bhiwari is fast growing as industrial town in Rajasthan and which falls in my constituency Alwar. I thank Hon'ble

Minister to approve survey for new line between Rewari and Bhiwari. I request Hon'ble Minister to expedite this survey.

It has been a long demand of poor people from Jaipur and Alwar to start a pair of passenger train from Jaipur via Alwar up to Delhi in day time so that passengers from smaller station can travel to & fro to Delhi-Jaipur.

Certain stoppages are in public interest.

1. Stoppage of Alwar Express at Rajgarh
2. Stoppage of Bareilly Bhuj Express at Rajgarh
3. Stoppage of Ahmedabad-Rajdhani at Alwar
4. Stoppage of Jaisalmer-intercity at Ajerka Station

Computerization Reservation at Rajgarh & Khairtal Stations are need of the day. Renovation and modernization of Rajgarh & Khairtal railway station road under bridge at Khairtal has been a persistent demand of people of Khairtal.

With the word, I support the appropriation Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAKASH B. JADHAO (Ramtek): Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to make request to the hon'ble Railway Minister since discussion on Appropriation (Railways) Bill is already going on in the House, I belong to Ramtek parliamentary constituency of Maharashtra. The construction work on Amravati-Narkhed section railway line has been lying incomplete for many years. This issue has been discussed in the House several times and a lot of correspondence has also been done. Every time an assurance is given that the work of this railway line will be completed but there seems to be no progress till date. I would like to draw your attention towards this point that farmers of this area produce best quality of oranges. Large number of traders from various parts of the world come to this region, however due to non-availability of railway line farmers are incurring huge losses. Through you, I would like to tell the hon'ble Railway Minister that the Government have laid new railway lines, provided new stations, made improvement in railways but due to non completion of this small railway line orange traders from various parts of the country, middlemen and farmers are suffering a lot. Therefore, I request that through this Bill sanction may be given in

*Speech was laid on the Table.

this budget for completing this railway line. If this railway line is laid then it will prove beneficial for the farmers and result in their development also. The Government do not provide the facility of goods train unless there are sufficient goods for 40 wagons. Here around 20 to 25 wagons of oranges are produced daily which traders are required to transport. Around 10 to 12 and at times almost 15 wagons of orange itself are required to be transported from this area and so over 40 wagons could be filled. Hence this railway line is absolutely essential for the farmers. Therefore, my request is that the Government should take the good step to complete this railway line by making provision for this purpose in this budget so as to provide relief to the farmers.

I would also like to say that railway lines are being extended at all places. Nagpur is considered second most important destination after Mumbai in Maharashtra. There is Nagpur-Bhibhapur-Nagbhed railway line in Nagpur and Vidarbha which is a narrow gauge line since the British times. I had requested several times and written letters stating that the said railway line should be converted into a broad gauge line as the speed of trains at these places is very slow and the population is also increasing. Similarly the existing narrow gauge line from Achalpur-Murtizapur-Yavatmal-Purgawal-Arvi which are narrow gauge lines since British period should also be converted into a broad gauge line. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister towards this issue and request that this railway line, which is a narrow gauge line since the British times, should be converted into a broad gauge line as it has become old and is in a very dilapidated condition and in future accidents may occur on these railway lines. I hope you will take positive decision regarding converting these railway lines into a broad gauge line at the earliest considering the increasing population of the country.

Alongwith this, I would also like to mention that last year an accident took place at unmanned railway crossing in Ramtek. The number of commuters has increased atleast four times at Ramtek Railway Station and the number of villages have also increased there. Accidents often take place there as trucks, taxis, school buses etc. pass through this crossing and many people have lost their lives due to unmanned railway crossing. I wrote letter to the Railways in this regard and in reply it stated that there is no provision for constructing gate. However, my request is that while considering the security of common people a railway gate should be constructed there without delay. I request that sufficient budgetary

allocation should be made to complete the Amravati-Narkhed railway line. There is an urgent need to convert narrow gauge lines, laid during the British times, into broad gauge lines. There are many places where railway crossings are not manned and signals have not been installed which take heavy toll of people. Hence I request that all unmanned railway crossings should be manned and signals should be installed at all places. It is condemnable hence I would request the hon'ble Railway minister to pay attention towards this and sanction all these things in this budget.

[English]

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagar Kurnool): Thank you Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on Supplementary Demands for Grants for Railways.

Railways is the major and the cheapest source of transport for the average citizens of India. Under the given circumstances of high price rise in fuel the common man always looks at the railway as the mode of transport. In fact, the railway carries around 60-70 per cent of the passengers who travel daily through all the means of transport. It is worth appreciating that the Railway Minister has not increased the first-class fares and has also not touched the lower class fares. But, Sir, very meagre, almost negligible, Budget allocations are made towards the maintenance and passenger amenities.

With due apologies to hon. Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad, as far as budgetary allocation is concerned, the States from where the Railway Ministers are not representing are the sufferers. The bulk of the cake goes to the Minister's State. It is very unfair. I would request the hon. Railway Minister, he is the Union Minister, to keep in mind the overall development of India as a whole and not one State or the other where lies his personal interest. The Minister can take up one or two projects in his State but that should not be at the cost of the development of the whole country.

I happen to travel in a prestigious train, A/C Chair car from Secunderabad to Guntur. As I got into the train it was very much stingy and unhygienic. When I had the breakfast in the train I felt like vomiting. It was so nauseating. I wrote a letter to the concerned DRM. He simply sent me a regret letter. I again happened to travel in the same train after one or two months but the situation had not improved at all. It rather deteriorated.

[Dr. M. Jagannath]

It is good that the Minister has introduced Tatkal Ticket scheme. If a passenger wants to travel on Tatkal ticket whether he travels the entire distance or not he has to pay the full charge from the station of the train's origin to its termination station. Even if the train is covering 400 kms and I travel only 100 kms I have to pay for the entire 400 kms. In what way it is justified? Is not the common man being penalized for the distance for which he has not traveled? My request to the hon. Minister is to modify it and see that the passenger is charged for the distance for which he travels in a particular train.

Coming to my own State Andhra Pradesh and South-Central Railway in particular, a great injustice has been done to my State. Though everybody is appreciating the initiatives taken by the Railway Minister, I too appreciate it, yet Andhra Pradesh is always given a step-motherly treatment.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): I agree with it.

DR. M. JAGANNATH: Thank you, Sir. Being in the Opposition we can take up these issues. Whether it is in the construction of new lines, doubling or gauge conversion year by year the budgetary allocation to South-Central Railway, in particular to Andhra Pradesh, is declining. If such is the attitude, the projects with the conceived cost of around Rs.500-700 crore might not get completed in another hundred years. That is why, my request to the hon. Minister, who is so generous in giving new trains and other facilities, is to see to it that the allocation made to the State of Andhra Pradesh is doubled.

Sir, coming to RUBs and ROBs, the Chief Minister of our State has written at least 30 to 40 letters to the hon. Minister for Railways regarding the various projects pending in Andhra Pradesh. We, Members of Parliament, in our own capacity also, have represented about them. Great injustice has been done in the sanctioning of the RUBs and ROBs. You should take into account the letters written by our Government and also the Members of Parliament.

In my constituency, a RUB at LC No. 47 of Jedcherla Railway Station of Secunderabad- Dronachalam section is required. Actually that gate lies in the middle of Jedcherla town. When I contacted the railway authorities, they say that they are not getting the required funds.. A

passenger who had a heart attack could not be saved. The hospital is situated just beside the railway track and since he could not cross that gate, he died there. There was uproar in Jedcherla town saying that the MP is not taking any interest in the matter. Under humanitarian grounds, such projects should be sanctioned. The system is meant for the provision of facilities to the people and not going just by hard core rules in the books.

My request is for a ROB at Gadwal railway station level crossing. ROBs at Yenugonda level crossing gate between Mahabubnagar and Jedcherla. railway station and Devarkadra railway level crossing gate are required. My long pending request is for the provision of manning of double crossing at Kuttur railway station between Thimmapur and Shadnagar railway stations. It is situated very much in the centre of the village. Many accidents had taken place in which many people died. My request to the hon. Minister is not to go strictly by the rules of the book. Rules can be changed. How many times have we amended the Constitution?

Coming to construction of new lines, Gadwal-Raichoor-Macherla was sanctioned in 1997 with an estimated cost of Rs. 108 crore. I think it has now escalated to around Rs. 200 crore. After ten years, you may find that only Rs. 30 crores have been spent on it. Likewise, Muniarabad-Mahabubnagar, Macherla-Nalgonda, Peddapalli-Nizamabad, Dharmavaram-Pakala need more budgetary allocations.

Coming to doubling, Secunderabad-Guntakal onwards to Bangalore, Chennai and Goa is a very important route for south bound trains. Since it is a single line, it is getting congested and hence, it requires doubling. I request the hon. Minister to take up doubling of Secunderabad-Dronachalam section.

Coming to surveys, recently, an updated survey has been ordered for Gadwal-Macherla. I request the hon. Minister to expedite and sanction funds for it. Likewise, one more survey had been ordered in 2005 between Jadcherla and Nandyal. This has to be expedited and completed.

Finally, I would say that Garib Rath is a very good concept. I should congratulate the hon. Minister for it. A Garib Rath was planned to pass through my constituency, Secunderabad, Mahabubnagar, Gadwal, Kumool onwards to Bangalore. I request the hon. Minister to sanction one more Garib Rath to pass through Secunderabad, Mahabubnagar, Gadwal, Kumool onwards to Bangalore.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

DR. M. JAGANNATH: Sir, due to paucity of time, I am laying the remaining part of my speech on the table of the House.

*Hon'ble Speaker Sir, Thank you very much for giving the opportunity to participate in the Debate on Supplementary Demands for Grants for Railways.

Railway is the major source and cheapest mode of transport for the average citizen of India. Under the given circumstances of price rise and high rise in fuel charges. The common man looks towards railways for transportation.

In fact the Railways carry around 60 to 70 percent of the passengers every day.

It is appreciable that the Railway Minister had reduced the fares on higher classes and not touched the lower class passengers.

But when the Budgetary allocations are concerned, the States from which the Railway Ministers are representing, the bulk of the cake had been taken away ignoring the other stations. This is very unfair.

Though the Minister claims that there is no increase in fare, the Railways are failing miserably in providing good passenger amenities.

Number of old bridges are still existing in the various parts of the country which need reconstruction for safety. But this is not attended to and Budgetary allocations are not enough.

In some of the prestigious trains and AC chair cars, the maintenance is very poor and highly unhygienic.

The way the Tatkal Passengers are charged, it is nothing but looting the common man.

In Tatkal instead of the passenger is collected fares for his actual distance he travels, the fares are collected from the origin of the trains to the destination of termination whether the passenger travels the entire distance of half of the distance. It is unfair and the actual fares of the distance travel to be collected from the Passenger.

South Central Railway

Great injustice has been done to the State of Andhra Pradesh which comes under the South Central Railway, partly Southern and Central Railways zones.

The Budget allocation whether it is for the new links, doubling and gauge conversion, the budgetary allocations declining year by year when compared to previous years allocation.

In the present Railway Budget around Rs.450 crores have been allocated for important project like new lines. Gauge conversion and Doubling etc. At this pace of allocation. I think the project might not get completed even after other 50 years.

In the sanctioning of RUBs and ROB's to the South central Railway, many of the requests of the State Government and of our personal request, have been not considered and sanctioned.. Coming to my own constituency, the RUBs and ROB's at the following places been long pending for consideration:

1. RUB at LC No. 47 of Jchelarcha Railway Station of Secunderabad-Dronachallam section
2. ROB at Gad Railway Station level crossing
3. ROB at Yenugonda Level Crossing Gate between Mahaboob Nagar and Jadcherla.
4. ROB at Deverkadu Railway level crossing Gate.

My long pending request of provision of manning of double crossing at Kutnoor village between Tmmapore and Shadnagar Railway Stations is not been considered yet. I request the Hon'ble Minister to sanction the manning of above said Railway Gate.

Budget Allocation for Ongoing Project in Andhra Pradesh

Construction of New lines; Gadwal-Raichoor-Macharla. Parts of this main line between Gadwal and Raichur have been sanctioned in 1997-98 with estimated cost of 108.9 crors. Though 10 years have been passed the expenditure incurred seems around 30 crores and still 70 crores have been required to complete this project. This years allocation is also very meagre around five crores. I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to increase the Budgetary Allocation for the current financial year 2008-09.

2. Muniarabad-Mahaboob Nagar Line: The estimated for completion is 497.47 crores. But this year also the allocation is very meagre around 400 crores are still required to complete this project. I request the Railway Minister to double the present year allocation.

3. Marcharla-Nalgonda, Padapalli-Nazamabad, Jdharmovaram-Pakala lines also need more allocations.

..... This part of the Speech was laid on the Table.

[Dr. M. Jagannath]

Doubling

Secunderabad-Guntakal and onwards to Bangalore, Chennai and Goa have become very important Route for South Bound trains. As the number of trains have increasing in this route, the route is becoming congested and long delays is taking place in passage of trains. Doubling of Secunderabad-Guntakal is very important and I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to take up the doubling of Secunderabad-Dronachallam section immediately.

Surveys

Updated survey for Gadwal-Macharasi new lines have been ordered recently. I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to speed up the survey and consider for sanction of construction of new Railway line between Gadwal and Macharasi.

A survey has been ordered during the Railway Budget of 2005-06 between Jadcharla and Nandyal of SCR. I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to expedite the survey of this line and sanction the new line between Jadcharla and Nandyal.

New Trains

In Andhra Pradesh, Talanganma and Raayalseema areas are relatively very backward areas. To travel between Bangalore and Secunderabad, passengers have to spend lot of money on other means of transport than Railways. Earlier one Garib Rath trains was planned to pass through Secunderabad, Mahaboob Nagar Gadwal, Karnool and Guntkal onwards to Bangalore. But for the reasons not known this trains passing through Secunderabad, Yokarabad, Wadi onwards to Bangalore. I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to sanction this Garib Rath train to pass through Secunderabad, Mahaboob Nagar, Gadwal, Karnool onward's Bangalore.

With request through you, Sir, the Railway Minister to allocate more funds for the Projects of Andhra Pradesh of South Central Railway Zone which is giving very high revenue to the Railways than other Railway zones. I conclude my Speech."

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperambudur): Sir, after Shri Lalu Prasad has become the Railway Minister, Railways is making a huge profit and railway development is under good progress. In this scenario, I want to register a few points.

On behalf of DMK Party, I would like to support the Demands for Grants for Railways. Today, in India, we see that the coaches are not modernised. I am residing nearby the Integral Coach Factory, Perambur. I often used to visit that Factory. When I go and see that Factory, I used to see very modernised coaches being manufactured in the ICF, Perambur. The ICF is one of the best coach manufacturing units in the Asian Continent. Those coaches that we find inside the factory are not found on our railway track. We came to know that those modern and well-built coaches are exported and are not meant for the Indian Railways. Indian economy is booming and our GDP growth has crossed eight per cent. We are a developing country. So, why should we not use those modern coaches for the Indian Railways? Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to make use of those modern, well-built and good facility coaches in the Indian Railways. Today, the coaches are very less in number. Whenever I approach the GM, Southern Railway to have more trains in suburban areas, there was a complaint that they do not have so much of coaches. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to send more coaches to the Southern Railway so that we can utilise those coaches and ply more trains in the suburban areas.

Further, in the ICF many vacancies are there. In the past, the practice was that the apprentice training students were appointed as Class IV employees. But now it has been stopped. Most of the employees are from Bihar. Most of the people employed in the ICF, Perambur are from Bihar. I would request the hon. Minister to give opportunities for the sons of soil. It is for Class IV employment. There is a complaint that local people are not being appointed there. That should be taken care of by our hon. Minister.

In the last Budget, our hon. Minister announced Sriperambudur rail connectivity. It is a one of the fast growing industrial towns. It is the place where Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated and there is a Rajiv Gandhi Memorial Centre. Kindly allot more funds to start the project very quickly and have rail connectivity to Sriperambudur. The survey was already completed in the year 1993. Tiruvallur-Arakkonam fourth line has been announced. The work progress of the third line is very slow. Arakkonam is hon. Minister, Shri Velu's constituency. Shri Velu should take more interest to complete the work faster. The announcement of Puttur-Athipattu, which is connecting the Ennore Port should not remain just an announcement. For that also more funds should be allotted and the work should be started very soon.

My experience with the Railway Ministry is that the trains are running fast but the officers are slow and the

works are progressing very slow. The hon. Minister should take note of it. The officers and the contractors are not working fast. Whenever we approach the officers, they are blaming the contractors. They are not very keen to implement the project. To complete a work of a bridge, it takes five to ten years. For example, LC 10 in Chennai – Arakkonam Section and LC -12 in Chennai – Arakkonam Section, Thirunindravur – Pattabiram, which is my home town, we started the ROB in 2003, but till today it has not been completed. The State Government has completed its portion of work. But the Railways' portion, which is very small, has not even started their work in LC 10. That is why I am telling that the trains are fast in Railways but the officers and contractors are very slow. Try to make them work fast. It is the case not just in LC 10 and LC 12 but also in LC 34. In Chennai-Gummudipundi section, which leads to Elavur and Gudur, in Sulurpet Section, LC-34 has more traffic. There is an unmanned gate. Two years back I took one DRM, Shri Jayaraman to inspect the place. There is a lot of traffic. But there is an unmanned gate. Even after two years, even today, they have not made it a manned gate. Even when the Minister was attending a function in Gummudipundi, several Railway Passenger Associations complained to you.

Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to make it a manned level crossing in LC-34.

Sir, the basic amenities are very poor in Chennai and its suburban areas. So, I would request the hon. Minister to take keen interest to fulfil the basic amenities of rail commuters.

Sir, there is a long pending demand of extension of foot over-bridge at Gummidipoondi and foot over-bridge at Minjore. I think the hon. Minister knows very well about the railway halt at Nemlicherry. It is a very long pending demand of the people of my constituency. We demanded it for the last ten years. The hon. Minister of State of Railways, Thiru R. Velu, has sanctioned it. However, he asked for the public contribution. With a lot of difficulties we could collect and pay Rs. 25 lakh as public contribution to construct a platform. But till today, not even an inch has moved to have a railway halt at Nemlicherry. It is a very bad situation and the hon. Minister knows it very well about the railway halt at Nemlicherry. There are a lot of colleges and a lot of Government employees are staying there. The request for a halt at Nemlicherry is pending for the last three or four years. So, I would request the hon. Minister to take

fast action for a halt there. That is why I am telling it repeatedly that the rails are fast but the railway officers and the railway contractors are very very slow. I am telling it repeatedly as I am very much agitated about it. You are doing a lot of good work. ... (*Interruptions*) Gravel is available and even I myself have arranged for some gravel. The contractors lift it away and the railway officers are not taking any interest. Whenever I approach them, they are shifting the burden on the contractors and other people. So, I would request the hon. Minister to make it fast to implement the construction of halt station at Nemlicherry. I am also requesting about a halt at Pulikulam near Gummidipoondi section where the hon. Minister inspected it.

My last point, before I conclude my speech, is about the important demand about the suburban railway station at Chennai Central. We are having only four tracks. Two platforms are in the main capital of the city. All the daily trains that come from Arakkonam and Gummipundi sections, these trains are not able to come inside the platform. Therefore, we have to make it wide and put more railway tracks for halt of trains in this station in the capital city of Chennai.

