

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Tenth Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, May 3, 2007/Vaisakha 13, 1929 (Saka)

**The Lok Sabha met at one minute past Eleven of the
Clock**

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Question Hour is a very valuable hour.
I have got your notice. Please wait till 12 o'clock.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : Mr.
Speaker, Sir. ...**(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : I will give you opportunity at 12.00
hrs.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad) : Mr. Speaker,
Sir, ...**(Interruptions)**

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you all at 12 o'clock. Thank
you for your co-operation!

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Now only 59 minutes are left. After
59 minutes, I will allow you.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Q. No. 401. Shri Kiren Rijiju.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am committing myself to give you
chance to speak at 12 noon.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad) : Sir, this is
the question of our culture. The world our culture...
(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I am not committing to call you at
number one.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir,
a lot of...**(Interruptions)**

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing will be recorded now, since
I am going to permit it to be raised at 12 o'clock.

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I request you earnestly to raise it after
59 minutes.

**Q.No. 401. Shri Kiren Rijiju — not present. Shri
Dharmendra Pradhan.**

11.04 Hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Ethanol Blended Petrol

+

***401. SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN :**
SHRI KIREN RIJIJU :

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

***Not recorded.**

(a) whether the Government has received representations from various oil companies suggesting the increase in the quantity of ethanol in petrol;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to import ethanol for this purpose

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) further action taken by the Government in this regard?

[English]

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

(a) No, Sir. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas vide Gazette Notification No. G.S.R. 580(E) dated 20.9.2006 has directed oil companies to market 5% Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP), subject to commercial viability and as per Bureau of Indian Standards specifications, in the notified 20 States and 4 Union Territories.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Government have no plans to import ethanol for the Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government had directed the oil companies in 2006 to blend 5 per cent ethanol in their products. What is the present status of the case? Today we are talking about environment and petroleum scarcity in the world and say that its deficiency is increasing and all are talking about bio-diesel and its substitute. The Government had directed

the oil companies to blend five per cent ethanol long ago. I would like to know as to what action has been taken by the oil companies in the regard and if he has reviewed the comparative economic impact with regard to the quality of oil we are importing from abroad and if we could blend five per cent ethanol in the product. Sir, through you, I would like to know what is the progress in this regard for the last 6 months.

MR. SPEAKER : So many questions have been raised on this issue [English] What is the future of this? [Translation] You may answer the questions you like.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Sir, hon'ble member has asked a number of questions today ethanol is needed in the country.

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN : I would like to know as to what action has been taken by the oil companies.

MR. SPEAKER : What are you saying now?

[English]

You are a very astute Member.

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Listen to me first. If the reply does not appeal you, then, you can ask again.

MR. SPEAKER : You need not to talk to him directly.

[English]

You talk to him through me.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Yes, Sir.

[Translation]

Sir, our country has not got a capacity of producing 155 crore litre ethanol. Sixty crore litres are needed for 5 per cent ethanol blending programme. The companies have floated tenders for this. They have considered it and signed

a contract for about 83 crore liters of ethanol out of which 2.4 crore litres of ethanol have also been stored. This contract is for three years and during this period the use of 5 per cent ethanol will be made for blending in Petrol. This is a bye-product of sugar industries as well as of molassis. The Government also believe that it will immensely benefit the farmers. The Government import about-73 per cent oil from abroad. With the use of ethanol, we will have to import less and our foreign exchange reserve will be saved with it. That is why the Government are thinking about it and they are moving in this direction.

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN : Sir, through you, I am not asking so many questions, but a specific question about the oil companies which...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You may ask questions. We are not forbidding you.

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN : Sir, hon'ble Minister has given an evasive reply so far and said that he is taking steps in this direction. He will do it five per cent in three years. Has he imposed a condition of three years that it would be five per cent in three years? His direction was that it would be five per cent every year. Kindly let us know the names of the companies which have been blending ethanol alongwith blend by the percentage thereof.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, each company has its own data and the list is very long. If the hon'ble Member wishes, I can read it out...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You can submit the details to him. [Translation] There is no need of furnishing details here.

(Interruptions)

SHRI DINSHA PATEL : I said that a contract of 83 crore litres had been signed, out of which 2-3 crore litres of ethanol had already been collected...(Interruptions)

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, 5 to 25 per cent ethanol is being used in the world. Huge investment is needed in ethanol production. Ethanol is also produced from sugarcane juice. If ethanol is produced from sugarcane, there can be an investment of 18 to 20 crore. The Government would think there will be more investment after the commitment of using 10-15 per cent of ethanol. Now, there is a crisis of sugar in India due to which farmers are suffering losses. I would like to know from hon. Minister whether the Government are going to make a specific programme or not, for increasing it upto 15 per cent? If not, the reasons therefore.

SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Mr. Speaker, now the use of ethanol is 5 per cent. We are thinking about increasing it upto 10 per cent. All the companies have been asked about the necessary changes in carburettor of their vehicles being manufactured by them and the benefits likely to be reaped with these changes. By the way, there is a need to provide benefits to the farmers directly as there is about 25 million tonne sugar production this time and we need only 19 million tonnes. We are exporting 6 million tonnes. About 5 crore farmers and one crore labourers are also likely to be benefited of this. This is why the Government are thinking about it. But it has been said about the thing which is happening technically. It will be considered after the submission of the report whether the blending will be 10 per cent or not.

[English]

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI : Thank you, Sir, I want to ask this from the hon. Minister. We are growing a lot of jatropha plants, and the Government of Chhattisgarh says that they have been running their vehicles with the oil created out of jatropha plants. Is there any movement officially at all to include this in the mix of petrol? Is there any policy regarding petrol being made out of jatropha?

MR. SPEAKER : It is not really related to Ethanol. Do you have any information about it?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA) : Sir, the Government is considering this, but it is too early to take any steps on it. I am saying this because hardly 10 litres were collected when the Government announced about jatropa. Therefore, it will still take sometime for it.

[Translation]

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister has stated in the reply that the Government is not importing ethanol. But on NDTV profit channel a senior officer of his Ministry said that the Government are planning to import ethanol and negotiations are on with the Petrovas Company of Brazil in this regard. Firstly a wrong reply was given.

There is a 610 million litre shortfall of ethanol and it cannot be met by producing ethanol from sugarcane only. The matter of increasing the percentage of blending is being talked about, as Patil Saheb said. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether his Ministry is making any plan in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture so that ethanol may also be produced from agriculture produces or forest produces such as Mahua (*Bassia Latifolia*) forest produces. Its technique is available; is there a plan to produce ethanol from such produces or other agriculture produces, as you are saying the farmer will also get benefits out of it and that could be proved correct.