Sir, with these few words, I conclude my speech.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Sir, as the House knows, the country knows and the world knows, railways are the engine of growth for any economy and that engine of growth is growing everyday with globalisation. So, it is high time that certain parts of India which were neglected, for example, the Eastern sector, the hinterland of Gopalpur, Visakhapatnam, Paradip, and the Kakinada ports should have a proper rail connectivity which the hon. Minister in his first appropriation granted it.

Sir, at the very outset, I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways because he had shown some concern for the State of Orissa. In my constituency he has sanctioned a new line – Junagarh to Ambagura and then from Kantabanji to Jeypore via Navrangpur which will connect the KK line. So this will open up a vast resource belt of bauxite ore, iron ore from Bailadila and it will be connected directly to Visakhapatnam. So, I thank the hon. Minister for that. I also thank him for the doubling of the Titlagarh to Raipur railway line which will have a direct port connectivity of six steel plants with the Visakhapatnam Port.

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

We want the doubling of the Titlagarh to Sambalpur line so that it can connect another four steel plants with the Visakhapatnam Port. This will become a very big money earner for the railways. But, at the same time, about these new railway lines which have been earmarked from Junagarh to Ambagura and from Kantabanji to Jeypore via Navrangpur, I hope the hon. Minister of Railways and the Railway Board will sanction enough money for its survey so that the survey could be done early and the work could be started gradually in due course.

Sir, I would not like to speak much about the Railways. There is only one request which I have been making to the hon. Minister since last four years and he has always assured me that he would do it. It is a very small request about 2807/2808 Samata Express.

Is he allergic to the word "Samata?" I do not know. But the "Samata Express" starts from Visakhapatnam and it goes up to Nizamuddin. It runs thrice a week. So, I would request the hon. Minister to make it a daily train. I hope the hon. Minister will yield to this request during his reply. I repeat that Train No.2807-2808 should be made a daily train service from Visakhapatnam to Nizamuddin because a lot of commuters from the KBK areas are coming to the metros to earn their livelihood. This is the only train which connects many constituencies. It connects the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency; then, it covers Mahasamund Lok Sabha Constituency of Shri Ajit Jogi. It further covers Bolangir, the constituency of Shrimati Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo; Kalahandi which is my constituency. It further goes to Shri Giridhar Gamang, the ex-Chief Minister of Orissa's constituency. From there, it goes to Shri Kishore Chandra Deo's constituency, Parvatipuram. From there, it goes to Shri Yerrannaidu's constituency. So, many Parliamentary seats are covered by this train. Hence, air-conditioned first-class facility also should be provided in this train. An additional three-tier bogey should be provided. This is all connected to Visakhapatnam. Then, Shrimati Jhansi Lakshmi's constituency also comes under this. So, we have all been demanding that this train should be made a daily train. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to at least make this train a daily service.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on this subject.

I rise before this House to deliberate on the Demands for Grants (Railways) for 2008-09. It is a Herculean task, no doubt, to run a railway system which has 63,327 route km. of tracks on which more than 18,371 trains ply carrying more than 17 million passengers and hauling nearly 2 million tonnes of freight everyday.

We are at the second stage of the Budget passing exercise. In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of this House towards certain issues. Many Members are praising the functioning of the hon. Minister and his associates. But is it not true that the surplus after dividend is likely to go down by nearly 13 per cent and the working expenditure is expected to go up by 17 per cent? I would like to get a categorical answer to this. As a result, the operating ratio of the Railways is likely to go up to 81.4 per cent during the year 2008-09 from 76.3 per cent for 2007-08.

I was given to understand that to check the contractual failures due to rising prices of steel, the Railways have decided to procure steel on their own and give it to the contractors to avoid delay and escalation in completion of the projects. Cement is another important component in the construction area. Why do you not work out the feasibility of procuring cement also?

For the speedy execution of the railway projects, I would suggest that there is a need to empower the field units, the CAOs and also the General Managers, to take financial and administrative decisions at their level to avoid delay so that precious time can be saved. At the same time, proper monitoring and accountability at all levels should also be fixed.

The Railways' outlay in the Eleventh Five Year Plan comes to around Rs.2,55,000 and odd crore. This has to be expended between 2007 and 2012.

This is in respect of new lines, doubling, electrification, gauge conversion and the like. A detailed break-up of Plan head-wise is yet to be finalised. Already, one year of the Plan period is complete. But, we do not have any idea as to how you are going to expend, how the expenditure is going to be done. Specifically in the Plan head section, detailed break-up is not there and this reflects poorly on the functioning of the Railways. This is the case after completion of the first year of the 11th Five Year Plan. What is stopping you, I fail to understand. Let us understand when the Minister gives the reply. A number of other hon. Members have also mentioned about

unmanned level-crossings. When Mr. Nitish Kumar was the Minister, he created a Railway Safety Fund. A lot of money is there which can be spent to have manned level-crossings. Recently, in my constituency near Naraj there is a bend on the Railway line in Baranga-Raj-Athagarh line. A serious accident took place there because of an unmanned level crossing. I think that has come to the notice of the Minister. It must have come to their notice. I had also written to the Minister regarding this. I would like to suggest that when such accidents take place and valuable human lives are lost, immediately those places should be taken up on a priority basis where we can have manned level-crossings and where State Government is not coming forward with the requisite support of having a manned level crossing. I think the Railways have adequate financial capability today to have manned level-crossings in those accident prone areas. Second, I would like to draw the attention of the House that we have a number of Zonal Advisory Committees. I do not know since when, but the Railway Minister is empowered to nominate 7 members to these Zonal Advisory Committees. I am shocked to know that the Railway Minister has recommended not 7, not 8 not 10, but more than 14 members in his capacity. These people are not from that zone, but they are from another zone which is more than 300 or 500 kilometres fartheraway from that zone. How would they understand the problem of that zone, I fail to understand. Once, this was raised in a Zonal Committee. More than a year has passed, and not a single Zonal Committee meeting has been called. When during the meeting, people objected to this type of nomination, within a week's time a letter went from the Railway Ministry saying that the nomination is being withdrawn. Subsequently, I do not know on whose pressure, the same list is there and not a single meeting is being called. I would like to say, let the Ministry also review it whether these Zonal Advisory Committees are meeting as per the law and whether they have been functioning as per the rules which have been framed. This is one aspect. Third point is about the investment that is being made. I will conclude by saying this. Recently, Garib Rath started. This has been an eye opener for me. I do not know whether the Minister himself knows about it or not. If Garib Rath is meant for long distance passengers only, then I have nothing to complain. Rate of the tickets of Garib Rath is much more than the rate of the tickets of the Express trains. I will give you an instance. You can find out for yourself. Recently, the Minister of State, Mr. Velu, had gone to flag off a Garib Rath which was announced last year, very recently in the month of March, from Bhubaneswar to Ranchi.

That Garib Rath halts at different Express halt stations. A person who travels from Bhubaneswar to Angul or Talcher or even to Cuttack pays much more because the rate is fixed at Rs. 180 per 100 kms. If he gets down within 100 kms., the ticket rate is the same. So, how does it help the poor? How does it help the short distance passengers? Otherwise, you should say that the Garib Rath is only for long distance passengers.

I would like to get answer to these points, if it is possible, from the Minister. With these words I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD (Salempur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful that you have given me time to express my views on Railway Budget. I support the Railway Budget 2008-09 presented by the hon'ble Minister and through you I would like to place two-three points in this House. The time since Lalaji has taken over the charge of the Department, the functioning of the Ministry of Railways is being widely appreciated within the country as well as outside. Even the poor people have appreciated his efforts. However, through this House, I would certainly like to tell the hon'ble Minister that he has done a commendable job, however, some of his officers are diluting his efforts, which is not in the fitness of things. During last session, I had said that Mayawatiji started the work of transfer of officers after becoming the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Similarly, the Department of Railways has outrightly transferred 62 conductors from Gorakhpur and Lucknow. I have also written a letter in this regard stating that his Department has transferred all those people without bothering a bit about rules and regulations of Railway Board. I would like the hon'ble Minister to look into the matter. Almost two months have elapsed but nothing has happened regarding those transfers. When I asked the General Manager, Gorakhpur about this he said that he has no information about this. It is unbelievable that a General Manager is saying to a representative of people that he has no information. In his Department 62 conductors were never transferred at a time, this has happened for the first time and that too during his tenure. The officers are keeping him in dark.

Earlier tickets and other papers were printed by the Railways. In Gorakhpur the printing work has been discontinued from 1st April. He is talking about providing employment to people however, I would like to know as to where will the people, who are working there, will go? Has this been done by his order or the General Manager has ordered to discontinue the work?

[Shri Hari Kewal Prasad]

While presenting his Railway Budget second time, the hon'ble Minister had promised to do the survey work from Barhaj to Faizabad via Dohrighat and Ramjanaki Marg. Barhaj is associated with Baba Raghav Das from where maximum people took part in the freedom struggle. But it has become clear in this budget that no action has been taken on that promise. The work of survey from Bhatni to Gopalganj railway line has already been completed. I suspect some foul play in land acquisition exercise. I would like to say that the farmers should be provided with Government job.

Secondly, last time, I met him in the month of June and during this time I met him when the House was adjourned. I told him that there is an overbridge in Salempur in my parliamentary constituency and this road goes from Deoria to Assam. He may be knowing that a survey in respect of this road was conducted sometime back. According to an estimate the amount of traffic there has increased manifold and it is now more than one lakh fifty thousand vehicles. Now the question of overbridge holds no significance there. Further, there is a longstanding demand for an overbridge on the road from Dohrighat to Balia near our railway station Bithara. Recently, on 4.4.2008 the people of that area staged a dharna. There is another demand relating to stoppage of Durg Express train, which originates from Gorakhpur and halts at Deoria and Mau. Salempur, Bithara station is giving much revenue to the Railways. But, stoppage of this train not been provided so far at the above station.

He has introduced Garib Rath train. Bihar Sampark Kranti train also runs. Deoria is district headquarters I, myself, Mohan Singh and many other people have requested him to provide stoppage of these trains at Deoria. When I met him last time he again said that stoppage would be provided. Thereafter I wrote letters on three occasions in this regard. I also gave a written speech in this House. Whenever I meet him I ask for the same. Every time he says that it would be done. The people of my area say that I have good relations with Laluji. Can I not get even this job done? Four years have elapsed but so far neither Garib Rath nor Bihar Sampark Kranti have been provided stoppage at the said two stations i.e. Deoria and Salempur in my parliamentary constituency. A request was made for halt of Inter City Express at Kidhirapur. When the stoppage was provided and the earnings of the railways enhanced, suddenly this halt was discontinued. When he was visiting Gorakhpur, he announced there that keeping in view the interest of

the people of that area and as demanded by Shri Harikewalji, we will introduce Intercity Express. But, surprisingly no mention has been made about the above Inter City Express in the current rail budget. But, still we were feeling happy that when we people drew his attention in this regard, he promptly said that he would introduce Intercity Express from Chhapra to Gorakhpur. But, when the above intercity Express is likely to be introduced? When enquired with the Chairman, Railway Board in this regard, he told me that, as of now, the renovation of coaches and other works are going on. How much time will they take to complete this work will they finish this job only after this session is over? There is a train at 7.30 a.m. from there. Thereafter, there is no train till 3.00 p.m. The people have to wait for such a long period. But, there is no train in between this period. When he announced last time in the House that an Intercity Train would be introduced, the people of that area praised him and said that Laluji has kept his promise. But so far there is no sign of the introduction of that train. I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister to kindly let me know as to when he is going to introduce the above Inter City Express. At least, he should make an announcement in this regard today.

Barhaj is the city of Baba Raghav Das. A train was to be introduced from Barhaj to Chhapra and Barhaj to Gorakhpur. There was already a train running between Barhaj and Gorakhpur but I do not know as to why that train was discontinued. Such things are happening repeatedly which are not being attended to even after written requests. There are no retiring rooms at Salempur, Bithara Road and Deoria. It was said that retiring rooms would be constructed but nothing has happened so far. On paper it was said that retiring rooms would be constructed soon but they have not been constructed so far. *...(Interruptions)* There is a Bhatparrani railway station which is in dilapidated condition. There is no retiring room at this station also. I would like to say that atleast a retiring room should be constructed at Bhatparrani railway station where a lot of people come from Bihar and take their onward trains from there. A project for beautification of the above station was also mooted but that has also been cancelled.

With these words, through you, I once again urge upon the hon'ble Minister of Railways to let us know as to when he is going to introduce the Inter City Express on the above mentioned route considering my written speech in the past and today's submission, he make some announcement in this regard. 62 railwaymen have been

transferred there in respect of whom I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister. He should take immediate steps to stop their transfer. With these words, I support the Railway Budget and conclude.

SHRI MOHD. TAHIR (Sultanpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my views.

Sir, on behalf of my party, I rise to support the Budget. I would like to thank the hon. Minister for giving his approval to the electrification of railway track from Utratia to Banaras. He also deserves our congratulations for renovation work at Gomti bridge in my parliamentary constituency and for making announcement to introduce a Garib Rath from Delhi to Banaras also.

Sir, at the same time, I would like to say that Eastern Uttar Pradesh is very poor part of the country. I have written many letters to him in this regard. Belwai station, which connects many districts like Azamgarh, Sultanpur, Ambedkar Nagar and Faizabad, should have a stoppage of the Doon Express to benefit the common man of the area and it would enhance the earnings of the railways also. Stoppage may be temporary initially at the said station but it should be given. There is a need to introduce a new train between Sultanpur and Mumbai as many poor people live in Mumbai and travel between these two destinations. The Saket Express, a bi-weekly train between Faizabad and Mumbai, should run four days in a week. It is a must in larger public interest. I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister of Railways towards the fact that due to non availability of pantry car in Sadbhavana Express, the passengers have to face a lot of inconvenience. Therefore, a pantry car should be provided in the Sadbhavana Express. The doubling and electrification work between Utratia and Banaras is progressing at a very slow pace which needs to be speeded up. Likewise, so many crossings fall on the railway tracks between Sultanpur and Lucknow and Sultanpur-Banaras. There is heavy rush of traffic on these railway crossings as this route connects Bihar. In view of this, there is an urgent need to construct railway overbridges on the above railway crossings.

Sir, Sultanpur is a very poor district which deserves your attention for its development. He should change his stepmotherly treatment with eastern Uttar Pradesh. He should do justice with this area. Therefore, more attention should be paid towards eastern Uttar Pradesh.

With these words, I conclude.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Sir, a poet has rightly said "Bulbul ki zindgi hai chaman ki bahar par, Hindustan ki zindgi hai Railway ki raftaar par." Nothing is exaggerated in it because Railway is such artery through which, the blood of national unity runs. Rail connects the people of the country and Shri Lalu Prasad has presented such a budget which is like a bread of sugar, you bite it from any side you will find it sweet. But sometimes taking excess sweet is unhealthy.

14.59 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RASHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

Sir, today, I would like to draw your attention towards Ajmer, when Hon'ble Lalu Prasadji had visited Ajmer Sharief, that time while addressing a big public meeting he declared that Ajmer Railway Station would be reconstructed as a world class station. Today, in the morning, when I saw in his reply the names of those stations, which are to be converted into world class stations. The name of Ajmer was missing. It caused some apprehension in my mind. Therefore, again I would like to draw attention towards the promise made by him earlier. Because, I know, he follow the principle of sacrificing even life to keep his promise. Therefore, he will certainly undertake the work to make the Ajmer railway station world class station. Puskar is also a big place of pilgrimage.

15.00 hrs.

But he had allotted a very meagre amount for this. This time he has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 19 crore but the pace of the work is very slow. I want that this work should be completed within the tenure of the existing Lok Sabha. If this is done Puskar will also be connected with the railway line also and a number of pilgrims who visit there shall be benefited.

Earlier, a mail train used to run between Ahmedabad and Delhi and he has extended it from Ahmedabad to Haridwar but now it has been extended upto Gandhi Nagar. People have to wait for this train on Ajmer Railway Station or hours because the time schedule of the train is unchanged. In this way when this train arrives Ajmer from Ahmedabad usually it is late by 20 minutes, 30 minutes or sometimes by an hour. This train reaches Gandhi Nagar after Ahmedabad Sabarmati and then comes back on main line and reaches Ajmer and it has no arrival time. Therefore, its time table should be rescheduled so that the passengers belonging to Ajmer

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

will get benefited and they would know the timing of the train.

Byawar, a city in Ajmer district has been the place of revolutionaries. Earlier, I had requested Railway Minister and now again I am requesting him. I think you had also made a promise in this regard. In this connection, I went to his office also and requested him that Ashram Express, which is a super fast train should be given stoppage for two minutes there. If he wishes this work can be done on trial basis for three months. Byawar is a city with a population of more than one lac people. I have been elected to the Lok Sabha for the fifth time and I have been making this demand for the last 18 years. He may please look into this matter and give two minutes stoppage to Ashram Express train at Byawar, so that people bound for South India from there will get benefited.

Here, I would like to make request to the Hon'ble Railway Minister. Both Ajmer and Agra are the important cities from historical and tourism point of view. These cities have had close relation since old times. Earlier, there was a train when meter gauge existed between Ahmedabad and Agra fort. Later this line was converted into broadgauge and that train was discontinued. Today, no direct train is there to connect Ajmer with Agra. He have given a train from Jaipur to Agra fort, that runs upto Gwalior. If he extends this train upto Ajmer, people, going to western Uttar Pradesh will get benefited from this.

Kishangarh is the biggest mandi of marble in Asia. It is famous all over the world. He had granted permission of ROB near Kishangarh. Rajasthan Government has contributed its share and the construction work to be done by State Government has been completed. But I am sorry to say that construction work that was to be carried out by the Railways could not be done. Because they did not give their share. Firstly, contractor left the work, later, this work was retendered and that work is still held up. I want that construction of ROB near Kishangarh which was started six month ago for connecting Kishangarh to marble area should be completed at the earliest so as to facilitate easy access for the people.

He had conducted a survey on Ajmer-Nasirabad-Kekdi-Devli and Kota rail lines last year after that there was a hope that the work will start this year but it couldn't be so. It is my request that for the time being he should connect Ajmer to Kota via Chhitorgarh and Bhitwada, as

a result of which Kota and Ajmer the two big cities of Rajasthan will get connected with each other. Ajmer also has revenue office of the state. Office of the Board of Secondary Education and Public Service Commission are also located there. Both Ajmer and Kota are centres of education. If both the cities get connected with each other, people will be more benefited by this.

Ajmer is still not connected with southern part of India through direct broad gauge line while Kachigudi is connected with Ajmer through meter gauge but broad gauge is upto Pune and not beyond that. Consequently, direct train is not available for here. So, if he connects Ajmer to Chennai and Hyderabad, I shall be highly obliged.

He has introduced a train between Udaipur and Indore and if he extends it upto Ajmer, people of Indore, an Industrial city of Madhya Pradesh will have direct link with Ajmer. He should start passenger trains between Ajmer-Delhi, Ajmer-Mehsana as a result of which railway stations in rural areas on the way shall get connected with rail services and people of the area will get benefited. A large number of people, who are followers of Radha Swami Seet live in Ajmer, and they go to Beas. The train running between Jaipur and Amritsar, should be extended upto Ajmer, so that the people of Ajmer are also benefited. Loco factory is the mainstay of the economy of Ajmer. Standing Committee of Railway alongwith its Chairman had visited and inspected it and has handed over its report and he has also already accepted to do the Modernisation work. He had sanctioned an amount of Rs. 51 crore in this regard but only Rs. 14 lac have been released. The sum of Rs. 14 lacs is insufficient to execute work of modernisation of such a workshop where thousands of employees have been working. Therefore, it is requested that please pay attention towards it. If he increases a few unreserved boggies in the long distance trains, common people will get some relief. If three things namely security, punctuality and safety are taken care of, Railways will witness phenomenal growth and it would earn good reputation. Thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak.