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, our Ministry has no plan to import ethanol...(Interruptions)

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : But your officials have said this in an interview on NDTA...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot discuss it. He has come to know of it, and he will take necessary action.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Chemical companies are exempted to import. But it is not allowed in the case of our Ministry...(Interruptions)

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have not got the answer to my remaining question. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Are you going to discuss the matter with the Agriculture Ministry?

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : Are you going to discuss the matter with the Agriculture Ministry or the Environment and Forests Ministry? I am asking this because one can make Ethanol from so many other things. Are you considering this aspect also?

[Translation]

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Currently Ethanol being produced in our country is based on sugarcane. Whether ethanol be produced from other things or not, it has not been considered yet. But in Brazil and other countries...(Interruptions)

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : The hon'ble Minister has said that farmers will be benefited. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Farmers will definitely be benefited...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : This is not right. Please do not record it.

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I would not allow this. Mr. Lakshman Singh, there cannot be running Supplementaries.

*Not recorded.

[Translation]

SHRI DINSHA PATEL : If that will be used, then farmers will be definitely benefited.

[English]

Corporate Safety Plan

+

*402. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH :

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have prepared any Corporate Safety Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made so far in implementing the said plan?

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) to (c) Yes, Sir.

The Corporate Safety Plan formulated and presented to both houses of parliament in Aug' 2003 states the objectives, targets and strategies which the Indian Railways would aim to achieve in the decade 2003-2013.

The Plan aims at :—

- (i) Reduction in overall consequential train accidents per million train kilometers from 0.44 in 2002-03 to 0.17 in 2012.13.
- (ii) Elimination of collisions by extensive use of Anti-Collision Device (ACD) and other measures.
- (iii) 60% reduction in derailments by way of timely renewal of assets, improved signalling and

interlocking and modernisation of flaw detection systems and maintenance practices.

- (iv) Reduction in fire accidents by adoption of fireproof coaches and use of fire retardant materials in the existing coaches.
- (v) Containing the rising trend in level crossing accidents.
- (vi) Aiming at reduction in fatalities in case of serious accidents by use of Crash Worthy Coaches and tight lock couplers with anti-climbing features.

The document encompasses the broad priorities and time frame of the safety related works. Efforts are being directed towards continuous reduction in risk level to Railway customers primarily by way of enhancement of asset reliability by their rehabilitation and modernization, alongwith induction of appropriate technologies for prevention and mitigation of train accidents. The plan envisages a total investment of Rs. 31,835 crore [inclusive of the Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF) amounting to Rs.17,000 crore] for safety related works during the ten year period.

The progress made so far includes clearing track renewal arrears of 16,538 kms., and rehabilitation of 2087 bridges out of 2286 bridges which required rehabilitation. Almost 64,000 of Track kms. of track has been brought under mechanised maintenance. Overdue signalling assets have been replaced at 1122 stations out of 1494 stations, track circuiting has been provided at 4047 locations out of 5307 locations. Site acceptance test of Anti Collision Device (ACD) already installed on 1736 kms. over NF Rly is in progress and expected to be technically cleared for implementation on rest of the net work. Arrears of replacements of most of overaged rolling stock have been cleared. Design for crash worthy coaches having anti climbing features has been finalised for all future production. Other works of on going nature including early fire detection, research and development (RandD) for further mechanization of maintenance and monitoring

techniques, modernisation of training centers and for improvement of working environment of staff are being adequately funded and pursued.

As a result of various initiatives taken under the plan there has been a steady improvement in safety performance of Indian Railways. Accidents per million train kilometers have come down from 0.44 in 2002-03 to 0.28 in 2005-06.

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a fact that despite Corporate Safety Plan and security arrangements a number of bomb blasts have occurred in many important trains in the recent past in the country. The Khanna Committee has recommended formulation of a safety plan for Railways and the Government has accepted the recommendation. However, the Government is not very serious on the issue of safety. If so, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, whether there has been a constraint of funds for implementing the Corporate Safety Plan of Railways. If not, what are the reasons for not installing safety equipment in all important stations in various zones?

SHRI R. VELU : With regard to whether the Government is very serious about implementation of the safety plan, I would just briefly say that the safety plan was envisaged and presented in Parliament in August, 2003. It is a Paper; it is a published document. It was based on again Khanna Committee which had gone into this whole question.

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Member says, you are not serious about implementing it. Do not give all details. Just say 'yes' or 'no'.

SHRI R. VELU : First, we are very serious about implementing it. Secondly, based on the blasts that occurred in Mumbai and also in Samjhauta Express, we are tightening our system of security by installing closed circuit TVs, having more sniffer dogs, bomb detection and disposal squads and also creation of awareness among the traveling public that they should not touch abandoned

articles, etc. We are also considerably enhancing the security measures. I think we have already identified about 185 stations which are prone to this kind of security hazards.

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH : Sir, more than 50 per cent of accidents are occurring due to collision and derailments. Railways have been testing Anti-Collision Device for a very long time. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the details of progress made so far in setting up of ACDs in all zones; the reasons for consuming so much time in the finalization of setting up of ACDs; the details of progress made so far in the production of crash worthy coaches in the country; and the steps taken by the Government to obtain the targets of Corporate Safety Plan in a stipulated time.

SHRI R. VELU : First of all I may say that this plan is envisaged for a period of ten years starting with 2003-04 and ending in 2013-14. The major objective of this plan of Anti-Collision Devices (ACDs) is elimination of collisions totally, to achieve a nil collision state. Accordingly, we are very serious about implementation of ACDs. We are now implementing it in the North East Frontier Railways where about 1,736 kilometres have been provided with the ACD equipment. Site acceptance testing is now almost over. Fine-tuning also is over. Once the technical report about its successful commissioning on N.F. Railway is brought to the Railway board, we will not only implement it in the North East Frontier Railways but also initiate works in some sections of – Southern Railway, South Central Railway, South Western Railway and Northern Railway – a similar quantum of kilometres for implementation. We are making a policy to see that by 2013-14, the entire country is brought under the protection of a proven collision prevention system. There is no question of going back on this.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Kishanbhai V. Patel – not present.

SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY : Respected Speaker, Sir, of late, it was reported that Railways has decided to discontinue the supply of South Indian food items.

MR. SPEAKER : Do you want to know about food items on this question!

SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY : It is a very serious issue.

MR. SPEAKER : Pose a question on safety. I am sorry.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : In spite of my weakness for gastronomy, I cannot allow you.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Ask about railway safety?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let us not make a mockery of this House.

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA : I would like to know this from the hon. Minister. Many ROB's are highly accident-prone as is reported authentically. Out of over one lakh ROB's, 50,000 were constructed by the Britishers. What is the time-bound schedule chalked out by the Corporate Railway Safety Plan to encounter the alarming situation?

MR. SPEAKER : Is the Corporate Safety Plan dealing with ROB's?

SHRI R. VELU : Yes, Sir, it is because one of the objectives of the Plan is to minimize the kind of accidents taking place at level-crossings. Two-pronged attack is planned by the Railways to deal with accidents at level-crossings — one is the grade separation by way of providing ROB's; and the other is the RUB's.

Secondly, we are making these level-crossings increasingly manned over the years because we have got about 18,000 unmanned level crossings where accidents do take place; where 40 per cent of the accidents do take place; and where 70 per cent of the fatalities do take place.

What is the plan with regard to ROB's? In fact, about 1,200 LC's are being identified for the purpose of constructing ROB's. Here, the point is, wherever State Government comes forth with a proposal to convert such kind of manned or unmanned level crossings qualifying for ROB's, we are here to help. We are not saying 'no' because we have not got sufficient resources in our kitty to help them to construct those ROB's.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY : The Minister is very well aware that last month a big accident took place in unmanned level crossing between Kanchipuram and Arakkonam, which is situated near his constituency where 13 village administrative officers died. At that time, the Minister immediately announced that pathways and subways would be constructed in the unmanned level crossings. The other matter is that if we write to the Minister regarding level crossings, the reply given was that it involves a huge cost and the Railways do not have any funds. I would like to know from the Minister as to how much of the Safety Fund is available with the Railway Department and as to how much of it has been spent for converting the unmanned level crossings to manned level crossings? What steps have been taken by the Minister in regard to safety?

SHRI R. VELU : I will clarify him.

MR. SPEAKER : Briefly.

SHRI R. VELU : The hon. Member has referred to an accident when I announced on the spot that a limited 11 to 12 feet high subway would be built so that auto-rickshaws and two wheelers can find a way to ply. The question is as to whether this can be done. We have programmed in the Railways 400 such subways, out of which at least 200 would be sanctioned this year.

In reply to whether we can convert unmanned level crossings, I would say that if we want to convert 18,000 unmanned level crossings, it involves about Rs. 3,000 crore as capital cost; about Rs. 600 crores as recurring cost per annum. In fact, the Railways is very serious about it

and is ready to even relax the conditions wherever called for so that these unmanned level crossings increasingly become manned ones.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an important question because we read about rail accidents in the newspapers every now and then. The Ministry of Railways keeps on announcing introduction of new trains but the railway tracks are the same due to which such accidents take place very often. I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister whether any scheme has been formulated to explore alternative routes so that new railway tracks may be laid on those routes. Because he has always been talking about alternative routes. Will he emphasize on that? But he does not seem to practise what he preaches. New trains are being introduced on those routes due to which accidents takes place very often. For example, we had suggested an alternative route from Delhi to Mumbai via Udaipur that there is a need to link Udaipur and Ahmedabad. I would like to know as to what the Government are thinking about it?

[English]

SHRI R. VELU : For all new trains, I cannot lay a new track. On the other hand, what we have done is, we have now renewed about 12,000 kms. of railway line under the Railway Safety Fund of Rs.17,000 crore. She asked whether we can have a second line from Mumbai, via Udaipur. I have to check up what are the missing links in that. We are trying to, where traffic potential is much more and density is much more, increase the line capacity by electrification or by having more blocks that are being created between two stations, or we try to have a second line as she has mentioned. We are very serious about it.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : We have thousands of unmanned level crossings and manned level crossings. The Ministry of Railways has fixed norms for this – if there is a huge traffic and if there is a need or demand,

then the Railways can construct ROB. These guidelines are not meeting the present day reality. If there is a need in a particular area or if there is a demand from the public or demand from the Government of that particular State, then the Ministry of Railways is ready to construct the ROB. They have to change the norms because they had fixed the norms long back, though the norms were fit enough. We have requested to construct ROB by changing norms. They have to change the norms for reduced traffic, and then only they can construct more ROB.

MR. SPEAKER : It is a good suggestion.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : It is not my suggestion; the Ministry of Railways is ready to change the guidelines.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, are you ready to change the guidelines – say just 'yes' or 'no'.

SHRI R. VELU : I cannot say that straightway. As I mentioned, there are about 18,000 unmanned level crossings; 1200 have been identified qualifying 'one-lakh train vehicle unit' – that is, in 24 hours how many trains pass through multiplied by the number of road vehicles, which gives the product of one lakh. I may not relax – but on their other hand, I put this for consideration, wherever it is necessary, even the State Governments can come forward and the local bodies can come forward and take up as deposit work. Once they agree for deposit work, I am prepared to do it and the Railways would permit it.

MR. SPEAKER : The trouble for me is that the Minister knew everything about the Railways!

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : This is clearly regarding safety and security. Very often, in the running trains, dacoits attack passengers and more especially the lady-passengers. It is taking place everyday in the country. May I know from the hon. Minister through you, Sir, whether the Government is planning to enhance security in the running trains especially in the Ladies' Compartments?

SHRI R. VELU : There are escorts in 3600 trains, both by RPF and GRPF, to prevent any dacoity. The question was whether we ensure protection in Ladies' Compartments. Yes, we are also protecting Ladies' Compartments. We are also appointing or recruiting lady constables for this purpose in the Railways.

MR. SPEAKER : Q. 403 – Shri Shriniwas Dadasaheb Patil – Not present.

Shri Asaduddin Owaisi – Not present.

Today, the popular Minister is spared!

Q. 404 – Shri P.C. Thomas.

Indo-Iran Gas Pipeline Project

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*404. SHRI P.C. THOMAS :

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO :

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

(a) whether some countries are pressurising and advising India to withdraw itself from the Indo-Iran gas pipeline project;

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

(c) the reaction of the government thereto; and

(d) the present status of the said project alongwith the discussions held with the participating countries?

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

Statement

(a) to (c) During visit of US Secretary of State Dr.

Condoleezza Rice to India in March 2005, she informed the media that the US had conveyed its concerns on the proposed gas pipeline cooperation between India and Iran. The US legal position on this issue flows from its Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA) of 1996 that provides for the imposition of sanctions against foreign companies that make an investment of more than US \$ 20 million in one year in Iran's energy sector. The Government is pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran in national interest in order to meet the energy requirements of the country. During the recent meeting between Mr. Samuel W. Bodman, US Secretary of Energy with Minister (Petroleum and Natural Gas), he was informed that India was free to pursue its energy option with any country and would act independently to pursue its interest.