15.06 hrs.

(SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH *in the Chair*)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am not going to make a speech but through you. I want to request the hon. Minister on two-three points. People have great expectations from the

projects that have been already approved or those which had been sanctioned in the Budget. For example the work on Chhapra to Kaptanganj project has already been in progress, but presently the work has been lying stand-still. This work is related to yours and my constituency. We would like to know about the reasons for stopping the work, if it is due to some technical problem, then resolve it because this project has been in progress since long. Likewise for the Maharajganj to Masrakh scheme, you had sanctioned some money for land but nobody knows how it was utilized. The State Government has completed the process of acquisition of land but no further progress seems to have taken place in this regard. In reply to a question it had been stated that rail route between Gorakhpur and Barauni would be electrified. It was started one or one and a half year back but no action has been taken even on paper so far. Please initiate work on Gorakhpur to Barauni route as committed. The Government had announced three, four projects. The Government had announced projects for Marhara, Garkha, Sonpur and Dariyapur. The land filling work was going on in Dariyapur but it is going on at a snails pace. But as the Government might be knowing, no work is going on at rest of the three places due to technical reasons. The process of land acquisition is yet to be started. It would mean nothing if these projects remain on papers only. Today the people of Bihar and Chhapra would be able to know the status of the schemes announced by the Government and the provision made for them in the budget and the reasons for delay in execution. I request to explain the situation in this regard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for restricting your speech; otherwise you usually make long speeches.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): First of all, I congratulate hon. Lalaji and Ministry of Railways for better administration and providing passengers with lots of facilities. The aspiration of children, elderly and youth have been fulfilled and Shri Lalaji and his entire staff deserve appreciation. Many projects have been sanctioned in my constituency but work has not commenced till date. No work has been started till date on these projects. In my area there is a 16 kilometre missing link between Modasa and Shamlaji. Shri Lalaji had approved it while replying on the Railway Budget but no provision has been made in the budget so far. I request that work on it should be started immediately.

In Rajasthan and Gujarat, especially, the border areas of both the states, Udaipur and Sabarkantha which fall in my parliamentary constituency, Rs. 784 crore were sanctioned for gauge conversion of main line, Ahmedabad, Himmatnagar and Udaipur. People of my area celebrated this development with fire works. After the completion of the conversion work, I think nobody would forget the name of the Railway Minister and I would like to mention it clearly. Work on this rail link should be started at the earliest and that too in the current budget. Many big farmers are there and they get good produce too. Their crop could be sent to the other parts of the country. In any case, this region is a backward one. Here the number of industries is less. We feel that the farmers should get remunerative prices with increased production. Therefore gauge conversion work on Ahmedabad, Himmatnagar, Udaipur should be started. If the 16 kilometre missing link is connected with it then a new route may be opened from Delhi to Udaipur, Udaipur to Mumbai via Modasa, though it has two routes. One goes through Baroda, Godhara and Mathura to Delhi. The other one goes through Ahmedabad to Delhi via Abu road. This would be the third route with gauge conversion and 16 kilometre rail line linkage.

I would like to mention one thing more to the Railway Minister that Ambaji is a famous temple for Gujarati people living in the entire world. It is about 15 kilometre from Abu road in my parliamentary constituency. A survey was carried out there. Perhaps result of it is yet to come out. It would need environmental clearance as it is situated at such a place. It is like Puri, Dwarka and the people of Rajasthan and Gujarat come here to worship 'Shakti' and this place has a great importance during 'Navaratra'.

I have one more demand. A new freight corridor from Mumbai to Ahmedabad via Ajmer would reach Delhi. Gujarat is having 1600 kilometre of coastline and many ports are attached with it. I would certainly emphasise that the ports should be connected with it. The line connecting Palanpur to Kandla has been opened recently. Goods, that would come from other countries to Kandla port, would have to be transported from Palanpur to Ratlam or Madhya Pradesh, it would go from Palanpur to Ahmedabad, Baroda to Madhya Pradesh or from Marwar Jn. to Udaipur and Chittorgarh. My suggestion is that a new rail line should be constructed from Palanpur to Taranga and Vadali. Then it should be connected with Ahmedabad, Himmatnagar rail line. This would facilitate the movement of goods coming from Saurashtra and Kutch ports via Ratlam and Mansod of Madhya Pradesh

[Shri Madhusudan Mistry]

via the shortest route and the goods meant for exports would reach from Mansod, Ratlam to Udaipur, Himmatnagar, Palanpur to Kandla or the nearest port by taking the shortest route. This would bring immense development in the entire Madhya Pradesh and the Central area of Rajasthan, its winterland that is the area of the Scheduled Tribes people and hilly areas. This proposal should be considered. In between Modasa to Godhara, one line from Vadodara to Godhara, Dahod, Mathura reaches Delhi and the second line goes from Mumbai to Vadodara, Vadodara to Nadiyad, Nadiyad to Modasa-Shamlaji and Udaipur, and if Modasa, Loonawara and Godhara is connected with it then both the routes would be connected automatically which would help in the movement of goods and passengers. Though this rail line existed before. It is my request to connect it.

More recruitment should be made in the railways. I know that the Minister has mentioned about out-sourcing. As far as the issue of maintenance of platform, passenger trains and goods trains is concerned, the railway administration will have to tone itself to earn more appreciation from people and he also deserves congratulations for the fact that he has promised to run so many trains on time. This would enable the people to chalk out their time table and would be able to reach in time with planning. The insistence of Railway administration to run trains on time needs to be appreciated a lot. I congratulate the railway administration and all its staff for presenting a better rail budget and the steps they have announced.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Shri Madhusudan Mistry. You have given a very good compliment to the Railway Department.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Madam, I rise to support the Demands for Grants of the Railways for the year 2008-09. At the outset, I must congratulate hon. Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad, for making Indian Railways a profitable organization and also for disbursing dividend.

After Shri Lalu Prasad became the Railway Minister, the security aspect of the railway has also been taken care of and the number of accidents taking place has reduced. Hon. Minister has given special attention to maintain the security of the railway lines also. In this regard, I would like to point out that still there are a lot of unmanned level-crossings. Even though at majority of

the level-crossings, the gates are inter-locked, still accidents are taking place. There are a good number of level-crossings which are unmanned. In the Railway Budget, hon. Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad, has announced that the licensed porters, who are working in the railway stations, would be appointed as gangmen and gate-keepers. So, there is a chance that a good number of unmanned level-crossings will get manned.

In my place, that is, from Ernakulam to Kayamkulam, the density of population is very high and there are a good number of level-crossings also. So, I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister in this regard. Somehow, in the Railway Budget, only six or eight unmanned level-crossings are proposed to be manned. Therefore, I would like to urge upon the Government that the number of unmanned level-crossings should be decreased, and more number of level-crossings should be manned.

There is a long pending demand that the doubling of the section from Ernakulam to Kayamkulam both *via* Kottayam and Alleppey should be given priority, and it should be completed as early as possible. In the last Budget, it was there from Kayamkulam to Ambalapuzha, but there is no provision in the Budget for doubling of the section from Ambalapuzha to Ernakulam. If this section is doubled, then the entire section will be completed. As of now, the usage is more than 140 per cent. Hence, the doubling work should be completed by giving it top priority.

In the last Budget, there was a declaration that one workshop for Mainline Electric Multiple Unit (MEMU) would be instituted at Kollam, but it has not been instituted till now. Therefore, some importance should be given to it because a number of daily commuters in Kerala very much depend on the Railways. If this workshop for MEMU is established at Kollam, then it will be helpful for the daily commuters. There is no MEMU in Kerala as of now. Hence, this workshop should be established immediately, and MEMU trains should be started in Kerala.

In the last Budget, there was also a proposal for formation of a joint venture company with Steel Industry Kerala Limited, that is, Autocast limited, which is in my Constituency. We are hearing that it is going on, but Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has not been signed between the Government of Kerala and Autocast Limited till now. Therefore, I urge upon the Government that this declaration, which was made in the Budget, should be expedited and started immediately.

The number of inter-city trains is very less. Further, the number of bogies is also between 14 and 16. There are a lot of incidents of accidents happening as a result of heavy rush in these inter-city trains. Many of the Government employees as well as private employees depend on it as the bus fare is twice or thrice more than that of the fare in the Railways. I would like to request that the number of bogies in these trains should be enhanced to full strength. This would also increase the earnings of the Railways as well as benefit the daily commuters.

Lastly, I had raised this point during the Budget discussion also. We have shifted our Medical College from Alleppey Town to a rural area. Further, there is a Nursing College coming up, and Virology Institute is also there. Therefore, there is a request from a part of the local people as well as from the Government to establish a new block station. As of now, there is a station that is about three kilometres away from the Medical College. I would request the hon. Minister to start a new block station near the Medical College, which will be beneficial for the patients as well as the students who are studying there.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Dr. Manoj, thank you very much. Please conclude your speech. There are a number of speakers after you who wish to speak on this issue.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Madam, I have tried to deliberate on most of the points during the discussion on the Railway Budget. I would request the hon. Minister to take all these points into consideration, and I support the Demands for Grants (Railways).

[Translation]

DR. COL. (RETD.) DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla): Madam Chairman, Shri Lalu Prasad ji has presented a very good budget for the country and especially for the common man, the coolies, who used to carry luggage of passengers have been upgraded to the post of gangman. I think he has set a good precedent. Apart from this he has given many other facilities. He has given some facilities to the senior citizens and he has enhanced some more facilities for Ashok Chakra and Vir Chakra awardees. Shri Lalu Prasad ji had promised a railway line for Paonta Sahib during his tour to Himachal Pradesh. I would like to draw his attention towards making a provision in the budget for a railway line connecting Panta Sahib, on the line of train facilities given for religious places; anandpur

Sahib in Punjab and Nanded Sahib in Maharashtra. A large delegation from Paonta Sahib had met him during his visit to Shimla and I myself was with him for two days. I would like to mention that a new railway line for Paonta Sahib would benefit entire Shivalik region where new industries are being set up and some industries as J.P. Industries, Ambuja Industry, the largest cement factory of Asia, have already set up their factories there. These industries also, have promised to make some contribution to it. I think that if this railway line is constructed, it would not only enable the area to send its vegetables and fruits to markets, but would also create employment opportunities for the unemployed youth. From strategic point of view also, this area should be connected upto border in the same manner as we are constructing a line from Joginder Nagar to Pathankot. From strategic point of view it should be connected through rail link as we have three Infantry divisions and area bordering with China. Thus, it would not only promote industry and tourism there, but, also make our country safe.

I would like to request the hon'ble Minister for Railways that work on Baddi to Chandigarh railway line should be started immediately, as sanction for the same has already been given. A survey has been conducted and doubling of railway line between Pathankot and Joginder Nagar should be expedited to link this area. Thirdly, I would like to mention Shimla-Kalka line which is a heritage line, I think no improvement has been made in it after opening of this route in 1903 by Lord Curzon. If we make some more improvement in it, it would provide many facilities for the tourists who come here. The entire area will look pleasant and environment will be improved a lot, presently the movement of trucks, loaded with cement, damages small bridges and roads. If a railway line is laid here, as I indicated in my budget speech that from Parwanoo ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Shandil ji, conclude your speech after mentioning the names of two or three places like Paonta Sahib or Parwanoo for which you are demanding railway line because there are so many Members to speak.

DR. COL. (RETD.) DHANI RAM SHANDIL: Madam, I think the area of Paonta about which he has promised, must be covered. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please mention Paonta, Parwanoo and all other places which you want to be connected by rail in your list of demands. Hon'ble Minister himself wants demands mentioned in points.

DR. COL. (RETD.) DHANI RAM SHANDIL: The railway line from Pathankot to Jogindemagar has been included for doubling because the railway line for Bilaspur has been promised by him and it will be connected to the line from Pathankot to Jogindemagar only after the doubling work is completed. I would like to tell the Minister for Railways that he has presented a very good budget and people of whole country are happy with it. Once again I thank him while supporting this Budget.

[English]

*SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNIAH (Tumkur): I would like to bring the attention of this house to the bets that I have been pursuing the following matters relating to the Railways in my Parliamentary constituency for the last about years.

1. Construction of Overbridge at Tumkur and Upperahalli
2. Construction of Railway station at Rampur between the Nittoor-Sampege Railway Line as there is fairly long distance.
3. Electrification of Bangalore-Tumkur section of Railways.
4. Doubling of Railway Lines between Bangalore and Tumkur
5. Upgradation of Railway stations at Kayasandhra, Tumkur, Banasandhra, Nittur, Tiptur and Honnawalli etc.

The above works are very important and urgently required to be undertaken as there are lot of inconvenience facing by the people at large. More trains are required to be introduced between Tumkur and Bangalore particularly in the morning between 7 to 8.30 and in the evening between 5 to 7.30 as there are large number of commuters are using the Railway to reach their office, schools and colleges. I am sorry to inform this house despite my repeated requests no concrete steps have been taken by the Railway authorities despite the assurance given by the Hon'ble Minister from time to time.

Hence I urge upon the Railway Minister to look into the above long standing demands and instruct the

concerned to implement the work without any further delay. It will be a great relief to the sufferings of the people of my Parliamentary Constituency.

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Respected Madam, I rise to support the Demands for Grants of Railways (2008-09). We support the Demands for Grants of Railways because the hon. Union Railway Minister has come before this House for various requirements of modernization, upgradation, development, expansion of railways. Today, the Indian Railways is the second largest unit in the world. We need to give a further push or a momentum to the growth of the Indian Railways. Therefore, all the demands required by the Union Railway Ministry have to be adopted.

Madam, may I take this opportunity to compliment the hon. Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and his associates for doing an excellent job in accelerating the development of railways in this country. Not only they have developed a modernized railways, but they have proved to the world that the Railways can be one of the best earning public sector organizations in this country. They have proved to the country that the public sector can do much better than any of the private sector in the country. With a surplus of Rs.37,500 crore this year, the Railways are moving towards the target of Rs.1,00,000 crore profit in the future. Whatever we have enshrined in the Common Minimum Programme with regard to the development of Railways has been completed in the last four years. Therefore, Railways have added one more feather to the cap of the United Progress Alliance Government headed by Madam Sonia Gandhiji as well as Dr. Manmohan Singhji. Therefore, the performance of Railways will add one more golden chapter to the history of UPA Government. Therefore, the Grants that are required by Railways now must be voted by the House.

The Railways today have contributed to the economic development of India. If India today is able to achieve about eight to nine per cent of growth in the economic sphere as well as in industrial development, it is because of the easy carriage of freight from one place to another at reasonable rates. Therefore, the Railways have now become real nerves of economic development of India and we must compliment them. They have adopted a passenger-friendly as well as labour-friendly approach in the Budget and we should congratulate the hon. Minister for that. The gross traffic receipts have enhanced from Rs.10,000 crore to Rs.81,901 crore over a period of

* Speech was laid on the Table.

20 years. This is a magic achievement by the Indian Railways.

While conceding all these achievements, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that the operating ratio has just started declining. From about 90, it is now coming down to 81.4. This must be a cause for concern. Profitability should not be eroded by a falling operating ratio.

We should fill up all the vacancies in the Indian Railways. We should be able to absorb all the contract workers that we now have. It is a good measure that we are going to provide employment to Porters as Gangmen. It is a measure of great human kindness that this UPA Government has done to the force labour and other people who are working in the Railways. Likewise, we must take more labour measures so that the labour force of this country would be able to appreciate the needs of the Indian Railways. Safety and security must be our prime goals. The outlay on these aspects must also be enhanced.

While appreciating the Minister for all these things, I would also bring to his notice some of the problems of the Union Territory of Puducherry, which is not very well connected by the Railways. As you know, it is at the far end of this country. For the last fifty to fifty-five years it has not been connected by any of the major Railways. Thanks to the initiative the Railway Minister has taken this year, we are getting a proposal from Chennai to Cuddalore *via* Puducherry and a Garibi Ratna from Puducherry to Bangalore. I would urge upon the Minister to expedite these projects so that the people would be able to get these projects quickly.

Karaikal, which is one of the regions of the Union Territory of Puducherry, is not at all connected by Railways as of today. This area which is now getting more and more of accelerated development should be connected with other parts of the country especially Salem. Salem and Karaikal must be connected by a broad-gauge line. Karaikal has all the potential of growth and a connection to Bangalore *via* Salem would provide more momentum to the growth of Karaikal. A broad-gauge line is already there from Salem to Attur. It must be connected from Attur to Karaikal. This project must be given importance.

I would like to explain the geographical characteristic of Puducherry. No constituency in the country will have this kind of a characteristic. Puducherry is the capital city. About 890 kilometres away from there, there is one

region called Yanam which is in Andhra Pradesh. About a thousand kilometres away from Puducherry there is Mahe which is in Kerala. About 160 kilometres away from Puducherry is Karaikal which is in Tamil Nadu. So, my constituency is spread over three major States and it is ill-connected by railway network. That is why I emphasise that Yanam, Karaikal and Mahe must be connected to Puducherry. A separate plan may be envisaged to achieve this. I would urge that at least 0.1 per cent of the total grants allotted to Railways may be granted to Puducherry because Puducherry enjoys 0.2 per cent of the total area and 0.1 per cent of the total population of this country. So, at least 0.1 per cent of the total grants may be allotted to take care of the development of railways in Puducherry.

[*Translation*]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I would like to request the Minister for Railways to include the issue of safety of women in it. Women must be provided safety in trains. For safety of women there should be fencing around stations because many women cross railway line in habitated areas and sometimes women commit suicide in anger on railway lines. This will stop such accidents. Wire fencing should be erected around railway stations.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): Madam, I would like to thank the hon'ble Minister that he has announce a railway line from Nanded-Yavatmal to Wardha in this budget but has made no allocation in the budget for this purpose.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: There is no safety even in trains. Women should be given police protection in trains also.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Madam, a railway line for Nanded *via* Yavatmal-Wardha has been announced twice, but only announcements are made. Till date no provision of funds has been made. The Government of Maharashtra has decided to contribute its share of forty percent and communicated it to the Ministry of Railways; but there is no mention about it in the budget. In the same way the Chief Minister of Maharashtra has taken a decision for Beed and Parli and the state of Maharashtra is ready to contribute its share of forty percent. The Government are making announcements repeatedly. I would like to say that only announcements would serve no purpose. We should start their implementation.

[Shri Haribhau Rathod]

I would like to draw your attention towards another important matter. The Government have extended some concessions for patients suffering from serious diseases such as heart attack etc. A new disease named sickle case has been reported in Vidarbha region. It is being said that tribals are being affected by this disease on a larger scale as they take non-veg food items. Due to this disease, entire blood of the patient becomes infected. The people have to travel for treatment to Mumbai and other distant cities. It would be a great gesture if the patients are given concession, by declaring it a major disease.

[English]

*SHRI KIREN RIJIJU (Arunachal West): Sir, I would like to remind the Railway Minister that benefits of the huge revenue collection of Indian Railways are not reaching the State of Arunachal Pradesh. The Railway line to State capital Itanagar is taking too long time and I have reminded the Minister again and again to expedite it.

The train reservation facility for the people living and working in Arunachal Pradesh must be increased with modern facilities. The Train berth quota at present is not adequate and a substantial raising the nos. of seats very urgently required.

The Bogheebeel bridge is facing some acute problems. All the boulders required for it are brought from Arunachal Pradesh. There must be fund provision for the conservation of environment and forests in foothill areas.

The safety in trains must be given top priority. Many times people from North-East face problems and the security provision is not enough. All the trains running to and from North-East should be given priority for security.

The cleanliness and sanitation inside the trains and the platforms needs urgent attention.

All the trains of North-East should be consisting of new bogies and speed needs to be increased substantially.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Madam, First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to all the hon'ble Members who participated in the debate on the Demands for Grants in respect of Railway Budget for 2008-09 and make their valuable suggestions. The Parliamentary Standing Committee examined the Budget thoroughly and submitted its report. After seriously considering all the suggestions put forward by the Committee and the Hon'ble Members, a time bound action would be taken and the Committee as well as the august House would be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

Madam, I am very happy to inform the House that the Indian Railways transported 794 million tonnes of goods during 2007-08 vis-a-vis revised target of 790 million tonnes. I extend my congratulations, through this House, to all the railway employees and railway consumers for the great achievements of the railways. They have made their contribution in the progress of Indian railways.

Madam Chairman, hon. Members will be happy to know that long awaited Kolkata Dhaka Maitri Express between India and Bangladesh has been started from 14th April in order to promote harmony between the two countries. I hope that this train would prove to be helpful in bringing together the people of both the countries, who are culturally and historically close to each other. Without amicable relations with its neighbouring countries none of the countries can make progress. It is a clear cut policy and priority of UPA Government to maintain cordial relations with its neighbours that had been turned sour in the past, we have done a commendable job through Indian Railways in that direction. Indian Railways has been complimented for that. Thar Express and Samjhauta Express have been restarted from Pakistan. Earlier a train used to run between Bangladesh and India from Dhaka but this train was discontinued during 1971 war. We have restarted that train in the name of Maitri Express, thus Indian railways has done this historical task of joining hearts after the congenial and trustful atmosphere created by UPA Government. It is being appreciated and complimented everywhere in all countries by all the sections of society. We will further strengthen it. This Rail budget has been prepared keeping in view the needs of common man. With regard to concessions provided in freight and passenger fare, people expressed doubt that freight has not reduced rather, I have juggled

*Speech was laid on the Table.

with figures. After coming into effect the rates of freight in the country from 1st April, a newspaper, I have forgotten its name, has reported that though certain items have become costlier but rail travel has become pleasant. To reach their destination from capital, Delhi, earlier people used to spend Rs. 8-9 and now they are reaching here spending only 2-3 rupees, thus, positively influencing faith and firm belief of the people in railways.

Madam Chairman, when I had presented a detailed budget, during the course of discussions on it I had told that the budget seeks to provide relief to the people of every section of the country. We do not produce enough fuel diesel or gas to meet the requirement of our country so we have to purchase it at high price for our countrymen. One third of total consumption of diesel is in Indian railways, despite that not even a single paisa has been increased in the fare since UPA Government came to power. Had there been NDA Government, then they would have definitely exploited common man through Railways. But we have provided relief in all cases. We are being criticized for the price rise of certain items, but, we are making efforts to make them cheaper. Hon'ble Prime Minister is going to convene a meeting for seeking cooperation of state Governments in regard to the artificial scarcity of a few items. The ultimate objective of a Government is to create an egalitarian society taking care of common and poor man and consider their financial condition and expenses and Indian Railways functions on the same lines.

Madam Chairman, I assure that Indian Railways would strive to act in consonance with the expectations of our Hon'ble Prime Minister and Shrimati Sonia ji of providing maximum relief to local industries, common people and curb price rise.

Madam, giving relief to students, females, senior citizens, after a review we had reduced the fare of fully A.C. coach by 5% and by 25% in Garib Rath. We have fixed their fare less than that of taxi fare and will reduce it further. We are concentrating on this also, and we have determined our priorities. Yesterday, I asked my officers how much indent for the procurement of wheat by FCI has been received by Railways and how much wheat has been transported because we have to maintain buffer stock. We have received indent on a large scale from FCI and have already started transportation of wheat. It would be ensured that people do not suffer from the shortage of wheat in any part of the country. Wheat is available in abundance in the country. Wheat has not

only been grown in Haryana and Punjab, but it has been procured abundantly in Bihar. There has been a bumper crop of wheat. Rice has been produced on a large scale keeping in view natural climate in my State. There has been a bumper crop of maize in the Koshi area where floods occur. The Railways is performing its duty well in the transportation of maize, which had to be sold at a very cheaper rates but now it won't happen. It is the responsibility of the State Governments to procure the grains and provide maximum facilities to their people and raids should be conducted.

We thank the Government of Delhi for conducting raids. You might have seen much oil and other items have been hoarded. All the edible items should be dehoarded. It should be checked where all those things are being sent? We are near completion of our FCI storage target, rather we will do more transportation than that. We have given preference to transportation for FCI. Private players who are known as dealing in forward markets or by some other name and they always talk about them, these people purchase agriculture produce directly from farmers by giving them Rs. 100 or 200 extra rate, then hoard the grains and forecast that the rate would be higher in so and so month and then we will sell them. They are planning to do it on the lines of Hapur Market where rates of Gold and Silver are declared daily. So I have decided and want to inform the House that we will not transport even one chhatank wheat of these private contractors or businessmen except the grains of FCI, PDS grains of State Government and SFC grains. Trains will not transport their grains at all as we want to check them. They have hoarded wheat and other grains and are making money through grains without thinking about the difficulties of common man. They are exploiting people. There should be a limit to profit making. Indian Railways is earning money, but it can also curtail its earnings for a noble cause. Indian Railways will do whatever can be done to provide relief to common man. We are concerned about it, convening meetings and constantly making efforts to arrest price rise. We need to understand the reasons for so much increase in prices and find measures to curb it.

Madam, people are apprehensive, but I do not make any discrimination in the matter of railways. We have got a lot of support and cooperation from you. We try to work on the basis of this formula whether it is to provide a train or to extend the train service, or to lay new railway lines. In case of ongoing schemes and unmanned gates where people are run over, we had clearly stated

[Shri Lalu Prasad]

in budget that there are 25 thousand unmanned gates where people are run over and they become the cause of accidents also. The people, whether they travel by bus or other vehicles become the victim of accidents while crossing railway lines and such accidents are discussed in the House. We want all these unmanned gates to be manned. I have already announced that. In this work we will take help of the persons having technical know-how. That is why I have said that we would deploy all the gangmen after giving them proper training and promotion. We are going to make all the unmanned gates as manned gates. We want the railways to run smoothly without any accident. We are going to recruit the coolie brothers to fill up the vacancies meant for gangmen within two months. I have told the coolie brothers not to do the work like this, but the leaders compel them to do so. When I went to Jammu to inaugurate the Garib Rath, I saw a bag full of coins lying at one side of a weighing machine. I asked them as to what was this. They told me that the Minister of Railways was to be weighed. I asked them who had done this? Rs. 30 or 50 must have been collected from each coolie. All the coolies were sitting there. I told them to take their individual money back, because I do not like to take this kind of money.

Madam, I have worked for the poor people. I have started so many new trains even for the parliamentary constituency of hon'ble Advani Ji. Hon'ble Members must understand that I will not start the new trains with old coaches. We have to implement each of the earlier announcements at the end of the financial year. Whatever announcement I make, I myself and both the Ministers of State get all those works initiated because Indian Railways is ours. I am not the owner of it. It is my duty to reform Indian Railways and get it back on the right track. At present there is surplus amount of Rs. 69 thousand crore in the treasury of Indian Railways. It has been earned by them during the last four years and now the target is to earn Rs. one lakh crore by the end of my tenure.

New railway lines have got saturated. Under the dedicated freight corridor plan, eastern corridor is proposed to be constructed from Ludhiana to Howrah and Calcutta and Haldiya Port, while the western corridor is proposed to be constructed in the next phase for which our Prime Minister had held a meeting with his former Japanese counterpart. I was also present in that meeting. The former Japanese Prime Minister wanted to invest in western corridor plan at the lowest rate. Western corridor industrial hubs are being set up. This is the decision of the Cabinet.

Mumbai-Howrah and other corridors will be constructed in second phase. There will be no land problem for double line and nobody will face any problem because of this. Our layout plans to by-pass big cities is ready. For eastern corridor, tender will be floated in May. The Prime Minister has instructed not to stop this work, as there is no paucity of funds. Earlier the Indian Railways were out of market, but now everyone is interested and wants to make investment in it. But the decision of our Government is that no private player will be allowed in core sector, except in certain areas like modernization of lines and stations. We have chalked out the course for Indian Railways and it need not depend upon any one in future notwithstanding any Government or any Minister comes to power. This would pave the way for the transformation of Indian Railways.

Madam, there would be requirement of transportation capacity of 1100 million ton goods and 8400 MT passenger load in the 11th Five-Year-Plan. Railways will have to improve its infrastructure and go for modernization to meet this requirement. I had mentioned all the steps, which are likely to be taken in this regard in my budget speech. Various arrangements like improvement in high density network, dedicated freight corridor, supply of coal, increase in goods carriage capacity upto 25 tons, running of excess load trains and so on have been made. We have prepared a vision for the requirement of locos, coaches in the next 25 years. I feel pained and do not feel better to say that the State Governments refused to provide land by making comments "go slow" for various schemes like setting up of coach factory for which foundation stone was laid in our leader Shrimati Sonia Gandhi's Parliamentary constituency Rai Bareilly, factory in Chhapra, diesel factory in Marauhara, electric factory in Madhepura and so on. If the State Government have such an attitude in our federal system, how will this country make progress? At present Shri Prabhunath Singh Ji is not here. He had raised this issue. I had no option but to come to the House and take authority on the lines of NHAI for these important projects. By appointing our own officials, we have exercised the jurisdiction of Railways so that we could acquire the land on our own. Acquisition of land is the job of the Government. I would like to say that the means of livelihood can be generated by infrastructure, power, railways, highways and aeroplanes. Merely shouting slogans, boycotting and evading responsibilities would serve no purpose. All will have to realize the reality.

Madam, Basu Deb Ji had requested to introduce a MEMU train from Bankura to Dhanbad. We will introduce it. Prabhunath Ji has left. As we had announced, 36-kilometre Maharajganj-Masrakh new railway line is being constructed at a cost of Rs. 114 crore. Final location, estimate and survey has already been made in this regard and the amount of Rs. 39 crore has been allocated for acquisition of land from 39 villages of Siwan district. Rs. 40 crore have been spent so far. There is a new railway line proposed from Barabanki to Guwahati. There are also proposals for setting up of Loco Factory in Marauhara and electric factory in Madhepura, but the Nitish Government have not provided land for the purpose. They have co-operated at snail's pace, so I have taken steps on my own. Electrification of Barauni-Siwan-Gorakhpur-Guwahati rail lines will be inaugurated on 3rd of May since Barauni-Gorakhpur and Guwahati are parallel lines. Due to increase in price of diesel, there is a need to electrify these lines. Azmi Saheb has asked about introducing a train from Azamgarh to Mumbai. We will introduce it in this very financial year. You have said about introduction of Wali express in the name of a poet. We will examine it, because Railways will have to take permission from the Ministry of Home Affairs for this.

16.00 hrs.

We will invite comments from the State Government and when the reply is received from your State Government, we will proceed on this issue.

Late Smt. Indira Gandhi Ji had the real understanding and perception about this country. She had a deep comprehension about the soil of this country.
...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Minister, we have to take up Private Member's Bill at 4 pm.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I will conclude shortly.

Extend time for a little while.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): Please extend the time, it will take maximum 15 minutes more, after that we will take it up.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: It is okay. Now the Minister may continue, after that we will take up Private Members Bills.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: After the Demands for Grants of Railways are passed, we will take up Private Members' Business.

[*Translation*]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Madam, late Indira Gandhi Ji had deep understanding of the soil and various segments of this country. She had fully appreciated the art and culture of the artists of this country. She had done the job of giving them recognition as well as getting them established not only in the country but also outside this country. Late Jashoda Devi belonged to Madhubani. A number of awards were conferred upon her during the time of Indira Ji. Madhubani paintings, and Madhubani Khadi are still very popular everywhere. Even today the people from outside go around Connaught Place for getting these paintings and khadi, but fake paintings are available on a large scale over there. It was the thinking and feeling of Indira Ji that popularized these paintings by appreciating them. The paintings were displayed in popular trains like Jayanti-Janta Express. It was our art in real sense. Now the whole identity of Mithilanchal is fading away.

I would like to extend my thanks to hon'ble Sonia Gandhi Ji, for calling and suggesting me to go ahead with all these steps and saying that there is still need to further improve the Indian Railways.

I would like to announce that we propose to adopt the Madhubani paintings which is the cultural heritage of Madhubani an soil of India and uphold the teachings and values of all religions including Ramayana, as it would provide employment to lakhs of people and work to talented artists. I will send a team and paintings of entire Mithilanchal would be adopted for the interiors of the bogies and offices of the Indian Railways and I shall not allow the talent to fade away. We will not let our culture extinguish.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Culture will remain intact and women would also get employment. Women are engaged in Madhubani painting.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I express gratitude to Soniaji that she remembers everything and reminds us on time and we execute all these works.

[Shri Lalu Prasad]

I express my gratitude once again to all the hon'ble Members who gave their extensive support to the railway budget. Kindly continue to remind me of the unfinished tasks, I will try to finish them. I thank you all. I request the hon'ble Members to accord approval to the Demand for Grants and the related Appropriation Bill.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH (Rajgarh): Madam Chairman, through you I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister the steps taken to augment energy conservation and fuel efficiency under the Technology Upgradation Scheme of the Indian Railways? Ever since he has assumed the Office of the Minister of Railways and till date he has not referred to his prospective plans in regard to Energy efficiency or energy conservation in his speech I would like to know as to what the Indian Railways is doing in this regard in the light of research works being carried out across the world?

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I will tell him. He should pay obeisance to his party for harping on domestic and indigenous things. IT sector has extended a lot of cooperation to the Indian Railways. Indian Railways has benefited a lot from the IT sector. All this is an ongoing process. Energy Conservation is also an ongoing process. Everything cannot be achieved in a single day. On the one hand they harp on indigenous production and on the other they talk of what is going on around the world. The ongoing process is not finished. It is still there and we shall see to it.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister and say that the railway passes have been issued to the freedom fighters by the Ministry of Home Affairs since the year 1971. A fund has been deposited by the Ministry of Home Affairs with the Railways under which a railway pass is issued for traveling to all the freedom fighters throughout India who remained in jail for more than six months. However, there are restrictions on them in respect of two trains. One is Shatabdi and another is Rajdhani Express.

[English]

I would request the hon. Minister to consider this because most of the freedom fighters are above 75 or 80 years of age and they very rarely travel. Their number is also coming down.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: This is not a clarification. This is a suggestion. You can give your suggestions to the hon. Minister in writing.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: I would like to know whether the hon. Minister would consider it.

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA (Ujjain): Madam Chairman, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister of Railways to draw his attention towards the fact that he had given me an assurance for acceding to my request. There is a passenger train from Jaipur to Shyamgarh which plies in rural areas. If it is extended upto Ratlam then a lot of people would be benefited and it would also facilitate rural people. I would request him that if this train is sanctioned, it will be a welcome move.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: All this should have been covered in your speech. Hon'ble Minister, would you like to give your reply? However it is a suggestion of the hon'ble Member that the train should be started from that place.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Hon'ble member gets his work done through me. It is not a budget related issue. I would rather tell him to come to me as he comes to me for getting his other things done. I shall see to it.
...(Interruptions)

SHRI KIREN RIJU (Arunachal West): I want to give a suggestion only. We had invited even the hon. Minister, but he did not come. I had told Lalujee even last time that there were many people from Bihar in Arunachal. We have a quota of railway seats each district which are booked in Guwahati. When we reach Guwahati we do not get a seat, despite reservation. I had a meeting with the Minister of State. He said that NF quota was not there. You are a Cabinet Minister, it is requested that if you issue orders immediately then it will be done.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: It is his suggestion, please take note of it. If you can do something about it, please do it.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Six cut motions have been moved by Lt. Gen. (Retd.) T.P.S. Rawat, PVSM, VSM to the Demands for Grants (Railways) for 2008-09. Shall I put all the cut motions to the vote of the House together or does the hon. Member wants any particular cut motion to be put separately?

Lt. Gen. (Retd.) T.P.S. Rawat – Not present.

I shall now put all the cut motions to the vote of the House.

All the cut motions were put and negatived.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I shall now put the Demands for Grants (Railways) for 2008-09 to the vote of the House.

The question is:

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the fourth column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India, to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in the course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 2009, in respect of the heads of Demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 1 to 16."

The motion was adopted.

16.10 hrs.

APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) NO. 3 BILL 2008*

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall take up item no. 17 – Shri Lalu Prasad.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I beg to move that leave be granted to introduce a bill to authorize payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2008-09 for the purpose of Railways.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to authorize payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2008-09 for the purposes of Railways."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I introduce the Bill.**

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, we take up item no. 18— Shri Lalu Prasad.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I beg to move:

"that the Bill to authorize payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2008-09 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to authorize payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2008-09 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to the Bill.

Clauses 1, the Enacting Formula and the long Title were added to the Bill.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, the hon. Minister may move that the Bill be passed.

*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 17.4.2008.

**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): Madam Chairman, I extend my felicitations and thanks to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and Shri Lalu Prasadji on the passing of Railway Budget for the current year. I want to place it on record.

16.14 hrs.

MOTION RE: THIRTY-FOURTH AND THIRTY-FIFTH REPORTS OF COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall take up item no. 19 – Shrimati Archana Nayak.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK (Kendrapara): I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Reports of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 5th and 12th March, 2008, respectively."

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That this House do agree with the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Reports of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 5th and 12th March, 2008, respectively. "

Shri C.K. Chandrappan, you may move your amendment.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur): I beg to move:

"That in the motion—

add at the end—

"subject to the modification that the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2008 (*Insertion of new article 45A*) by Shri C.K. Chandrappan be referred back to the Committee for reconsideration of their recommendation contained in the Thirty-fourth Report with regard to the said Bill."."

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That in the motion—

add at the end—

"subject to the modification that the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2008 (*Insertion of new article 45A*) by Shri C.K. Chandrappan be referred back to the Committee for reconsideration of their recommendation contained in the Thirty-fourth Report with regard to the said Bill."."

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Madam Chairman, when you put my amendment to the vote of the House, the Members should understand as to what it is. So, please allow me to say two sentences.

As it is said, the Bill seeks to amend the Constitution with a view to protect children below the age of 15 years from all forms of corporal punishment by any person.

I moved this Constitutional Amendment taking into account the recommendations made by the UN General Assembly to all States to adopt legislations that children will not be subjected to corporal punishment. I think, the Committee probably, has not gone into all the details of it.

Therefore, I would request that my Amendment may be adopted so that the Committee will have the opportunity to reconsider it.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That in the motion,—

add at the end—

'Subject to the modification that the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2008 (*Insertion of new article 45A*) by Shri C.K. Chandrappan be referred back to the Committee for reconsideration of their recommendation contained in the Thirty-Fourth Report with regard to the said Bill."