(d) India is pursuing import of natural gas from Iran through Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project. Two Secretary level Joint Working Groups namely India-Pakistan Joint Working Group and India-Iran Special Joint Working Group have been constituted for discussing the various issues involved. Four India-Pakistan JWG meetings and three India-Iran Special JWG meetings have been held so far. Subsequently, the issues are being discussed in the trilateral Iran, Pakistan and India Joint Working Groups meetings. Four Iran-Pakistan-India Tripartite meetings have been held. The 4th Tripartite Meeting of the JWG was held at Tehran on 24th and 25th January, 2007. In the above meeting, the final report of the consultant was discussed. The gas price formulation at the Iran-Pakistan border was agreed between Iran and Pakistan, subject to approval by their respective Governments. India was required to indicate acceptance in four weeks time. Suitable communication has been sent to Iran on 28.2.2007.

The 4th bilateral JWG Meeting between India and Pakistan was held at Islamabad on 22nd and 23rd February, 2007 to finalise the transportation cost and transit tariff within Pakistan. It was decided to hold further discussions on the subject matter. The technical subgroup meeting between Pakistan and India was held at New

Delhi on 22nd and 23rd March, 2007. Discussions were held on the technical issues, Transit Fee and Transportation Cost. It was decided to hold the JWG meetings to continue the discussions.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, the hon. Minister has given an answer which is satisfactory in the sense that our Minister and our Government have told US that we will pursue with the arrangement which we have already started with Iran with regard to the gas pipeline. But my concern and the country's concern is as to whether when the American Minister came here he had little frightened us and told to our media that India has been told not to enter into a contract with Iran. That is our concern. Of course, as seen in the answer, our Minister who has been greeted well by the Iranian Minister who has congratulated him also, I have read in some newspaper also, has earned a good name but the concern is whether America is treating us bad or is interfering.

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA) : There is no question of America or any other country interfering in our affairs. Due to very heavy rise in oil prices, Governments all around the world have to depend on other alternate fuels and gas is one such fuel. So, the Government has decided to have negotiations with Iran and Pakistan to bring here a gas pipeline of 2135 kms. The US Secretary of Energy Mr. Bodman was here and he inquired about what is happening to this plan. There is no question of his pressurizing our country.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, I am glad that when the US Secretary of Energy Mr. Bodman came here we have boldly told him but my real feat is ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Not bold him but told him boldly.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Of course, I know he is very bold.

MR. SPEAKER : He has boldly replied.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : From the answer itself I find that during the visit of US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice, who has been threatening us other times also, when she came in March 2005, informed our Media and not the Government – the question is whether she said something to the Government – that India has been told not to enter into a contract with Iran. That is of great concern and that is the issue. If that is the issue, that has to be dealt with in a different manner and I hope that is the pride of whole Parliament and India to see that no country, be it America or anybody, can pressurize us to leave it at that stage. So, my question, through you, Sir, is whether Dr. Condoleezza Rice, when he told the Indian Press...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : It is 'she' and not 'he'.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Yes, ...*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : Remove that portion.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have deleted only those three words.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : My only question again, not for the sake of repetition but to get a forceful answer from the Minister, is whether Dr. Condoleezza Rice when she came here had said anything to India in terms of our contract with Iran dissuading us from going forth in this contract.

SHRI MURLI DEORA : I can assure the hon. Member, there is no such fear, that India can ever be pressurized. The US legal position on this issue is that there is an Act in America called Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 that provides imposition of sanctions against foreign companies that make an investment of more than 20 million dollars in one year. This is also not the issue and I can repeatedly tell the hon. Member that nobody can pressurise us and we are going ahead with the discussion on this gas pipeline.

*Not recorded.

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO : Sir, IPI, Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline is considered as peace pipeline. Now that the Government of India is actively pursuing the project relating to import of natural gas from Iran, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has explored any alternative mode of transportation of natural gas from Iran by skipping the passage through Pakistan. It is because there may be any emergency or difference of opinion with Pakistan on the security issues.

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Transportation of gas through the pipeline is the best way of transporting gas. There is no problem in transporting gas from Iran via Pakistan to India. When the strategic things are discussed this will also be considered.

[Translation]

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV : Sir, I have a specific question for the hon'ble Minister and the question is that if the proposed India – Iran gas pipeline is to pass through Pakistan, whether the Government of Pakistan has agreed to have a dialogue and keeping in view the terrorist activities whether security of gas pipe line has been ensured? Is it not so that this project will be a great economic disaster in near future?

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, last month when the Prime Minister of Pakistan was in Delhi, he assured that there will be no problem in this project.

[English]

SHRI P. RAJENDRAN : May the Minister inform the House whether the Ministry has finalized any action plan for the implementation of IPI pipeline and how much amount needs to be invested by the Government of India? What is the total outlay for the project and by what time it can be implemented?

SHRI MURLI DEORA : How much amount will be spent is being worked out. But it is estimated that the total cost may be around seven billion US dollars.

ADV. SURESH KURUP : I would like to know from the Minister whether the US Government has at any time expressed its displeasure on India entering into an agreement with Iran and Pakistan regarding this pipeline and if so, what was the reaction of the Government of India regarding this?

SHRI MURLI DEORA : It is not to the knowledge of Government of India.

MR. SPEAKER : He is concerned with his Ministry.

Promotion of Tourism

*405. SHRI M. APPADURAI : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has drawn up any Action Plan to promote tourism in the country during the Eleventh Five Year Plan period;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the provision of funds made therefor; and

(c) the tourist circuits identified for development and the funds proposed to be allocated for the purpose during 2007-08, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to ensure development of places of tourist interest in a systematic and wholistic manner, the Ministry of Tourism had commissioned 20 Year Perspective Plans for all States/Union Territories at the beginning of 10th Five Year Plan. The Perspective Plans have given Action Plans for tourism development in the States/Union Territories in the short-term and long-term. These Perspective Plans have been sent to the States/Union Territories

to guide them in initiating action for development and promotion of tourism during the 11th Plan

To promote tourism in the country during the 11th Five Year Plan period, Ministry of Tourism has adopted a strategy to position tourism as a major engine of economic growth and as a national priority through creation of world class tourist infrastructure. In addition, the Ministry has drawn up and adopted a focused marketing and promotional plan and also plans for quality human resource development for hospitality sector. The allocation for Ministry of Tourism for 11th Five Year Plan has not been finalized by Planning Commission however, the Budget allocated for the year 2007-08 is Rs. 953.00 crore.

(c) The Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance to States for development of places of tourist interest to attract domestic and foreign tourists. The projects for Central Financial Assistance are identified in prioritization meetings in consultation with State Governments every year and financial assistance is provided to the States/UTs for the projects which are complete in all respects as per guidelines, after considering their inter-se priority, availability of funds etc. For development of a circuit, the maximum financial assistance that can be sanctioned is Rs. 8.00 crore. However, for projects of mega circuits the maximum amount that could be sanctioned is Rs. 50.00 crore.