The motion was adopted.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Reports of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 5th and 12th March, 2008, respectively, subject to the modification that the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2008 (*Insertion of new article 45A*) by Shri C.K. Chandrappan be referred back to the Committee for reconsideration of their recommendation contained in the Thirty-Fourth Report with regard to the said Bill."

The motion was adopted.

16.17 hrs.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' RESOLUTIONS

(I) Free, Compulsory and Uniform Education up to Higher Secondary Level—Contd.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, the House will take up Item No. 20 – Further Discussion on the following Resolution moved by Shri Ram Kripal Yadav on 31st August, 2007:-

"This House urges upon the Government to take effective steps to provide free, compulsory and uniform education up to Higher Secondary level in the country"

Shri C.K. Chandrappan, you were on your legs last

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur): Yes, last time I was on my legs. We actually started the discussion during the last Session.

The Bill, of course, is a Bill and the Motion is a Motion. The Resolution is: "The House urges upon the Government to take effective steps to provide free, compulsory and uniform education up to Higher Secondary level in the country."

The intention of this Resolution is very good. But my feeling is that we have to discuss this proposition more seriously because the Constitution says that free and compulsory education up to primary level to all children should be provided. It was a Constitutional stipulation made when the Constitution was adopted several decades before. But we are far away from getting that stipulation implemented.

Now, I support the idea of making some more addition that 'not only primary, secondary but all education to be made compulsory and free.' But why could we practically not do that? Though in terms of financial commitment and all that, it would have been much less. But we could not succeed in getting it implemented.

Madam, it is related to the question of education for all. If the idea of education for all is acceptable to all, then probably, you should have found more resources to be spent for education. I think, at the present level, if we treat education, be it primary, secondary or anything, the meager spending on education on the Budget or the meager spending by the Planning Commission would not help us to achieve any of these goals. That is the experience we have. The UPA Government, when it came to power, in their National Common Minimum Programme promised that five per cent of the GDP would be provided for education.

Now, four years have passed after the UPA has come to power. We are nowhere near that promise being fulfilled. So, my request is that you take measures so that at least this promise made to the country by the UPA is fulfilled. To that extent, you make education more viable and available to common people.

Apart from more financial allocations for education, there are certain other aspects we have to consider. Recently, there are certain reports. The Sachar Commission Report has come. It pointed out certain realities. They were not unknown because these were

[Shri C.K. Chandrappan]

pointed out various other reports before this Parliament. If there is food scarcity to a certain section of the people, then they are not in a position to send their children to the primary school. It is because they are very, very backward people, say, they are fishermen, poor Muslims and Scheduled Caste people. These people are very poor due to social reasons and economic backwardness. It is because of their social backwardness and economic backwardness, they are not in a position to send their children to the primary school, though there are facilities offered for getting primary education free.

You make primary education free. But there is no employment to the parents; there is no food for the family; and there is also social oppression. The children, instead of going to the school, will look for food. They may not be working but they may be begging. But whatever is the thing, they will not go to the school. So, food, employment and social position of various strata of society are also factors that are influencing the decision of the Government or various agencies to provide free education. But the people are not in a position to make use of it.

Now, when the Sachar Commission's Report came, it described the position of the Muslims. It said that more than 60 per cent of the poor Muslims in the country, not in small number, are living at a standard which is much below the standard of ordinary poor people, the Scheduled Caste people, the Scheduled Tribe people and the fishermen. Then, conscious effort has to be made to improve their position. While doing so, you may try to bring them to educational institutions also. So, unless and until all these measures are taken, and all are going hand in hand, then, probably, we may not achieve the goal that we want to achieve. That happened to the Constitutional promise, a commitment that was made to this country for compulsory and free primary education to all the children. We could not fulfil that. Now, when we could not fulfil that, we are going to add a little more to that by saying that education up to the level of higher secondary in the country should be provided free, compulsory and uniform. The idea is very good but the practicability of that should be considered very seriously.

About that aspect of uniformity and all that, one can go on speaking at length. I am not attempting that. We have several types of education being provided at the secondary level. There are Government schools providing education according to its syllabus. There is CBSE. There are recognised but unaided schools where education is of a different type.

So, all these various forms of educational system are remaining at the secondary level. Speaking about universalisation and making it compulsory is very difficult. Take the education by recognised but unaided schools. They are also providing secondary education. Anybody sending their children to that educational institution must have that much of money to provide for higher fees. Everything regarding that education, the uniform, the dress, the transportation, is very costly. Can you think of a situation where you will provide only one type of education at the secondary level? More ideal would be if the Government takes the responsibility. But, I do not say that the Government should take that responsibility because the Government may not have that resource to spend. Then, naturally the private sector will come. But, I want to know whether the private sector in this field will be allowed to have a free day. That is the problem. If the private sector comes and they expect reasonable profits, it is okay. One will not so much object because they are spending money.

In the earlier days, in Kerala when the Christian Missionaries played a very significant role in promoting education in Kerala, they provided free education to the students. We had no case. They never exploited. But as time passed, as things changed, they also changed.

SHRI K.S. RAO: It is moneymaking now.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Now only moneymaking is there. The whole point is, what is happening in Kerala in the higher education sphere is different. It may not be so in the secondary education level. The Government is bringing the Bill to regulate it. But then they can get away because these are minority institutions. The minority institutions will get the constitutional protection that is provided with good intention to help the minorities to live with full freedom in this country.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Weaker sections also.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Yes, the weaker sections also. But, what is happening is that in the garb of minorities, when you are making education as a good business proposition, then these minority rights help them. They seek that protection and they exploit the whole society, not only students and parents but the whole society. That cannot be allowed.

When we speak of an education of the type visualized by the mover of the Resolution, we have to think in

terms of what kind of education that we will have at the secondary level.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Shri Chandrappanji, one minute.

Hon. Members, the time allotted for this Resolution is over. Still, we have two hon. Members to speak on this and thereafter reply by the hon. Minister. So, if the House agrees on extending the time of the Resolution by half-an-hour we can do so.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): Madam, if you think more time is required, then it may be extended.

[*English*]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I think half-an-hour is sufficient.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Madam, it can be extended further. There are other hon. Members wanting to speak. ... (*Interruptions*)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Only two speakers.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: I have no objection. I will stop in two minutes.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: No, I am asking that you be given more time.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I think half-an-hour is all right. If we need more, we can increase the time by another half-an-hour.

[*Translation*]

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR (Aurangabad, Bihar): Please allow the hon. Members to speak first, thereafter you will come to know how much time is required.

[*English*]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: I think half-an-hour is sufficient. If we need more, then we can increase the time.

Shri Chandrappan, please continue.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: My only submission is that let us see that the constitutional promise or commitment made to the country is fulfilled. After that, we can think of enhancing free education to different sectors or different sections. Otherwise, we will be like the proverbial rider. There is a proverb: If the dreams come true, the beggars will ride on horses. That kind of situation will come. It is not that we should dream only; sometimes we should come to the ground realities also.

While supporting the intention of the Resolution, I submit that let us implement it and let us make a firm resolve that we will implement the constitutional commitment regarding free and compulsory education to people made decades ago by the Founding Fathers of the Constitution. Let us see that it is fulfilled. Afterwards, we can think of going further and thinking in terms of compulsory, uniform higher secondary education and all that.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI K.S. RAO (Eluru): Madam, I congratulate Shri Ram Kripal Yadav for bringing this Resolution on making education free, compulsory and uniform. I stress on these words because of the importance of education. Education is the only instrument for the poor people with the help of which they can come up in their lives. We are all eye-witnesses to what happens. No matter how many hours they work during their lifetime, be it starting from 10 years and going even up to 60 or 70 years, we know what their plight is. We are aware that there are hundreds of millions of people who still live below the poverty line. There are also people above 65 who are living like orphans because their own children are not in a position to take care of them.

We also see the difference between the living standards of the person who is highly educated and the person who is not educated at all. A person who is not educated at all, even if he works 12 hours a day, he is not being paid even Rs. 80 per day, while a person who is highly educated and coming from IIM, IIT or other institutes of higher education, during his campus selection, he is being promised a package of rupees one crore. What is the difference? Both the people are working round the clock. The poor man who is not educated is working for even 12 hours a day and the person who is coming out of IIT or IIM or other institute of higher education is

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being paid rupees one crore not for the reason that he works for 12 hours but because of his quality of education or his enlightenment or his ability to produce. All these things are taken into consideration and not merely the working hours. This distinction is only because of education.

Education has got so much importance that all of us have to take care of that. My friends, these three words — free, compulsory and uniform — have attracted me. We are thinking in terms of making free primary education. But taking primary education is not getting a person into any slot where he lives in a decent way. Then, later comes upper-primary education. These days we have upper-primary education and the same facilities are being provided like mid-day meal to attract those people so that they do not drop-out in-between and continue to study up to upper-primary level. Even then, his life is miserable; he cannot live on his own; he cannot get an employment; and he cannot prove to be a useful citizen of the country except to sweat round the clock throughout his life-time. In view of this, naturally the need arises, once again, to extend it to at least higher education.

Let me synchronize it with other things. We have got an Act prohibiting children up to 14 years to be employed by anybody or any institution. We agree to it because he will be crippled if he were to be employed, if he were to work hard beyond his capacity while he is below the age of 14. If we make education compulsory up to, at least, higher secondary level, automatically that law will be implemented. Now, we find that education is not made compulsory up to higher secondary level. We see thousands of boys below the age of 14 working. It is only in cases where complaints are made by somebody that these cases are coming to our notice that a judge, MP, MLA or a rich man is employing a person below the age of 14 years, and we are trying to take some action on it. Instead, if we make it compulsory right up to higher education, then this problem will not arise. Thereafter, the Act will automatically get implemented, and we would provide a little more education to them.

Here, we would be making the parents to compulsorily send their children to schools, and there is no way out of it. Today, all that is happening is this, and it is my own experience. In the villages of my Constituency, particularly, the areas where the poorer people are living, there will be boys who have studied right up to MA or MSc. They would be from poorer sections of the society,

and they would all be together playing cards or chatting or whiling away the time not in a useful way. If they are asked why they are doing like this, then they say that they have no employment. Even though they are MA and they have applied for jobs, but they are not getting employment for the past five years or ten years.

Why do they not get employment? It is because they are MA, and they did not acquire any skills by virtue of their being MA or MSc., which can be put to use directly either by industry or trade or some other organisation. Therefore, the type of education that is given even up to the level of MA is not suitable for the needs of the country. Hence, the person is not getting employment. Therefore, the parents also think that their children should not suffer as they had to suffer. They want their children to live in a decent manner, and they do not want their children to soil their clothes by coming to the fields and doing the routine job that their parents are doing. Thereby, neither they are useful in the fields nor they are useful in getting employment. So, they are losing in both ways, and the net effect is that these days the parents think on this line. Why should they send their children to the schools at all? If they send them to the fields, then they can enhance their income by another Rs. 80 a day, which will be helpful to them. Therefore, the number of dropouts has gone up. We have realised that out of 100 students who have joined in for the primary education, only seven students are left by the time they go to the University. It means that 93 dropouts are there when they go to higher education.

It is a good thing that the Government has taken up Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and provided thousands of crores to ensure that these dropouts are reduced. They have also started the mid-day meal scheme to attract these boys. It is going all right to that extent, but that is not an end by which we are going to achieve the goals. It is because when we are making it compulsory to study up to higher education or upper primary education, then the number of unemployed people will be increasing. I am saying this because the type of education that we are giving is not suitable to the Indian needs.

Therefore, my humble request — that I have already made many times in this House — is that they should be given education that provides them skills by which they can get employment or they can be utilised by the industry or trade or society effectively. If a person acquires certain skills, then the personal confidence will also go

up. The person will come out of the institute with the confidence that he is a useful citizen, and he can get employment anywhere and even if he does not get employment, still he can be self-employed as the Government is providing enough finance. He could take loan at 3 per cent interest or 4 per cent interest or even zero interest and start his own life, and take care of his family. Therefore, I was emphasising this kind of education, which provides them skills and increases their self-confidence.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: There should be upgradation of skills.

SHRI K.S. RAO: Yes, this kind of education is to be given. This is why I support the second word, that is, compulsory. The parents have no option except to send their children to schools right up to higher-secondary education. If this is done, then the second step will come.

Thereafter, comes the issue of uniform education. Once again, I appreciate Shri Ram Kripal Yadav for calling it uniform education. The quality of education given in a village is totally different from that given in a Government school, and the quality of education that is given in a private school — more so in an urban area — is totally different and we are all aware about it. A fellow who goes to the convent — his style, accent, language — is totally different, and he attracts everyone. But a person studying in a village, he studies in Hindi or Telugu medium, or in a local language, when he approaches a multinational company, he does not fit into it because he cannot understand the language; he cannot understand the accent, so his life would become miserable. The type of education imparted in a village school, Government school, is different from the type of education that is imparted in a private school in an urban area. Therefore, at least, up to higher education, if the standards of education were to be uniform, then you cannot differentiate or they will not be at a loss. In that sense, uniformity must also be there.

While supporting these three phrases, that is, free education, compulsory education and uniform education, up to a higher standard, to begin with, is all right. My only addition to this is that it must be an education that imparts skills to them. So, instead of giving formal education up to MA or BA, after eighth standard, depending upon the aptitude of the boy, the Government should impart the necessary skills. For example, if we give a white paper to some children who do not know anything, they will go on scribbling something. You can

deduce from that he might be having some interest in painting or in some art. Some other boys, five or six year old boys, when they see a car, they try to fiddle with it which might tell us that he might be interested in the mechanical field or something of that kind. The teacher can judge the aptitude of the boy and then decide which profession suits him the best. Some boys might be interested in photography; somebody else may be interested in something else. So, depending upon the aptitude of the boy, skills must be imparted to an extent where he can live on his own.

While employed in a private company or Government, or even self-employed, suppose after 30 years, if he thinks that he must increase his social status or to improve his opportunities in the coming future, then the university doors must be kept open to them, no matter what his age is. He must be allowed to go and study at any time and in whatever course he wants to do. He must also be given the same degree, be it BA, MA, M.Tech, etc. He must not be looked down upon once again by somebody who did his doctorate simply because he got a doctorate. My humble request to the Government is that the focus should be on providing skills and the right type of education to the boys.

In this context, I am happy to mention that this time the Government understood the importance of providing skills to the students, and it has provided Rs. 16,000 only for skill development in the Budget. I am not sure whether they have really understood the importance of the skills to be imparted and the importance of the time at which the skills have to be imparted.

Now, we are making a huge claim that India has got the maximum number of technical manpower compared with any other country in the world. But when it comes to the ground reality, for example, if one stenographer working in the Parliament Secretariat were to go on leave or leave the job, it takes six months to get one more; if one translator were to resign from this Parliament Secretariat, it takes years to get another translator. You know how many Members have made a claim here that they want translators in their respective languages, but the Government's reply was that it was not getting them. It means that we have not understood the needs of the country, that is, where we have got the shortage. You name any profession; if you want to get a cook, you cannot get one; if you want to get a stenographer, you cannot get one; if you want to get a computer data operator, you cannot get one.

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In respect of software technology, we are all very proud that India is number one in software industry, and we are also proud that America, Germany, U.K, and Japan were seeking our software technologists. We are happy to that extent, but I understand that even in our country, our software industry is short of software technologists who meet their requirements. That means we are preparing lakhs of technologists here, but they do not find themselves relevant in this country, that is, to meet the requirement of the industry here. So, the Government, the educational institutions must think as to what kind of software technologists we need here. What is the industry's requirement and what are we producing? Anything that is produced in the educational institutions must have relevance to the needs of the industry and the society in this country. That way, a revolutionary change has to be brought in the type of education that is imparted in this country. The present system of education was started by the Britishers to cater to their needs and to loot the wealth of this country. That is gone. Now we have got our Independence. We have to produce our own boys to our requirement. This has to be taken care of.

While congratulating Mr. Ram Kripal Yadav for tabling this Resolution, and supporting the views expressed by Shri C.K. Chandrappan, I would say that this is a good Resolution. The Government should never think that a Private Bill is a Private Bill and a Government Bill is a Government Bill; we only care for the Government Bill and not for the Private Bill. Where there is substance, where there is a need to understand the gravity of the situation, the Government can bring some changes which are practically required. But neglecting a Bill on the ground that it is a Private Member's Bill is not correct.

I, therefore, request the Government and the Ministers who are present here to take note of these things and then bring this revolutionary change in the system of education and make education free, compulsory and uniform.

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Madam Chairman, at the outset I support this Resolution moved by Shri Ram Kripal Yadav urging the Government to take effective steps to provide free, compulsory and uniform education up to higher secondary level in the country.

I think this Resolution strikes a dissimilarity from the Resolutions that we have passed earlier urging the

Government to provide free and compulsory education up to the level of the primary education. Even the Constitution makers have made this provision. Mr. Chandrappan said that we should first accomplish this objective of the Constitution makers and then think of free and compulsory education up to the higher secondary level. To a certain extent this contention of Mr. Chandrappan may be correct. At the time when the Constitution was made the situation in India was vastly different from what it is today.

In those days we had only 16 people out of hundred who could read and write. The country was plunged into illiteracy. Everywhere illiteracy was pervading our national life. Therefore, the Constitution makers felt that at least a minimum of education should be provided to every person so that India can be described as a literate country. We did not have the opportunities for education; we did not have facilities for education in the form of schools, in the form of teachers, in the form of infrastructure. Therefore, what was envisaged at that point of time was that we should have minimum education up to, say, sixth or eighth standard.

But today, in 2008, when we are facing the challenges of the 21st century, we have to aim higher. Today we are building up a knowledge society. It is not merely a society of literates. It is not a question of whether Indians know the alphabets, whether they are able to understand what is education. Today we are making a big leap forward not only in the sphere of education but also in the sphere of society and economy. We are moving from a stage of literacy to a stage of knowledge building society. Therefore, what we require today is not simple education up to primary level. I would feel that every citizen of India, given the resources, should be given free and compulsory education up to the level of even college and university. When the hon. Finance Minister was making his Budget Speech he was saying that we are giving greater importance to higher education today because higher education builds the capabilities of the nation in terms of manpower. Therefore, we are said to be envisaging the creation of about 1500 universities and the Knowledge Commission seems to be working on those lines. So, when such is the paramount need and when the country is expanding so fast in the area of knowledge there is no hesitation to say that we should have free, compulsory and uniform education up to the secondary level. Therefore, I would feel that the Resolution has been properly framed and we should be able to accept this Resolution. I endorse the view of our earlier speaker, Shri K.S. Rao, who said that we should not reject it just

because it has been moved by a Private Member. It is a very sensible Resolution, very relevant to the contemporary needs of the society and, therefore, it should be accepted.

Before I go into the three adjectives involved in this Resolution, I should underline how education is important today. India's greatest asset today is the human resource. Next to China, India has the largest population but the quantity of population is not a great asset for us. Quantity does not make differences in our economic and social development. It is the quality that matters. It is the quality of population that is important. We have large potential of natural and technical resources, hidden and un-hidden resources. If these resources are to be exploited for the benefit of the society the human resource must be able to work in combination with the resources.