SHRI M. APPADURAI : Hon. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister's reply is not complete. My particular question was regarding the State-wise projects. The funds allotted for the Eleventh Five Year Plan are not enough to compete with the other countries. So, more funds are needed because through tourism, we can earn more foreign exchange. You have also not mentioned the State-wise tourist circuits in your reply.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : Sir, the hon. Member is quite right that the funds allocated for the Ministry of Tourism are most inadequate and certainly not comparable to international standards. But still we have come a long

way from the original allocation to Rs. 953 crore which was made as a budgetary provision for this year. The final proposal for the 11th Five Year Plan has not yet been finalized by the Planning Commission.

Sir, we have prioritized the projects for the financial year 2007-08 for several States. The allocations, naturally, have not been done since the total amount for five years is not known to us. If the hon. Member is interested in a particular State, I can say straightway, but otherwise I will give him the full list.

But I would like to say that we are trying in the Eleventh Five Year Plan whatever budgetary provisions we have, we should try to use them to maximum extent and create tourist inflow of at least ten million in the next five years. We want to diversify our source market away from the traditional tourists coming from the USA and the UK. We are looking at China, Spain, South Africa and several other countries like Australia and we are also trying to make inroads into the Latin American continent. We are trying to increase the spending of the tourists so that it matches the international spending of 30 per cent. We are trying also to increase our domestic tourism from almost 400 million to 760 million tourists in the next five years.

The House is familiar of the steps that we are taking to increase the infrastructure. Whatever remains in the Budget category, we have several innovative schemes which we have launched. More than that, we are trying to promote India as a tourism destination for full 365 days so that we do not depend on peak seasons and then for the rest of the year we do not have anything. We are promoting all the States by sanctioning and giving them some financial help within our means to the States to develop tourism destinations and circuits.

SHRI M. APPADURAI : Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the steps taken by the Ministry, other than allocation of funds, particularly for the growth of tourist place called Courtalam in my constituency in Tenkasi

in the State of Tamil Nadu. I had requested the hon. Minister to include this place in the All India Tourist Development List and also requested for allocation for more funds for the development of infrastructure for this place, Courtalam.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : Sir, it is very difficult for the Union Ministry to identify projects *suo motu* and decide which ones have to be financed and supported. This is an annual exercise done by the officials of the State Tourism Ministry. They prioritize their projects and circuits and we finance them. The financial support from the Union Ministry is symbolic. It is Rs. 5 crore for destination development and Rs. 8 crore for circuit development except for new mega projects which the UPA Government has agreed to fund, which means Rs. 25 crore for destination development and Rs. 50 crore for circuit development. The hon. Member would have to be in touch with his Ministry of Tourism so that they prioritize the project he has referred to. We will have no problem at our end to support it.

[Translation]

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA : Sir, today tourism has become a big industry and a means for employment generation. I would like to know whether any scheme is being formulated by the Ministry to promote 'Religious Tourism'. There is a letter written by Guru Govind Singhji lying in the gurudwara of village Malkowal of Garh Shankar Tehsil, a Chakki used by Guru Ravidasji lying in Khuralgarh, and a temple constructed by the Pandavas is also there in my parliamentary constituency. Does the Government propose to do something to promote religious tourism in these areas?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : Sir, I would like to inform the hon'ble Member that a huge funds have been allocated for various projects in Punjab. As the Member himself said that tourism is an employment generating sector, I think that maximum employment generation in the country has been through tourism. So, we have encouraged rural

tourism. We have decided to identify 100 villages having fine arts, Crafts textile or wood work as core sectors in all the States of the country taking one or two villages in each State in our pilot project. We have selected 70 villages in this way. There is Raghurajpur in Orissa, two villages in Nagaland and since the hon'ble Member is from Hsiharpur district, I would like to inform him that we have identified Bhootgarh in Hoshiarpur for rural tourism which is famous for its woodwork since ages. The Ministry of tourism is looking into it. This way, we are emphasizing on pilot projects under rural tourism.

Besides, he has mentioned about religious tourism. I would like to tell him that in the last two years we have identified two circuits in Punjab through the Punjab Government and have supported them. One of these circuits is religious places and the other one is named as Freedom circuit keeping in view the importance of freedom fighters. Under religious circuit we have identified one temple in Devi Talav Complex, Jalandhar a mosque in Roza Sharief in Fatch Garh Saheb Sarhind, one church in Batala and eleven Gurudwaras. Besides, in regard to the letters, mentioned by the hon'ble Member, I would like to request him to contact us, afterwards and we will try. Under the Ministry of Culture we have a manuscript mission through which we will try to extend every possible support to them.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Tourism, as an industry, is having new potentialities. Is there any proposal in the Eleventh Plan to develop specialized treatment in Ayurveda for tourists from other countries which is the traditional Indian system of treatment? Many foreigners prefer such a treatment and that is available in my State, Kerala where Ayurvedic treatment is a speciality. Has the Minister included any such programme in the Eleventh Five Year Plan?

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : It is like carrying coals to Newcastle by telling the hon. Member about the

advantages which Kerala has gained in the manner it has promoted tourism. Wellness tourism is our major product which we are marketing around the world very aggressively and Kerala is number one State in that. So much so, wellness tourism using naturopathy, ayurveda and other allied methodology is being replicated all over the country. This is a great tribute to Kerala which originated it. For the last five to six years, Kerala has achieved tremendous progress in this regard and we are continuing it under the present Government also.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, all the main tourist places of Bundelkhand like Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Khajuraho, Orcha, Kalinjar, Charkhadi, Mahoba and Hamirpur etc. except Khajuraho are neglected as no financial assistance is being provided to them by the Central Government. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the Union Government have any action plan to put these places on the tourist map so that domestic and foreign tourists are attracted towards these places and revenue increased. Besides this I would also like to know about the funds provided by the Union Government to Uttar Pradesh Government for the development of tourist places.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : Sir, recently, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh visited our Ministry to thank us for the huge funds allocated to that State ... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA : I am talking about Uttar Pradesh

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : I thought you belong to Madhya Pradesh.

MR. SPEAKER : He has mentioned about Khajuraho.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : I made a mistake.

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA : Khajuraho is in Madhya Pradesh.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : That is why I thought there was something wrong when he mentioned it.

MR. SPEAKER : You are right, he started with Khajuraho and then switched over to Uttar Pradesh.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : I would like to mention here that unfortunately Uttar Pradesh Government has not spent even one fourth amount of funds allocated to it during the last five years for the development of tourism. From the day I became Minister I made several efforts and wrote several letters to them and told them that if this amount was not spent in time, then those schemes will lapse.