After all, output or production of commodities is the function of the labour, the resources, capital and entrepreneur resources in the country. So, all these four factors must combine together to produce an output which we describe as the Gross National Output. An increase in the Gross National Output in terms of percentages is denoted by economic development. Therefore, if this economic development has to occur, if this production function has to operate optimally combining these factors of production then the only possibility of increasing output in the country is to enhance the quality of labour force which comes from the population of the country. So, population becomes an asset provided its quality is enhanced. Population becomes a liability if its quality is not improved. There is no point in saying that India has hundred and odd million people steeped in greater illiteracy. But there is a great merit in saying that hundred and odd million people of this country are literate people. So, it is the quality that matters and not the quantity. How do we improve the quality?

There are at least two measures which our Government has realised, which all the countries have realised, that is by providing free and compulsory education to the people you are able to enhance the enlightenment, the ability of the people to work, understand and assimilate knowledge. Therefore, providing education is one such component in enhancing the quality of the people.

The second one, of course, is health. Health of the people also influences the quality.

Therefore, when we are embarking upon economic development, envisaging on the quality of human resource, then education must get the first precedence. All over the world, the empirical evidences are abounding in nature and we find that all educated countries are highly developed countries. Wherever you find very high *per capita* income or wherever you find higher levels of development, you find that country is educated up to hundred per cent. There may be one or two exceptions here and there where you find a spurious correlation between education and economic development. There are countries which have developed but they are undereducated. And, there are countries which are undereducated but highly developed. These are all noble exceptions or ignoble exceptions but the general rule is, there is a positive correlation, a positive correspondence between education and development. In most of the countries where the *per capita* income is high the literacy level is also high. Where the literacy level is low the *per capita* income is also low. Therefore, any Government which is aiming at social, cultural and economic development must pay utmost importance to the provision of education to the people.

That is why economists consider education as a common good. Education is not a private good. Education cannot be provided by individuals unto themselves. I cannot educate myself or the hon. Minister cannot educate herself. Education has to be provided by the society considering that as a common good. A road is a common good; a hospital is a common good. Like that, education has to be accepted as a common good. That is where the role of the Government comes in providing free education. Constitution-makers, like Dr. Ambedkar realised the importance of education because it was he who reached the highest level through education. Coming from a very backward and downtrodden community, a person who was denied the normal liberal education in his own days, suffering from the stigma of untouchability, a man who was not even allowed to touch the chalk piece and go to the board and explain what a calculus is or what mathematics is, was able to get six degrees. He was B.A. in Persian language; M.A. in Economics; M.Sc. in Economics; PhD in Economics; D.Sc. in Economics; and then Bar at Law. He was destined to frame the Constitution of this country. Through his own shining example, he was able to prove that education is the *summum bonum* of everyone's life. When the obligation of framing the Indian Constitution was dawned on him or was entrusted to him, he felt that education should be given the highest precedence. Therefore, he wrote in the

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Indian Constitution that right to education should be considered as a noble right to the people and to ensure this right to education, he said that there should be free and compulsory education. Of course, he did not anticipate the word "uniform" because in those days he did not find the disparities in education, the heterogeneity of education was such a big problem in the country at that point of time as it is today. Therefore, he aimed at that level of education so that we will be able to do it.

In 1964, the Kothari Commission also echoed the same sentiments. In fact, it went a step further and said that India's destiny is moulded in class rooms. The Kothari Commission did not say that India's destiny is determined in agriculture or industry or in service sector. It said that India's destiny is moulded in class rooms. The moulder of the destiny is the teacher. What is the implication of this? If India is to develop, if India is to accelerate, then the class rooms should be accelerated by providing education to each and every person in the country. Then came a number of other Committees, like the Ramamurthy Committee which underlined the significance of education. Then came the New Education Policy framed by the late Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. After taking over as Prime Minister, he felt that if this country is to revolutionise itself, then the only way to do is to provide accessible education to everybody. He should be credited for his fervour, for his enthusiasm and for his interest in initiating a discussion on the New Education Policy. That New Education Policy also underlined the importance of free and compulsory education to the people.

The National Common Minimum Programme, which is the latest document on the Government's functioning also says that for every Indian there will be a qualitative, affordable and accessible education. It means the Government will provide free and compulsory education to the people. Therefore, all these documents, all these efforts of the Government tend to say that education has to be provided free and compulsorily. Why should it be given free? Why has the word "Free" come in there? It has come in because education is an input. Education has to be acquired by paying a prescribed fee....
(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for this Resolution is over. I have two more hon. Members to speak on this subject and then the reply of the hon. Minister.

If the House agrees, we can extend the time by another 45 minutes.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Okay.

17.00 hrs.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: So, Madam, why it is to be made free because India, as Shri K.S. Rao has said, even today lives in poverty. What was the poverty situation at that point of time? At least today, they say that it is 25 per cent of people who are below the poverty line and in those days, seventy five per cent of people were below the poverty line. At that point of time, people did not realize the imperative need for education. Secondly, they did not have the resources to fall back upon and also to send the children to schools by paying prescribed fees. Therefore, in a situation of acute poverty, expecting the people to educate themselves or their children and when they were not understanding the crucial importance of education as an economic input, the Government had to provide this free education. This free education has to be given as long as there is poverty and as long as the purchasing power of the people is not sufficient enough. It is not only free education; to motivate the people, many of the State Governments have taken up noble measures which are sometimes criticised as populist measures. For example, our Union Territory Administration gives everything freely to the students who are coming to the schools. We are having free mid-day meal scheme. We are giving free uniforms to the students. We are providing free *chappals* to the students who are coming to the schools. We have a morning breakfast scheme. We provide coffee to the students in the evening. So, except the night dinner, everything is provided by our Union Territory Administration to attract the students.

Sir, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), an excellent scheme of the Government of India, is also designed in that direction to spread education to all sections of the people. Therefore what is important is that the Chief Minister of a particular State must feel elated to say that all my children in the age group of 6-14 years are in the class rooms. No student of mine is outside the school system working as a labourer in a hotel or as a coolie or at some other place. That should be the pride and the mission of every Chief Minister of a State. Education being the State subject, they should take up this. Therefore, the students should not only be exempted from

the prescribed fees, they should also be given certain incentives and disincentives so that they will be able to enrol themselves in the schools and we are able to get better students turned out of them. That is why, because of poverty we have to provide this kind of a system.

Madam, if the system has to work, it is not only that we should provide free education and also other concessions and benefits to students, but we should also realise that in spite of all these things, we should see whether we are able to eradicate the drop-out ratio or the stagnation in the schools. The answer is not completely 'yes' because still 25 per cent of the children go out of the school system. In spite of all the benefits that we are giving, in spite of all the monetary benefits that we are giving, we are not able to retain the students in the schools mainly because in many of the situations the education that we give is not attractive to the students. In the sense, we are providing simply a memory-based education. We are giving them a syllabus which is not attractive to them. We are teaching them education in a mode and method which is not attractive. Therefore, educationists have found certain deep maladies in the system itself which keep the students away from the school system in spite of all these things. That is why, the steps that the Government will have to take right now, not only up to the primary level but also up to the higher secondary level, is that you should frame a curriculum, a syllabus which would be able to entertain the students. You give a burden-less education to children. Do not ask children to bring kilos weights of books and notes to schools. Ask the children to keep everything in the schools. Let them learn everything by play-way method.

Now, there are excellent methods whereby the students can learn by themselves with motivated teachers. But, unfortunately, this country does not have that kind of a teaching leadership. I do not think that the teachers in this country are prepared for a change-over to this type of a system. They are happy with the existing system. The teachers must become innovators, motivators, real guides and the real destiny-makers. Only then will we be able to live up to that kind of a situation. Therefore, as a consequence or as a subsequent corollary of making education attractive, another step that the Government will have to take is to encourage the teachers to devise a variety of methods, methods of curricula, pedagogy, teaching to the students and examination.

The examination system that we have also drives away our boys and girls out of the system. What do they do? What do they learn and what do they write? What kind of an examination system that we have? The students have to write five out of ten questions; write two or three paragraphs out of six. So, they concentrate on something and if those portions do not appear in the examination, they fail. Once they fail, they think that that is the end of their career and they go out. Therefore, the free and compulsory education does not become effective unless you change the education system also. What steps we need to take is to change the teaching curricula, motivate the teachers and give them higher packages. I think the Sixth Pay Commission has done a great service to the teachers. It has realised that the teachers must be paid higher wages and salaries. But it is the duty of the Ministry to give them the directions in which they should move.

We should have an agenda for the teachers consistent with the needs of the society. What kind of changes are needed for teacher education, teacher evaluation and all these things must be made. It is not a kind of master-slave relationship as it exists today. Every teacher thinks that he is a master and the child is his slave. That kind of an attitude will no longer work in the school system. The teachers must take the children as their own children, bestow kindness, attention, give them proper guidance and make education more and more attractive. Every child must feel happy to go to school. As soon as he gets up from the bed, he must feel: "I must see the face of my teacher. I must go to the school and I must see my friends. I must be able to play." So, a kind of freedom, a kind of liberty should be given to the students so that they are able to feel that they have a congenial, compatible environment in the school so that they are able to learn themselves. This is what is happening in the foreign countries. There is nothing wrong in imitating or copying the best practices and the best methods/modules that are available in the foreign countries. So, the western countries have given a certain model which, with suitable modifications, can be used for the Indian conditions. That is what I feel that the Ministry should take up.

Of course, it has appointed a number of Commissions and Committees which have gone into the system. But what is today required is you make concrete steps towards implementation of these schemes.

[Prof. M. Ramadass]

Next, we must be able to ensure quality in education. Quality in education just cannot be measured by the examination marks. Education, again, is a production function. To put it in the economic terminology, it is a production function. Whatever inputs go into the system, quality must be increased in all those systems or those inputs. For example, teacher is an input. A computer is an input. A class-room situation is an input. The infrastructure available in the school is an input. If the quality of all these things is not going to improve, then the quality of education cannot improve. Therefore, the Government should understand which is the first cause and which is the consequence. We should not attack the consequence without understanding the cause. Therefore, every school must have proper infrastructure. Education must be mind-boggling. It must arouse interest in the students to think and ask why this is happening. When I throw a ball, the ball is attracted towards the earth. I should ask why it is happening. It is not necessary that I know the Newton's law of motion. There is no point in knowing it, unless you know that this Newton's law of motion is at the back of a ball falling from the sky towards the earth. We must kindle the spirit of enquiry. Only that will produce scholars of eminence, scientists of eminence, scientists who are required for the country. Are we prepared for this change? We have to be prepared. Only then we can make our educational institutions as real institutions or temples of knowledge. Otherwise, they will remain only huts in the villages. You see the Operation Blackboard. The result of Operation Blackboard will tell you the way the schools are functioning in this country without proper facilities. I do now want to elaborate on that, but it is a lamentable fact that many of the schools and institutions are lacking in proper facilities. The quality of education has to be related to larger issues. More important than the quality is relevance of education. Most of the educationists have now commented that the education being provided here is irrelevant to the needs of the society. What is wanted by the society today? After all, education is to make manpower. This manpower is going to work in agriculture, animal husbandry, industry, mines and other things. Unless we know what kind of manpower is required by this country, we cannot create such manpower. That is why, today India is facing a very bad situation wherein we have created a large number of educated people, and at the same time, a large number of unemployed people. The degree holders and various other highly educated people are not able to find a place. At the same time, we have a situation where we do not have manpower required by the society. Today, a multi-

national corporate requires a highly qualified stenographer. We are not able to get a stenographer, but we have hundreds of MAs and graduates on the line without knowing what is a data operation, what is stenography and what is typing. They are not wanted anywhere. Now, we have to reverse this trend. Otherwise, the educational system today will be producing a waste in education. The Finance Minister is here. People are asking for six per cent GDP investment in education. We have not achieved and we are not going to achieve that. This mandate of six per cent of expenditure on education was given in 1964 by Kothari Commission. But, today we are not spending more than 2.8 per cent of GDP on education. My question is what is the purpose of allocating six per cent to an education which will produce people who are not required for industry, people who are not required for service sector and people who are not required even in agriculture to work with. What is the fun in spending so much money and producing people who are not getting any opportunity to contribute in the social and economic development of the country? Have our education produced men of values in this country or have we produced people with very high democratic norms who are required for the society? Have you produced men of moral values? If that is so, we can find a correlation between increasing education and reducing crime rates in the country. Even that, we have not achieved. Many of the objectives for which education is important have not been accomplished because of the topsy turvy system that we have been following in the country, not knowing what should come first and what second and third. If the system has to revive, we have to radically change the system to the needs of the society. Here comes the need for manpower planning. Manpower planning is intrinsically related to economic planning. We must have a perspective 10-year Plan requiring the developments in the country. From that must flow what kind of manpower you want.

We should see as to what is the demand for manpower and that demand must be met by educational institutions. Only then there will be one-to-one correspondence between education, employment and economic development. I do not know when we are going to achieve this one-to-one correspondence. But I am optimistic that with dynamic Ministers like Shrimati Purandeswari and others in the Ministry they will be able to give a new thrust to this area where we have to reduce the irrelevance of the curriculum and irrelevance of the education system.

Madam, this is a very serious concern. Our boys and girls from poor families go to schools, colleges and universities with rosy aspirations, but they have to remain unemployed, not using their talents. Do you believe in a situation where a Ph.D student is working as an Elementary School Teacher in the private sector earning only Rs. 500 per month? What would be the feeling of his parents who have educated this boy by selling all their assets, hoping that their boy, after getting the Ph.D would become an IAS officer or would become a Lecturer or would become an Assistant Professor? All those hopes have been dashed because whatever he has studied and got a degree has not been respected, recognised and rewarded by the society. So, this is the situation. A kind of anger is developing among the youth. There is greater unrest among the youth, especially the educated youth because of this paradoxical phenomenon that we have created. Therefore, if education has to be meaningful to the society, whether it is free or compulsory, it has to be given in a relevant system.

Madam, another point that makes this Resolution more imperative is that today we have produced large amounts of disparities, disparities both in literacy levels as well as in terms of educational empowerment and accomplishment. Can we say that the educational levels in rural areas are the same as the educational levels in urban areas? There are vast differences in terms of literacy itself. It is not uniform. You may say that it is 64 per cent at the national level according to 2001 Census. But do you have 64 per cent literacy in a village in Bihar or in a village in Andaman and Nicobar Islands or in a village in Uttar Pradesh? It is just an average. It does not take into account the disparities. You take the literacy levels of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the one hand and the literacy levels of non-SC/ST communities and others on the other hand. There are great disparities. You take male-female literacy levels. There are differences even today.

So, when these disparities exist, one way of narrowing the gap, narrowing the disparity is to expedite the process of free and compulsory education to everybody, especially to the rural children. Rural children have not yet understood the significance of education and they will always have an opportunity cost towards going for a job rather than going to the school. We must inculcate a sense of significance among the rural people and girls. Of course, education level of girls is increasing, but still the poorer communities, the downtrodden communities and the backward communities have not

come out of the cobwebs of backwardness. Even today, the parents feel that once they have a daughter she is a burden on them. They feel that the moment she attains puberty she should be married. Why should I educate her? Why should I spend my hard-earned resources on her and then get her married? So, better let me not educate her, take her as a housemaid and get her three meals a day somehow. So, this is the tendency that is prevailing. How can we motivate these people to send their daughters to schools? This can be done only through free and compulsory education. You must bring a legislation to punish the parents who are not sending their girls or their children to schools. That is the meaning of compulsory education. I hope Mr. K.S. Rao will agree with me.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): He is a Ph.D..

PROF. M. RAMADASS: Of course he is not unemployed. I was mentioning about Ph.D scholars who are unemployed or working as Elementary School Teachers. I have all respects for Mr. K.S. Rao, more than a doctorate would command respect.

Dr. K.S. Rao is an enlightened Member.

Therefore, we have to bridge these gaps in literacy levels, gaps in educational advancement, achievements and accomplishments and the only way to do is to provide free and compulsory education.

Coming to the uniformity of education, this is the most important need of the day today, once we accept that education is an earner. Suppose, I have studied PhD and I get a job. I get a Rs.20,000 as a salary. I get Rs.20,000 because of my education. So, education enables me to earn. So, I become an earner. Suppose, my neighbour does not get education, he is not able to get Rs.20,000. Therefore, his income is zero and my income is Rs.20,000. So, inequality in income comes. So, the disparity in income distribution becomes true, becomes uneven because of unevenness of education. Therefore, education must be considered in its totality and it can set right inequalities in the economy, in income, in employment, etc. provided it is given in the proper way.

Madam, today, we have a variegated system of education. In one particular Union Territory, you have ten types of education, which are not easily comparable. You have regional medium language schools, you have English

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medium schools, you have play-way method schools, you have memory-based schools, you have Government schools, you have private schools, you have CBSE system and all kinds of systems are prevailing.

What is happening there is that a boy who comes after Twelfth Standard is not of the same calibre and character because they get different kinds of education and this would be contributing to greater inequalities in the society. If you consider the premise that education is equaliser of opportunities, different systems of education are working against the interest of the society by producing greater inequalities.

Today, you see the system, as Dr. Rao has said, that people who are educated in the English Convent Schools go into IITs and IIMs. They get their education out of the finances of the Government, which comes out of the taxpayers' money. But after getting their education, what kind of national commitment they have to this country? Instead of working here, even at the fag end of the course, they get an employment outside. They go and contribute to that country.

We are proud to say that India has third largest reservoir of scientific and technical manpower. We use that word. But where is that scientific and technical manpower and where were they produced? They were produced on the Indian soil, by using the resources of the country. But they are working elsewhere, contributing to the development of other country. Russia, at least, have acknowledged that its development was due to the technocrats of India, but many countries have not acknowledged.

Today, our IT professionals are contributing to whom? Not greatly to this country. Why? It is because you have given ivory tower education to these people. But their own friends and brethren are languishing in the schools and colleges in the rural areas not knowing even the very basics of education. Who is responsible for this? It is not individuals who are responsible. It is the Government which has perpetuated and produced this vicious circle of producing variegated education.

SHRI K.S. RAO (Eluru): We are responsible.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: Yes, we are responsible, the policy makers, including you and me and the Government. Therefore, it is high time that we should bring a uniform

system of education. Of course, in a very large and diverse society like ours with 18 languages, with different cultures, with different modes, it would be very difficult to bring exactly a uniform system of education in this country.

But at least we should move towards a reasonable uniformity. At least within a State, we should be able to ensure uniform education. Inter-State similarity and inter-State dissimilarity should be smaller, should be kept at the lowest level, and we should be able to do a great service in that way only.

Then, all said and done, I agree with Dr. K.S. Rao that skill-based education should be given to children. Madam Chairman, I would like to cite an instance from America. You know why America has developed so fast. It is because of the concept of their community colleges, which is yet to be learnt by the Ministry of Human Resource Development of India. Fifty-four per cent of the students in the American colleges go into the community college system there. The community college system provides skill-based education, relevant education, employment-oriented education, and once you finish your one-year course, you immediately get a job and enter into the economy, enter into the society. He is contributing to the development of the economy. The percentage of unemployed is almost 'zero'. It is 'zero' amongst the graduates who are coming out of the community colleges, and it is that institution which has catalyzed the development of America. Why do we not ape that model? We, in the Pondicherry University, introduced a first community college. I had the credit of being the Director of that community college. We wrote a report to the Ministry of Human Resource Development and to the University Grants Commission asking them to follow this principle, study the mechanism of the community college and introduce at least one community college in a district. I would like to assure the hon. Minister that no student coming out of community college will be useless; everybody will be useful in some avocation or other according to the way in which he is educated. So, if that kind of education is brought even at the secondary level, it is possible. You ask a student to choose a course of his own according to his skills, according to his innate abilities, and according to his future planning and goals. He would be able to devote his full attention on his studies. Instead you dump on him something which he does not want to study and you compel him to study something which is not innate to him. So, we should be able to go into the mode of a choice-based credit system wherever it is possible. The choice-based credit system

says that you allow the student to choose a course of his own either in the schools or in the colleges or in the University. Do you not think that it would be more advantageous? Do you not think that we produce students who will have a sense of belonging to education? Instead of making him an alien to education, make him have a sense of belonging to education. I have chosen this topic, I have chosen computer education, and so, I have to study; I have chosen History and so, I have to study; I have chosen Economics and, therefore, I have to study; I have chosen Econometrics and, therefore, I have to study. If that sense of fulfilment comes, naturally every student would be productive and useful not only to himself but also to the society.