If I give an example here then you will say that I am bringing politics in this matter and I do not want to do that. But I would like to mention that very important projects had been sanctioned for Uttar Pradesh. Even the Union Government itself is ready to spend Rs. 50 crore for the Taj Mahal. We had visited the site and found that the drains and the surroundings there are not good from the tourism point of view. At that time also we had allocated Rs.15 crore to the Agra Development Authority but that amount also was not used properly. If the hon. Member of Parliament talks to me and seeks my help for the use of this amount for the development of tourist spots located there, I shall be grateful to him.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I believe recently there was an election tourism.

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you.

It is good that the Government has allocated Rs. 8 crore as financial assistance to any particular scheme and Rs. 50 crore for a mega scheme. In my constituency, Chidambaram, the very famous Nataraja Temple has been selected as World Heritage Centre. Another place called Pitchavaram, surrounded by island, has to be developed as a tourist centre.

I had written to the Ministry as far back as 2004 requesting for an amount of Rs. 3.17 crore for the World Heritage Centre and more than a crore of rupees for Pitchavaram.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has included these two schemes in this Plan, particularly in this Budget year. I would like also to know whether my letter requesting a reply through the State Government will get a positive reply.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : Sir, restoration of temples and other historical monuments is the work undertaken by the ASI and it comes under the Ministry of Culture. I do not have all the details with me today because the main Question was on tourism. But I can assure the hon. Member that we have, in the last one year, added several new monuments to the list of 3667 monuments which are being protected by the ASI, in addition to the monuments being protected by the State Governments.

As far as the letter is concerned, I am extremely sorry and I would like to apologize to the Member if he has not received any reply. I try my best to reply to the hon. Members as quickly as I can after reading and making an enquiry into their demands. But on this project I will let the hon. Member know what is the status.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RANJEET RANJAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate that it is due to you I got an opportunity to visit Maldives in the CPA ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : No, please do not say that.

SHRIMATI RANJEET RANJAN : I would like to state that when I visited that place I came to know that it is a small country which is mainly dependent on tourism. I had only one thought in my mind as why water sports activities under tourism of our country and that country are so different. You can take the example of Andman-Nicobar

and Port Blair, we have a number of islands and various other things but why foreign tourists and other people are visiting Maldives even though it is very costly? I would like to ask the Government whether it has any plans to improve the condition of two-three things which impress foreign tourists. I would request the Government to pay attention towards the cleanliness of sea beaches and want to ask whether we are thinking of infrastructure building in Andman and Nicobar and Port Blair in a manner so that more and more foreign tourists visit our country in comparison to Maldives. In this way there are various examples, we have several such tourist places but as the Government is not paying attention towards some small things, tourists do not visit our country in large number. So, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he has any scheme for the places, where a lot of development is needed.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to state that I do not feel that tourism is lagging behind in our country. If you go by the figures of last few years you will find that the growth rate and tourist inflow in India is much higher than other countries.

As far as Andman and Nicobar is concerned, the hon. Member of Parliament would agree that these islands are situated in the South of our country and we have to save it from environmental point of view. We have built such infrastructure there because of its sensitivity. There is no doubt about the beauty of this seashore. So, it would not be good to ruin the environmental sensitivity of that place in the name of development.

Recently, we have started cruise tourism there. International ships are going there from the last 15 days, tourist ships will also stop there. We are taking an affidavit from them that they will not pollute the sea beaches in any way, they will not litter any filth there and they will use electric extinguishers for waste disposal. We are looking at India as a whole in a wider perspective and without any discrimination. It is not our intention to deprive any state of development in the tourism sector.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, tourism in the sub-areas of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep has increased to a great extent. We are making efforts to increase tourism there keeping in mind the sensitivity of that area but I feel it is not good to compare these areas with Mauritius and Maldives. The priorities of our country have been different. But today we are concentrating more on tourism, even though our priorities were different during the last 60 years and the Government were concentrating more on completing them.

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB : Sir, Buddhism is the fifth largest religion in this world. Five countries especially China, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam and Myanmar have more than 90 per cent of Buddhists.

My direct question to the hon. Minister is this. I would like to know whether 'Come to India-walk with the Buddha' campaign has been launched, which are the destinations that have been identified as Buddhist sites and whether no sites of Orissa have been included in this programme. I would also like to know whether Japan has offered to provide assistance for developing infrastructure in these Buddhist sites.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI : It is without doubt that Buddhist tourism, or people coming in from neighbouring countries with their deep faith in Buddhism, is a very important segment of our tourism promotion and the Japanese Bank of International Cooperation has come forward in a big way to help in building up infrastructure in some of the principal Buddhist sites. They have their own surveys. They take their own decisions in which State and in which area they want to do on a priority basis and it was their personal decision to develop a four-track road from Bodh Gaya, Rajgir, Nalanda upto Vaishali. We have completed the first phase of development with the JBIC in Maharashtra for the Ajanta and Ellora. They gave us large sums of money which, unfortunately, the Government of Uttar Pradesh was not able to fulfill for Sarnath, Varanasi and Khusi Nagar. They have now been here in India

recently and are in the process of identifying States. I have, on my part, suggested Orissa where it all started with the Kalinga War and I myself personally visited the site which we would like to bring into this map from Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Leh and Jammu and Kashmir. Every single State of India has Buddhist influences, monasteries and schools. During the last one year when we commemorated the 2550 years of the Bodhi Mahaparinirvan, we tried to give as much aid as was possible, to all these States which had asked from us. In Orissa, maybe we have not been able to put Orissa as yet on the map of the Japanese Bank of International Corporation (JBIC). Several Projects in Orissa have received a large sum of the Union Ministry of Tourism's financial help.

MR. SPEAKER : Well, because of the importance of the subject, I have allowed eight questions. I think we have a good discussion.

Replacement of Outdated Railway Coaches

*406. SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a large number of railway coaches are outdated and not comfortable for the journeys;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Railways to replace those outdated coaches?

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) and (b) No, Sir.

A codal life has been prescribed for different types of passenger coaches. Railways phase out overaged passenger coaches on a regular basis. Out of a total holding of approximately 47063 passenger coaches over the Indian

Railways system, only 1034 coaches are overaged which constitute only 2.2% of the total population.

Main line overaged coaches are normally not utilized in passenger services and are used only for departmental purpose. Few overaged coaches like Electrical Multiple Units and Narrow Gauge Coaches are however still in service. Due attention to all the safety and passenger comfort related items is provided to such coaches during scheduled inspections and maintenance and these are kept in satisfactory condition for passenger comfort.

(c) The acquisition of new coaches for augmenting the passenger transportation capabilities and also against replacement of overaged stock is a continual exercise for Indian Railways.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : Sir, in the answer given by the hon. Minister, it has been stated that there are 1034 coaches which are over-aged and outdated. They are still in service – either in the passenger service or with the Government for other purposes. Is it due to shortage of coaches that they are put in service since a large number of trains have been introduced over the last two to three years? If so, what are the measures that the Government is intending to take to produce more coaches and to replace these over-aged and outdated coaches?