Therefore, Madam Chairman, keeping all these issues, I think, it is not only with respect to the Resolution as such but also the education system today needs a vast revamping, and I would feel that the Government should work out what is called a 'common school system'. It is not impossible. It is quite possible. You associate people who realistically understand the Indian society and the Indian milieu. You may even constitute a Committee of the Parliament Members. You include Dr. K.S. Rao, myself and others who can contribute to you. We will give you beautiful suggestions which you can incorporate. Please do not think that people who are outside the House are alone intelligent or more competent and the people here are alone more competent and more educated. Everywhere you find talents. We are all people working with the students, with the society and with the people. So, we know what education in action, not inaction, and we know education in action.

Therefore, we would be able to give you fruitful suggestions to revamp the system of education. Once the system of education is revamped, I hope that India would really reach into a zenith of its glory, zenith of its development. Education is the only catalyst of development. The Ministry of Human Resources Development must take the initiative. All other things can follow once education is given. With right of education, right of values to people, you can produce good Indian citizens, not criminals, but you would create higher generations — we can see generations of Mahatma Gandhi; we can see generations of Ambedkar; and we can see generations of Jawaharlal Nehru if only education is taken on the right lines.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. You have made very good points and suggestions on this very important Resolution.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Madam, this Resolution moved by Shri Ram Kripal Yadav is a very effective Resolution. The House urges upon the Government to take effective steps to provide free, compulsory and uniform education up to Higher Secondary level in the country.

So, I would confine myself from Primary Education to Higher Secondary Education. I would not like to make an ingress into Higher Education because that is a complete different subject altogether, different ambit altogether.

Madam, it has been seen that since Independence we followed a pattern of education known as Macaulay Form of Education where three streams of Higher Education came into existence gradually with the Boards of the States. One was the Indian Council of Secondary Education (ICSE), second was the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), and the third was Higher Secondary Education of various States. So, these were the three streams from where a child could pass his Higher Secondary Education and go in for a higher education.

So, if you start comparing these three types of education, that is, ICSE, CBSE and the State pattern of education, you will see that out of these three types of education, the one, which comparatively ranked first till 1969-70 was the ICS Education. Then, the CBSE started strengthening itself. It started being more competitive with the ICSE. Then, the States gradually picked up. But here, I would like to say that the Secondary Education imparted in the States is in a very bad state of affairs. Also, the education imparted through the Kendriya Vidyalayas and the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas requires more attention and care.

Madam, you would find that in most of the backward States, the level of education is really down. The barometer or the graph of education in the backward States is down. The graph of women literacy in the backward States is really down. So, these Vidyalayas have to strengthen themselves properly.

So, it is my ardent request to the hon. Minister that these Navodaya Vidyalayas and the Kendriya Vidyalayas,

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

which are located in backward areas, should be strengthened. For example, I come from the Kalahandi, one of the Districts of KVK, which is one of the most backward Districts in the country. There, the Kendriya Vidyalaya is not declared as a Hard Station. There are no teachers available. With great difficulty, after much persuasion and request to the hon. Minister and the HRD Ministry, I could manage to get the Principal there. Similar is the case with Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya there. It has not been declared as a Hard Station, whereas the other Departments of the Central Government, namely, Doordarshan, All India Radio have been declared as Hard Stations. My point is that these are also Central Government sponsored schemes and they should declare them also as Hard Stations.

Here, Madam Chairperson, I would like to say and I hope that this discussion will go a long way in establishing firmly the right of education which was enshrined in the Constitution during the last NDA Government, and it made education for children from the age of 6-14 years compulsory. It made it free and compulsory. That is enshrined in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. When secondary education starts, that should also be made compulsory and free. I am happy that in this Budget, this time the hon. Finance Minister has provided or has given provision for additional Class VIII, middle school, so that higher education could start from there.

I was hearing my previous speaker. He gave a marathon and a wonderful speech. But he stressed mostly upon the higher education part. I agree with him on one point, and I think the entire House will also agree that the aptitude of our children, who are studying, should be carefully studied. By the time they reach Class IX or Standard IX, their aptitude should be carefully studied and observed by the *Gurus*, like it was done in the *Guru Shiksha Parampara* in the olden days of the ancient epics. *Guru Shiksha Prampara* is the ethics and ethos of our education system in this country. So, teachers should observe how the children are growing, what aptitude the child has and in which line of education will he shine and serve the nation to a great deal because, eventually, the education, which is given to our children, will cater to the need of various requirements of the country. It may be for military service, social service, medical service, doctors and to so many vocations. If I name them, it will take a long time. So, they will meet these requirements. So, a student or a child has to be created, mentally and physically developed and tuned to the times where he is

about to serve the nation. Therefore, this is a good Resolution.

Regarding uniformity in education, I think, that is also a good idea. But if you go to the Eighth Schedule, there are so many regional languages. So, to bring uniformity in education, we should have one, single language right from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and from Gujarat to Assam. I think the mother of all languages is Sanskrit which has got a raw deal after Independence. This has not been recognised properly also. So, Sanskrit, which is the mother of all languages, should be made a compulsory subject up to higher secondary education because during our time when we were studying, Sanskrit was there up to Class VII. I passed out from the Senior Cambridge School long back in 1969 from Delhi. Therefore, Madam, I would like to say here that our children have to be built, have to be educated according to the need of the hour and to take care of the crisis through which the country is passing, we have to have proper infrastructure in schools.

So, when I see Shrimati Meira Kumar, the hon. Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, I am reminded about those children with disabilities, retarded children and blind children. Those children are not getting the proper type of education. In my district, I am running a blind school, and there, education is given up to Class VII. I have been requesting the Ministry umpteen times to kindly give the status of higher secondary school. Also, the Governor of Orissa had visited that school and he had promised that he would take all steps to upgrade it to a high school. But till now it has not been done. I have been fighting for this.

Then, I am running a mentally retarded school for mentally retarded children in my constituency. It is known as Chetna. The children are doing very well. But these physically challenged children could be an asset to our country, and they can play a major role in the IT sector, in the telecommunication sector and also in teaching other handicapped children to lead a normal life. So, they should also be given due importance, which, I feel, this Government is not giving because while reviewing the provisions for the handicapped children in the Committee meeting, I found that the budgetary provisions are very low.

How do you expect that these children can come up and go shoulder to shoulder with the other children of the society?

Madam, this Resolution deals with higher secondary education. To strengthen the higher secondary education, we must take good steps. We have given mid-day meals scheme. We have started extending mid-day meals also to students up to Class 10. With this, I believe, more students will come to the schools. But what about the quality of the meal that is given in this scheme? There is no protein value. The money which is allotted for the diet for this scheme is abysmally low. Today, if you go to SC/ST hostels, you will see that the dietary provision there is very minimal, it is horrible. That food is not even given to the animals. Here the rich people give that much to their dogs.

If you go to the rural areas or to tribal areas you will see that the mid-day meals are of very low quality. The quality should be enhanced. Our young students belonging to the harijans and the tribals should be given good food and made strong. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI B. MAHTAB: Why do you not invite the Minister?

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Yes, I am requesting the hon. Minister. I will be grateful if she comes. I also invite the hon. Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment to come to Kalahandi. Her father late Jagjivan Ramji had gone so many times to Kalahandi. He was very close to the Party then.

Madam Chairperson, here I would like to say one thing about skill development. Skill development among the children is a major thing now. With the amount of industrialisation coming into the country, there are no skills in the country. There are no semi-skilled people also. The ITIs should work for skill development in the rural sector and right from the primary level to the middle school level, the children should be acquainted with skill development instruments and toys etc. so that by the time they achieve high school education they will have an interest for a particular type of trade where they could further excel in higher education. If they are not good students, they become dropouts and could achieve a skill through the ITIs or through the tool rooms.

We do not have enough tool rooms in the country. We have only six tool rooms in the whole country. We have a population of 110 crore people. The investments are coming into billions of rupees into the country. But we have only six tool rooms. Each tool room has a capacity of only 100 children. How do you expect the

skilled workforce to come up in the rural areas to meet the demand which is coming up in the future? I insist that this technical education and skill development should start from the primary level to the higher secondary level.

I remember one thing in our school days. I do not know if that trade is still there. There used to be a hobby centre in every school. I do not know whether it is functional now or not. There was another class for moral education. Today you see that the society is so much divided that you see Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, everybody raising the slogans. Let us remember the words of Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda said everybody has got a religion and they are like streams, they all flow into the ocean. When they flow into the ocean, all the religions seek one goal – the Brahma or the God or the Bhagwan or Jesus Christ or Allah. But all the rivers lead to that *Brahm Gyan*. It may be any religion.

Therefore, this moral education is a very important factor, a very important part of education in the school days when we were studying. But I do not see the moral education classes now where you could build up young, secular children knowing about secular religion and not squabbling at the top for petty political gains.

Madam Chairperson, you have given me lot of time. There is a lot to speak. If you start adding higher education, it becomes longer. So, I would like to restrict my speech to higher secondary education. I would plead with the hon. Minister through this Private Member's Resolution which is a very important Resolution. Hon. Member Shri Ram Kripal Yadav brought it and I thank him for that. I plead with the hon. Minister that they will have some concern and think about the poor States like Orissa and particularly my KBK region. Besides, they must strengthen the educational system in Orissa. Now we have got 13 new districts in Orissa which came up in the last about ten years.

In certain new districts, we do not have Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Jawahar Vidyalayas. So, I would request the hon. Minister to establish one Kendriya Vidyalaya in Nawapara district because in my district, there is a Navodaya Jawahar Vidyalaya and a Kendriya Vidyalaya. So, I would request for a Kendriya Vidyalaya in Nawapara district.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Shri Deo, please stop for a while. The time for discussion on this Resolution is over. We may extend it by half-an-hour.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister that when they establish Kendriya Vidyalayas in future, a Kendriya Vidyalaya may be established in Nawapara district, and a Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya in my district Kalahandi and in all the 30 districts of Orissa.

Also, they should open more Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh where the illiteracy among the women is highest in the country while they are developed and richer States because of their closeness to Delhi or because of their natural assets. The States like Orissa, Bihar and Jharkhand are totally neglected.

[Translation]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura): Madam Chairman, I would like to raise certain points here with your permission.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: All right.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: I am grateful to Shri Ram Kripal Yadavji and would like to thank him from the core of my heart for introducing a very important Private Member's Bill for providing free and compulsory education at higher secondary level. This is a very important issue. Education is not in good shape in the country. The Government educational institutes are not running well. If we look at the condition of old Government colleges, we will find that they are in bad shape. I have visited many places. I have seen it in Uttar Pradesh. There were many good Government colleges in my parliamentary constituency, but today their buildings are in a dilapidated condition, there is no sufficient staff and teachers over there. Earlier there were very good playgrounds but now they do not exist there. The condition is getting worse day by day. It is very astonishing and shameful also. We used to provide good educational facilities over there, but today our children cannot get good education, even if they wish. It seems that the number of students is declining day by day. The reason behind it is that, the students are not getting good educational facilities. On the other side, the number of

private educational institutes is increasing. What is satisfying is that, the private institutes opened, in urban or rural areas are providing good and satisfactory education and those institutes have good number of students on their roll. But the people from ordinary families face difficulties due to high amount of fees charged by these institutions. The Government have been asked to provide compulsory higher education. The Government should give special attention in this regard. The hon'ble Minister is present here.

I remember that in 1984, when I was Member of Parliament, hon'ble Rajiv Gandhiji was our Prime Minister. At that time, the discussion on education policy was held and probably Shri Pantji was the Education Minister. It was said as to why not nationalisation of education should be done? We should undertake nationalisation of the education. As it has been observed and I have also mentioned that on the one side the situation of Government colleges or institutions is bad, whereas on the other side, in case of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas which are run by the Union Government, the level of education imparted over there is better. They are most sought after institutions. Many people approach us to get admission in those schools. But there are certain limitations. The wards of officers and employees of Central Government are given priority in admission over there. Besides, the wards of defence personnel are also given preference in admission in those institutions. However, I would like to tell you as to why the level of education in those schools is better? Such people of the society send their wards in Government schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas and Sarvodaya Vidyalayas to get education. One of the reasons for this is that teachers there can be transferred anywhere in the country. If a complaint is filed, they can be transferred even to Kanyakumari or Assam. They can be transferred anywhere in East, North, West or South of the country. Therefore, they are afraid of transfer. But we do not have any such system. If we see the condition of Primary or Middle school, we will feel sorry. Even after 60 years of independence, we find our students studying under the trees. The buildings constructed over there are in dilapidated condition, there is no boundary wall. Many a times, I have got an opportunity to visit schools where our children study. I visit my parliamentary constituency

very often Pigs roam freely there and heaps of garbage are lying there. The villagers have turned those buildings in lavatories, because there are no lavatories there. There is no clean drinking water available for school children. Health facilities are not available and there is no physical education. There is no playground. Then, how can we tell those children to overcome their psychelity. I understand that a good atmosphere which should be made available to children is getting vitiated day by day. Teachers do not turn up in schools. Besides, the schools having requirement of 4 or 6 teachers are having only two teachers.

Madam Chairman, I remember when last time I contested the elections, during the election campaign, a child pulled my Kurta and asked me in Braj language—'Marvendraji, if you win the elections, whether these teachers will turn up in schools to teach. See the feelings and agony of the child who wants to study, but the teachers do not turn up in schools. They do politics, cultivate their fields or are remain in contact with the politicians, because they are teachers, and have influence in the socieity. We do not talk of dismissing them. But if they are transferred, we do not let it happen and want that the teacher should remain in that school, because they are our men. We have our own interest in it, because we take work from them for votes. Through you, I would like to submit that there should be serious consideration about this. Children are backbones of our country, they are future of our country. If we do not impart good education to them, how can we progress.

We agree that we have made a lot of progress in regard to private education. We have made a lot of progress in technical education. If you go from Delhi to Mathura, Agra, you will see good schools, technical education institutes, I.T. education institute, where quality education is imparted through MBA courses etc. on both sides of road. But fees of those schools are very high. Alongwith it, I would like to say that there are many such centers where certificates are given in exchange of money, but there is no teaching work over there. The students of my constituency come to me with computer diploma for jobs. If we send them anywhere alongwith recommendation letter they are interviewed and entrance exam is taken, but they do not qualify the exam because

they do not even know basics of it. But they are having certificates. The Government would have to look into the matter as to whether the organisations to which licence or permission have been granted, are really securing future of these youths or imparting education to them or not. The Government should set up a Committee in this regard.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The inquiry of private institutions should be conducted.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: A Committee should be set up in this regard. The officers appointed by the Government come from Jaipur to conduct B.Ed. exams in colleges which are having building on papers only. Licences are given to such institutes because they give bribe and the situation is such that in absence of building they are running school from small places. There are no students, they take money from them, the owners of those organizations are earning crores of rupees. Fake institutions are mushrooming one after another. Is it not the duty of this House, or hon'ble Minister to conduct an inquiry and check the practice of playing with their future.

I do not know about other States, but I know that centres are sold in Uttar Pradesh, I know many such schools, whether they are intermediate or private institutions which are involved in such practices. Private institutions are sold in lakhs of rupees and it is said that from District Education Officer to Education Minister of State and many high ranking officers are involved in this racket, who are paid bribe of crores of rupees so that their centre may fall in remote areas where help in copying is given. Rs. 3000 per subject are changed from the guardians of students and the rates of first division, second division or distinction are fixed. The Government must conduct an inquiry now because presently exams are going on in my area. When I tried to take up the matter with the District Education Officer, I came to know that he was helping examinees in copying. The local administration is also involved in it, everybody is given bribe. Whether it is intermediate exam, high school exam, B.A. exams, B.Sc. exams or M.Sc. exam or technical education exams, copying is going on. Why are we pushing the futrue of our children towards darkness? Why is our Government not paying attention to it? It needs to be considered very seriously.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Mere education is not enough; skill development must be there.

[Translation]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Madam, it is happening there openly. All know it, you too might have known about it. It might be happening in your area also. It is happening in several states where a teacher is appointed but he does not go to school because he gets a salary of Rs. 8000 per month and he keeps another teacher in his own place for Rs. 2000 per month. He remains at his home and the other teacher goes to school to teach the children. Later on, it is found that he further outsources the task of teaching to another third teacher. A number of such cases have taken place. They do not teach children at all. The teachers do not go to school. The children return to their houses. The whole atmosphere of education continues to be vitiated. I would, therefore like to submit through you that we should give a very serious consideration to it otherwise the child who is future of our country might be deprived of education. May be, children of a few wealthy people receive good education in good schools and colleges but the people belonging to the middle class, backward classes, the tribals and the poor people have also got rights under the Constitution so that they become good citizens after receiving good education, achieve higher social position and become well qualified but who is responsible if they are not given good education? It is our responsibility. It is responsibility of this august House. It is the responsibility of our Government. We must address it. It is a very serious matter.

[English]

It is said that "health is wealth" It is also said:

"When wealth is lost, nothing is lost;
when health is lost, something is lost;
when character is lost, everything is lost."

[Translation]

If we do not get education in schools, if children are not given an opportunity to build their character then

wherever we go whether we join politics, administration or any business, we won't be successful.

18.00 hrs.

We are lacking in character rather national character. We cannot achieve anything if we are not committed to our country. Our society is replete with a lot of disparities. We people are in politics. Various allegations ranging from corruption dishonesty to elitism are levelled against us. The reason is that we are lacking in character. We have observed that corruption is rampant in the administration. If we turn to business we see on T.V. and in newspapers that fake medicines are seized. Who is manufacturing spurious drugs? These are the people who albeit want to give life back to the society but a poor man dies if he consumes that spurious drug. What could be a greater offence than that of this untoward incident? We lack in national character. Our engineers build bridges. The bridge which is supposed to survive for 10 years collapses so early. Today we observe that construction cost of the roads being constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojna is Rs. 22 lakhs but condition of these roads is also quite inferior. When I had reported about it an enquiry committee visited that place. I received a phone call that an amount of Rs. 60 lakhs was being collected as donation in my constituency of Mathura. When I asked about the identity of the caller, he refused to reveal the same and he told that he was a contractor but the Committee which would be coming in connection with enquiry will be given Rs. 60 lakhs. The enquiry report was submitted and no fault was found therein. The reason for this is our education. Quality education needs to be provided in our society. ...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: But moral education should also be imparted.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Quality education should be imparted be it physical education, moral education which will build character of children in every way. We are talking of quality education which must be imparted. Nothing can be achieved unless education is nationalised by the Government. It is my suggestion that the Central Government should pay attention to it. Teachers should be paid higher salaries. They should also be transferred. Many people have suggested it to

me that primary education can only be reformed when teachers are paid higher salaries. The Government should spend more funds on education so that children can at least have a shelter on their heads when they study during rainy and winter seasons.