SHRI R. VELU : Sir, today, in the country, we have increased the capacity of production of coaches which is 1400 in Kapurthala, 1500 in ICF, Chennai plus about 400 given to BEML, Bangalore. It comes to 3000 and odd coaches. In fact, given the growth of the Railways, we are also planning to have one more coach factory in Raebareli where we will be able to manufacture another 1000 coaches in a year. Now, the question is that 1034 over-aged coaches are there. None of the BG coaches is put on the line. What we have put on the line is about 529 EMUs partly in Mumbai because in Mumbai, it operates on DC. We are now trying to switch over to AC. Our coaches are that of DC. We are also now manufacturing AC/DC coaches. That is why, for the present, we are utilizing those

coaches so that the traveling public do not have to suffer. Our friend from Kerala will be happy to know that not a single over-aged coach is run in Kerala.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : it is our experience in Kerala that either in the local trains or express trains or super-fast trains, the coaches that you have introduced are really outdated. I do not think that it is because of any intention. But the coaches that we see in Kerala are really outdated and it is difficult to travel because of unclean coaches, because of lack of water, dirty toilets in the coaches, etc. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister would try to see what is going on in Kerala. Why is it that you are sending coaches to that State which are in such a very bad condition?

MR. SPEAKER : Such a bad condition can also be in the new coaches and they are.

SHRI R. VELU : The codal life of a coach is 25 years. So, none of the coaches, which is going beyond 25 years, is allowed to run.

About the point regarding cleanliness, I would say that the Railways have announced that this is the Year of Cleanliness. We have tried to allot money. In fact, I must also very politely put to the hon. Member that this year we allotted about Rs. 483 crore for passenger amenities which will take care of cleanliness, the hygiene part of it. I would request, through you, Sir, the people also to cooperate in the maintenance of cleanliness in trains.

SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN : I have a question directed to the hon. Minister.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, put it.

SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN : In the North-Eastern region, over-aged, out dated and uncomfortable passenger coaches without basic amenities are being used. There are only 1034 over-aged coaches. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that out of the 47,000 and odd coaches, why only the over-aged, outdated coaches are being used in the North-Eastern States.

SHRI R. VELU : Sir, I would like to mention that in the North Eastern States, most of the lines are metre gauge lines. By converting most of the lines in the country from metre gauge to broad gauge, we have a surplus stock of metre gauge coaches. So, we have no problem of using over-aged coaches in the North Eastern Region.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Shortage of Air Traffic Controllers

*403. SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL :
SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is acute shortage of Air Traffic Controllers (ATCs) in the country;

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

(c) the number of ATCs required in the coming years in the civil aviation industry;

(d) the steps taken by the Government to meet the shortage of ATCs in the country;

(e) whether the Government proposes to open new institutions for imparting education in Air Traffic Control in various parts of the country; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) to (c) Due to unprecedented growth in civil aviation sector, the number of flights/aircraft movement have significantly increased. This has resulted in need for opening some additional units

at existing airports like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Nagpur. Further, additional ATCs will be required to provide services to new international airports under construction at Bangalore and Hyderabad. It is estimated that about 620 additional ATCs are required, in various grades to meet the demand at existing and upcoming airports.

(d) During the last two and a half years, as many as 371 Junior Executives (ATC) have been inducted in Airports Authority of India (AAI). Action for filling up other posts is a continuing exercise. AAI is also utilising the services of retired ATCOs. wherever possible.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. One additional training unit is being established at the existing Hyderabad airport. Air Traffic Controllers will be trained for the procedures in Area Control Services at Hyderabad Training Centre.

[Translation]

Shortage of Officers in Armed Forces

*407. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT :
SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is shortage of officers in the Armed Forces of the country;

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

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to fill the vacant posts in the Armed Forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :
(a) to (c) Presently there is a total shortage of 14165 officers in the Armed Forces. The Army has a shortage of 11238 officers, whereas the Navy and the Air Force have a shortage of 1399 and 1528 officers respectively. The details of the shortage of officers in the Armed Forces are as follows:-

	Army	Navy	Air Force
Authorised strength	46615	8821	12118
Positioned strength	35377	7422	10590
Shortage	11238	1399	1528

Several steps have been taken by the three Services to fill up the vacant posts. All officers including those in Short Service Commission (SSC) have been made eligible to hold substantive rank of Captain, Major and Lieutenant Colonel and equivalents after 2, 6 and 13 years of reckonable service respectively. The tenure of SSC Officers has been extended to 14 years in the three Services.

Besides, the Armed Forces have undertaken sustained image projection and publicity campaign to create a awareness among the youth on the advantages of taking up a challenging and satisfying career. Candidate-friendly recruitment procedures to attract more number of candidates and a focused publicity drive in various institutions to attract potential candidates have been undertaken. Awareness campaigns, participation in career fairs and exhibitions, advertisements in print and electronic media, motivational lectures in schools, colleges are also some of the other measures in this direction.

[English]

Illegal Trafficking in Antiquities

*408. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is aware of the increasing illegal trafficking in antiquities in the country;

(b) if so, the number of cases reported during each of the last three years;

(c) the corrective steps being taken to combat antiquities trafficking;

(d) whether the National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities will be able to combat the antiquities trafficking; and

(e) if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) and (b) The available data does not indicate increasing illegal trafficking in antiquities. The number of cases of antiquity thefts reported during the last three years is given in the enclosed statement.

(c) Under the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act 1972, provisions exist for regulating the trade in antiquities and for registering specific categories of antiquities. Government is considering the amendment of the Act to make the provisions more stringent and for providing higher punishments for violation of the Act.

India is also a signatory to the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Trafficking in cultural property.

The provision for security at museums and protected monuments has been augmented by deploying State Police, Private Security Guards and also CISF in selected places. Strict vigil is also maintained by the Customs Department at all airports and seaports and other law enforcing agencies like the CBI, DRI and the State Police.

(d) and (e) The National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities would document the antiquities and prepare a national database, which would help in establishing provenance in the retrieval of smuggled antiquities. The Mission would also promote public awareness, concern and participation in safeguarding of antiquarian wealth.