Madam Chairman, our Government have provided meals for children. We have an organisation in our area called 'Akshya Patra' which I had once visited, it arranged food for 70 thousand children last year. It had prepared very good food for children which I had also eaten. It is thinking of preparing food for one lakh children, next time. Their mobile van carries food. It has double benefit. Firstly it has enhanced the attendance of children in schools and secondly, those children who were hardly able to get food once a day are now able to get very nutritious food. I have visited such schools and I have found that children are taking interest in their studies. The performance of such schools in terms of results has increased because they are having good food.

Madam Chairman, Sir, I have seen many schools where the N.G.O.s are not as good as the 'Akshay Patra'. The state of affairs there is such that there are only two teachers—one principal and one teacher. There, they themselves cook food. Their whole day is spent in cooking food. Some children are able to get it while some are left without food. We read in newspapers that some children fall ill due to sub-standard food. The Union Government allocates funds for good food for children but it should also ensure that the funds are not misused. Funds should be provided to the N.G.Os. The N.G.Os like Akshya Patra have initiated work in many districts. Many more N.G.O.s can be roped in to see that optimum utilisation of funds is made and good food is provided to the children and number of children in schools is increased and good exam results are achieved and children are helped in becoming well qualified.

To conclude with these words, I whole heartedly support the Bill and hope that in future the Ministry of Human Resource Development will think of nationalisation of education while laying emphasis on the kind of education which was initiated during the regime of hon'ble late Shri Rajiv Gandhi. By doing so, we can provide quality and healthy education in every nook and corner of India be it urban or rural, tribal or downtrodden area

so that our children can become good citizens of the country and the country makes progress in the right direction.

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): Madam Chairman Sir, I have gone through the discussion in the House on the Private Member's resolution moved by Sri Ramkripal Yadav on 31st August, 2007. In that resolution he has urged upon the Government to take required steps to ensure that free, compulsory and uniform education up to the higher Secondary level is provided to the children.

I may not be in a position to by name answer all the apprehensions that have been raised by the hon. Members, but at the onset would like to thank Shri Ramkripal Yadav for having brought in this very important Resolution. I would also like to thank Shri Aaron Rashid, Dr. K.S. Manoj, Shri Thawar Chand Gehlot, Shri Mahtab, Shri Shailendra Kumar, Shri R.P. Verma, Dr. Sebastian Paul, Shri Chandrappan, Shri K.S. Rao, Prof. Ramadass, Shri B.K. Deo, and Kunwar Manvendra Singh for having actively participated in the deliberations and for having given their valuable suggestions in this regard.

Let me at the outset reiterate that education to us is a matter of faith and we have always accorded utmost importance to education because we definitely believe that education is the panacea for all our problems and our difficulties, as has been emphasized by so many of my hon. colleagues. Even during our freedom movement, our national leaders including Gandhiji had emphasized that education needs to be the basis of all our development and growth. In the Constitution which was adopted soon after our Independence, our leaders took care to ensure that we did provide to meet the educational needs of the children of our country and also the requirements of our country. However, our financial and infrastructural constraints did not permit us to actually devise or formulate any grandiose schemes or even provide ambitious priorities for our educational system. We started with a very humble beginning by making provisions in Part IV of the Constitution which ensured to provide free and universal primary education for all our

[Shrimati D. Purandeswari]

children within 10 years of the commencement of the Constitution. But we have not remained in this position and there has been a sea change in our approach and conception of what the educational system needs to be for our country. We had adopted a federal form of Government wherein the State Governments are free to function within their respective jurisdiction, with a fair degree of autonomy. Since it was thought and felt that a uniform pattern of education would not only be difficult but would also not be desirable. Education was, therefore, allotted to the State Governments in the constitutional scheme of distribution of power between the Union and the State Governments.

It was also felt that every State could decide for itself what would ideally be suitable for the States and they would come out with a system which would cater more to the local needs, requirements and resources of that particular State. We were quite conscious that so far as the education system was concerned, we should always settle for the best.

I would just like to go back slightly. The National Policy of Education, which was introduced in 1986 and later modified in 1992, which envisages a national system of education based on a national curriculum framework which would contain a common core along with other components that are flexible. The National Curriculum Framework, 2005, which is NCF 2005, has been formulated through a wide participatory process where the concerns of all the stakeholders were actually taken into consideration. The NCF 2005 envisages strengthening the national system of education in a pluralistic society based on the values enshrined in the Constitution of India, such as, social justice, equality and secularism. The NCERT has prepared the syllabi for all Classes and in the light of NCF 2005, the State Governments are expected to revise syllabus for the respective State Boards based on the NCF 2005.

It is, therefore, not correct to say that we have not attained sufficient progress in the field of education. Now, if we go back to our literacy figure, wherein our literacy was around 18.33 per cent when we attained our Independence or rather in 1951 when our literacy rates were as low as 18.33 per cent. In 2004, according to the National Sample Survey, our literacy is around 67.30 per

cent wherein the male literacy is 77 per cent; and the female literacy is 57 per cent. We must realize that the educational development in a country as large as India which was subjected to exploitation during centuries of colonial rule, not only was but continues to be a gigantic task and there is after all no magic wand that can alter the system overnight. The first important step that was adopted in this direction was the 86th Constitution Amendment Act making free and compulsory education for all children between 6 and 14 years of age a fundamental right. This constitutional amendment was brought in 2002. The new article 21A which made right to education a Fundamental Right has not been operationalised as yet but let me inform the august House, through you, Madam, that we are definitely actively on the job and I have reasons to believe that the legislation would soon be brought before the House. Instantly, there has been no provision that has been made in the Constitution which would say that secondary and higher secondary education made be made free and compulsory, which is not a constitutional mandate that we have. Even as we have a constitutional mandate which says that free and compulsory education needs to be provided for all those children between the ages of 6 and 14 within our country.

But for universalisation of elementary education which we have already been doing in the country, there are three major components which we go by. The first one would be the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, the second one would be the Mid-day Meal Scheme and of course, the third would be the Kasturba Gandhi *Balika Vidyalyayas*.

Turning to the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, this was implemented in the year 2001-02 with the basic objective of universalising enrolment in elementary education, besides enrolment, even retention by the year 2010. When we go into the achievements under the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, the gross enrolment ratio in 2004-05 is 108 per cent for the primary level and 70.5 per cent for the higher primary level. Madam, 98 per cent of the rural population have access to primary schools within one kilometre. This is one of the norms. According to the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, there has to be a school every one kilometre to make elementary education accessible for the children.

Out of school children, the percentage has come down to less than four per cent of the population. Out of school children were about 4.4 crore in 2001 and today they are around 76 lakh. Yes, we do agree that these are the children which we would call the hard to reach children, probably children belonging to migrant families but our efforts are still on to ensure that this number would also come down.

Madam, 8.81 lakh additional teachers have been recruited up to 31st December 2007; 1.87 lakh new schools have been opened up to 31st December 2007; and 7.56 lakh additional class rooms have been constructed up to 31st of December 2007.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for the Resolution is over. If the House agrees we may extend the time till the Minister's reply is over.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Madam.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: It is agreed. Madam, you may continue.

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: The other two very important components in *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* would be the Education Guarantee Scheme and the alternative innovative education. These two schemes primarily focus on those children who do not go to the school or are unable to go to the school. These two schemes actually provide bridge courses to ensure that children out of schools are actually brought into these centres, are given bridge course and once they are well equipped then they are mainstreamed into education. These two components have been very effective in ensuring that out of school children are actually brought into the main stream of education.

This laudable *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* is supported by probably the largest meal scheme that we have in our country, which is the Mid Day Meal Scheme. Today, it covers 9.7 crore students in all the blocks up to class five and 1.67 crore students in 3,479 educational backward blocks up to class eight. This is up to 2007-08. Now, the Mid Day Meal Scheme has been extended to cover all the children in all the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* schools, the Government-aided and the

Government schools up to class eight. Therefore, this large meal scheme today would cover around 13.9 crore children all over the country.

Turning to the nutrition that is given to the children through the Mid Day Meal Scheme, the Government provides grains free of cost to the States to cook for the children. Conversion cost is provided to ensure that the children receive the required amounts of Carbohydrates and Protein in their food. Definitely, through you, Madam, I would like to apprise my hon. colleagues that unless there is community participation I do not think this scheme can actually do well to the extent that we would want this scheme to do.

There are Parent Teachers Associations that are formed in the schools to ensure that the parents come to the school, check the meal to ensure that this meal is cooked in good hygienic conditions and nutritious food is served to the children. So, I would request my hon. colleagues, through you Madam, that if they could bring that kind of pressure on the State Governments to ensure that the Parent Teachers Associations are actually strengthened and are functional for the welfare and the good of our own children.

Turning to the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalyayas, these are residential schools at the upper primary level for girls predominantly belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and the minority communities.

These are implemented in the educationally backward blocks where female literacy rate is actually much below the national average and there is a wide gender gap in literacy which is above the national average. This is already being implemented in 24 States and 2180 KGBVs have been sanctioned upto March, 2007 and the number operational upto 31st December, 2007 is 2180 KGBVs. Now, 410 new KGBVs would also be set up under the revised guidelines which would be effective from the 1st of April, 2008. We already have sanctioned new KGBVs to some districts and this scheme covers 1,82,960 girls. This is the extent that the KGBVs are functioning.

So far as universalisation of secondary and higher secondary education which is the thrust of the resolution that has been brought in by my hon. colleague,

[Shrimati D. Purandeswari]

Shri Ramkripal Yadav, is concerned, there is a 29 per cent drop-out rate between classes I and V, a 51 per cent drop-out rate in classes I and VIII and 62 per cent drop-out between classes I and X. The gross enrolment ratio that we have for classes IX to XII is around 40 per cent. So, it is essential that even as we talk of universalising secondary and higher secondary education, we need to ensure that we address these problems that still exist in the elementary education. It is after all the children who come out of elementary education go into secondary and higher secondary education. Therefore, universalisation of secondary education could be definitely tackled or rather answered after we have strengthened the lacunae that we have in the elementary education. Even then, the Central Government has taken several initiatives in the secondary and higher secondary levels of education in the shape of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathans that we have and also the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas that are there in the secondary education level.

Now, there are 554 Navodaya Vidyalayas which is one per district and 972 Kendriya Vidyalayas which are primarily meant for transferable Central Government employees. But this does not mean that the general students belonging to the citizens of the area do not get into the Kendriya Vidyalayas. There is a percentage of seats which is allocated to the children from the local area also. About 44,000 Government secondary schools are to be strengthened in the ensuing Eleventh Five Year Plan. There is a thought process to establish 6000 model schools to be opened at the block level, one in each block, which would actually be model schools for the schools in that area to follow. New schools would be provided in such areas where there are no schools that exist. So, the 6000 model schools would first cater to such areas which do not have schools and the rest would be distributed. An amount of Rs. 130 crores has been provided in the budget for setting up Navodaya Vidyalayas in 20 districts with a large concentration of SCs and STs.

Coming to the aspect of free education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, that is elementary education, is free for all children between the ages of six and fourteen. Coming to the secondary level of education, education in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas is again free for children because these schools basically cater to the children belonging to

the disadvantaged sections of society. In the Kendriya Vidyalayas there is no fee as such which is charged from the students but there is a Vidyalaya Vikas Nidhi which is collected from the child which is to the tune of Rs. 140 and this is basically for the upgradation of laboratories, keeping of libraries and so on and so forth.

As I had mentioned earlier, education being a State subject, it is for the States to consider if they would want secondary education to be free. Uniformity in education is the other thrust area in the Resolution. India, as we all are aware, is a country of great diversity. The diversity is not only geographical but it also cuts across religions, cultures, traditions, languages, etc. Therefore, taking diversity into consideration, uniform syllabus may not be acceptable to the sentiments of so many people. That is why every State has its own State syllabus. Every State, taking into consideration the sentiments and the sensitivities of its own State, incorporates them into its syllabus. Therefore, a uniform syllabus at this point in time would not be desirable and would also not be possible. However, there is a core curriculum that is provided in the National Curriculum Framework 2005, which is used throughout the country. The States are free to adopt and accept the National Curriculum Framework. There is a uniformity in the education sector in the "ten plus two plus three" system that we follow.

There was a question raised about para teachers. There are today around 10.91 per cent of para teachers in the total number of teachers that we have. The reasons the States have to turn towards para teachers was there was a sudden spurt in the enrolment in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Programme. This has lead to shortage of qualified teachers and which was why para teachers were recruited.

However, even as teachers stepped into service, we ensure that they are given a pre-service training where the teachers are trained for a short period of time. If they are already experienced teachers, then they undergo a training of thirty days. If they are inexperienced, then they do undergo training for sixty days before they come into the profession of teaching in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan schools.

Some of the other concerns that have been raised today were with regard to allocation for education. The

National Common Minimum Programme assured six per cent of GDP allocation for education. We still stand by it. We are still committed to the allocation of six per cent of GDP towards education. But yet the hon. Members would need to keep in mind that six per cent of GDP that we have assured for education is not simply the Government of India's share. But it is the share of both the Government of India and the share of the States put together. Over the years, even as the share of Government of India has been going up, there is a slight decline in the States' share. So, through you, I would request the hon. Members to put pressure on their respective State Governments to ensure that the States do not cut it down and must rather increase it.

The allocation for education between the Tenth and the Eleventh Plan, there has been a considerable increase. Allocation in 2008-09 for elementary education was Rs. 34,400 crore and for 2007-08 it was Rs. 28,674 crore. In terms of percentage of public expenditure, thirteen per cent is the expenditure between the State Governments and the Central Government.

There also has been concerns raised about vocational education wherein it was felt that we have not been doing sufficiently enough to ensure that the skills are upgraded or rather the children are being given skilled development education. There are already 9,500 vocational schools with a capacity of ten lakh students. The Eleventh Plan target is to ensure that 10,000 more vocational schools would be introduced with relevant curriculum and with the relevant courses also. Even in the CBSE there is life-skill education that is provided to children in the classes from six to eight. The thrust of this education is to ensure that children gain an insight into their own personalities besides acquiring and understanding of their environment. This would ensure or rather help the child to actually look into herself or himself, identify the strength and then also identify the interest. So, the child even at the class six in the CBSE schools is exposed to vocational education.

As we are all aware, an ideal education system needs to be pyramidal in shape wherein the broad-based would represent the school education, the middle portion the secondary education and the top those echelon students

who would want to pursue specialized professional or disciplines in education. Unless there is a vocational bias in the secondary education, we would have more and more students transiting into higher education wherein the employment chances would be very narrow. Therefore, realising this that it is very essential that we need to give the right kind of support to vocational education and skill development, the hon. Prime Minister himself has been very keen on the skill development mission, as has been emphasised by my hon. colleague, Shri K.S. Rao. We are also trying to come out with more polytechnic institutions particularly some in public-private partnership to ensure that the disparity between the market requirement and what our institutes are churning out would be filled. So unless there is a public-private partnership, probably this gap could not covered.

Some of the other points which have been raised by Kunwar Manvendra Singh and also by Prof. M. Ramadass, I think, pertain more to the higher education which is beyond the scope of the Private Member's Resolution that has been brought in. There has been a concern raised by my colleague, Shri Bikram Keshari Deo about the children with special needs. An integrated education for disabled children and to mainstream them into regular schools has been a part of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and inclusiveness has been one of the most important focussed areas of our educational policy. Here we have been taking the help and support of the NGOs to identify the children in the districts and bring them to school. We have been ensuring that the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan schools have a barrier-free infrastructure so that these children do not have any difficulty in availing the facilities provided at the school. Madam, work-oriented education is also a part of the school curriculum as per the National curriculum framework 2005. There is an emphasis on moral education where the hon. colleagues have spoken out their concerns about moral education. Education is ethical values, secularism, physical training and sports have all been an integral part of the education system. Shri Deo has also raised concerns about the KGBVs in the State of Orissa. In the State of Orissa, there are 114 KGBVS which are all operational and particularly in the Kalahandi district, there are seven KGBVS which are operational. In the Naupada district, there are 4 KGBVs that are already operational.

[Shrimati D. Purandeswari]

With these words, I think I have answered most of the concerns that have been raised by my colleagues here. I have answered almost everything. I have replied to all the apprehensions and concerns that have been raised by my colleagues.

As I have mentioned earlier, let me once again re-emphasise that education is an article of faith with us. We will not be able to play a very effective role in the emerging scenario when our country is posed for a phenomenal growth. The 21st Century has been universally acknowledged as a knowledge century and if we want India to play a leading role in the global affairs, we must ensure that education should be the focal point of all our programmes and priorities which we are very well seized of.

With these words, I would request the hon. Member Shri Ram Kripal Yadav – I do not see him here – to withdraw his resolution emphasizing that we will take all pro-active steps to improve the educational system keeping in mind the various suggestions that have come from the hon. Members.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: It seems the hon. Minister does not want this to be made free.... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: I never said that we did not want to make it free. I said this: "Let us strengthen elementary education. Let us control the lacunae and firm up the lacunae that exist in the elementary education." Definitely, we will think about higher education.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: She has told about each and every thing.

Hon. Members, I have to inform you that Shri Ram Kripal Yadav who is the mover of this Resolution is not present in the House to exercise his right to reply.

Therefore, the Resolution moved by Shri Yadav has to be put to the vote of the House.

I will, now, put the Resolution regarding free and compulsory education up to higher secondary level moved by Shri Ram Kripal Yadav to the vote of the House.

The question is:

"This House urges upon the Government to take effective steps to provide free, compulsory and uniform education up to Higher Secondary level in the country"

The Resolution was negatived.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, the House will take up Item No. 21

Shrimati Jyotirmoyee Sikdar – not present.

Item No. 22 – Shri Rasheed Masood – not present.

Item No. 23 – Shri Haribhau Rathod.

18.38 hrs.

(II) Legislation for the overall development of persons belonging to Denotified Tribes and Nomadic Tribes

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): Madam Chairman, I beg to move:

"This House expresses its concern over the plight of persons belonging to Denotified tribes and Nomadic tribes including Banjaras and urges the Government to bring forward suitable legislation providing for:

- (i) promotion of educational and economic interests;
- (ii) reservation of posts in the services under the State; and
- (iii) reservation of seats in the House of the People and the State Legislative Assemblies.'

in favour of persons belonging to Denotified tribes and Nomadic tribes including Banjaras and take all necessary steps for their overall development."

Madam Chairman, thank you very much. Through you, I would like to raise the issue of those people who are about 15 crores in the country and 90 percent of them are living below poverty line. I am talking of those people, who are called denotified and nomadic tribes. There should be constitutional provision and constitutional safeguard for improving their educational and economic condition, making reservation of posts in services under the States, reserving seats in Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. The provisions which are applicable to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should also be made applicable to them. This is my proposal. Who are these denotified people? They are those who were notified as a criminal caste by the British Government. This criminal caste law was passed in the year 1871. It was a black and inhuman law. At the time of passage of this bill, Mr. Stephen who was one of the Members, had said in his speech that lawyer is born in a lawyer's house, doctor in doctor's house and thief is born in a thief's house. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Shri Haribhau Rathod, you will continue next time because the time is over

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: No, Madam, I will finish it.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: You will continue next time because you are on your legs

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: All right, Madam, I will continue next time.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to meet on Monday, the 21st April, 2008 at 11 AM.

18.40 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, April 21, 2008/Vaisakha 1, 1930 (Saka).

ANNEXURE I

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