Statement*The number of thefts of antiquities during the last three years*

S. No.	Name of State	Name of Monument/ Site and the District	Description of the Objects	Date of theft	Status of the Case	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Year 2004						
1.	Rajasthan	Charkhamba Temple premises at ruined Krishna Vilas	2 Sculptures	21.04.2004	F.I.R. lodged	
2.	Jammu and Kashmir	Bumzuva Cave, Distt. Anantnag	Shiv Linga of stone	23/24-05-04	F.I.R. lodged	Recovered
3.	Gujarat	Sun Temple Modhera, Distt. Mehsana	2 Fragment Sculptures	04-08-2004	F.I.R. lodged	Recovered
4.	Tamil Nadu	Alathur, Taluk Kulathur Distt. Pudakkotai	Jaina Image	06.08.2004	F.I.R. lodged	Recovered
5.	Madhya Pradesh	Lanji Fort, Distt. Balaghat	2 Sculptures	21.08.2004	F.I.R. lodged	
6.	Andhra Pradesh	Ruins of buried Jaina Temple, Denavulapadu Village, Jammalamadugu Mandal	Bust of Jaintatirthankara	8/9.9.2004	F.I.R. lodged	
7.	West Bengal	Indian Museum, Kolkata	A stone head of Lord-Buddha	29.12.2004		Case handed over to the CBI
Year 2005						
1.	Rajasthan	Ancient site Nagar, Distt. Tonk	7 Sculptures	12.01.2005	F.I.R. lodged	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Chhattisgarh	Centrally Protected Site Sirpur, Distt. Mahasamund	Stone image of Hariti	23/24.06.2005	F.I.R. lodged	Recovered
3.	Madhya Pradesh	Sculpture shed, Karitalai, Distt. Katni	9 Sandstone sculptures	17.08.2005	F.I.R. lodged	
4.	Chhattisgarh	Laxman Temple, Sirpur, Distt. Mahasamund	Stone image of Ananta-Shesh	13/14.10.2005	F.I.R. lodged	Recovered
Year 2006						
1.	Uttaranchal	Cave temple Patal-Bhubneswar Tehsil – Berinag Distt. Pithoragarh	Two small size stone images of Ganesha (Under worship) not so old	2/3.04.2006 Recovered	F.I.R. lodged	
2.	Uttaranchal	Temple premises of the Chandpur Fort, Distt. Chamoli	1 Carved-wooden head of Kali	18/19.04.2006	F.I.R. lodged	
3.	Bihar	Patna State Govt. Museum	18 Bronze sculptures	26.09.2006	F.I.R. lodged	17 have been recovered and 1 is still to recovered.
4.	Andhra Pradesh	Shiv Kodandarama Swamy Temple, Vomtimitta Distt. Kodapa Andhra Pradesh	Theft of central bud portion of the inverted lotus carved on the Kalyanamandapa ceiling	06.10.2006	F.I.R. lodged	
5.	Rajasthan	Archaeological Museum, Kalibangan, Distt. Hanumangarh	Wheel and cart frame	21.01.2006	F.I.R. lodged	

[Translation]

Electrification of Railway Lines

*409. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have received proposals from various State Governments regarding electrification of railway lines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) :

(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Recently the following proposals for electrification of railway tracks have been recommended by various State Governments and their present status is as under:—

Sl. No.	Name of the section	State Government	Status
1.	Itarsi-Allahabad	Madhya Pradesh	In Madhya Pradesh, two works viz. Bina-Kota (303 RKMs), Indore-Ujjain including Dewas-Maksi (115 RKMs), are in progress. Itarsi-Allahabad work is under examination.
2.	Talcher-Cuttack-Pradeep	Orissa	Work in Progress.
3.	Bina-Kota	Rajasthan	Work in Progress.
4.	Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur	Rajasthan	Not viable.
5.	Ratlam-Neemuch-Chittorgarh	Rajasthan	Not viable.
6.	DC/AC Conversion work at Kasara-Titawala section	Maharashtra	Completed.
7.	Delhi-Rohtak	Haryana	Under Process.
8.	Laksar-Rishikesh/Dehradun	Uttarakhand	Not viable.
9.	Najibabad-Kotdwar/Moradabad-Kashipur-Ram Nagar/Kashipur-Lalkuan and Rampur-Lal Kuan-Kathgodam	Uttarakhand	Not viable.
10.	Daitari-Banspani	Orissa	Work in Progress.
11.	Villupuram-Tiruchchirappalli-Madurai	Tamil Nadu	Work in Progress.
12.	Madurai-Tuticorin	Tamil Nadu	Under examination.
13.	Madurai-Nagercoil	Tamil Nadu	Under examination.

[English]

Emergency Landing of Air India's Flights

*410. DR. K. DHANARAJU :

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether a few flights of Air India made emergency landings in the country recently;

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

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted on the emergency landings;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the outcome thereof; and

(e) the steps taken to avoid recurrence of such happenings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Two Air India aircraft operating flight AI-349 and AI-737 made emergency landings at Delhi on 9th April, 2007. The Airbus (A310) Aircraft VT-EJJ operating flight AI-349 on 9th April, 2007 reported snag of Nose Landing Gear (NLG) down lock Indication. After following Flight Crew Operating Manual (FCOM) procedures, crew made an uneventful emergency landing at Delhi. Investigation into this incident is complete and indicates that the Telescopic Drag Strut (TDS) of NLG was defective. This component has since been sent to Vendor's Facility for further investigation. The aircraft was ferried to Mumbai, with DGCA permission, on 25th April, 2007 for accomplishing permanent repair as advised by M/s. Airbus Industrie.

The second aircraft operating flight AI-737 on 9th April, 2007 reported snag of RH Main Landing Gear (MLG) down lock indication. After following FCOM procedures, crew

made an uneventful emergency landing at Delhi. The defect of NLG down lock indicator was rectified and the aircraft was put back in service. The incident is under investigation and the recommendations will be complied with as and when the investigation is completed to avoid recurrence of such happenings.

(e) While specific steps to avoid recurrence of such happenings will be taken on receipt of the investigation report, Air India aircraft are maintained to the highest airworthiness standards under the Continued Airworthiness Programmes. All the tasks are carried out as required by Original Equipment Manufacturers' (such as Boeing, Airbus, General Electric, Pratt and Whitney etc.) Maintenance Planning Document (MPD) and schedules approved by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The infrastructure used by Air India is as per recommendations made by Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).

[Translation]

Phasing out of MiG-23

*411. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR :

SHRI MILIND DEORA :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Air Force has phased out MiG-23 aircraft from its service;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any Swing-Wing aircraft has been inducted in its place;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any action plan is being executed to develop and produce indigenous MiG or other Swing-Wing category aircraft as per the requirements of the Indian Air Force; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Upon completion of assigned technical life, the aircraft are progressively phased out.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) Some variants of MiG aircraft were manufactured by M/s. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). However, no MiG aircraft are being manufactured by HAL now. Repair and overhaul facilities of certain type of aircraft have been set up by HAL and IAF. The Indian Air Force is continuously updating itself with advanced technologies.

[English]

Revision of Pay Scales in PSUS

*412. SHRI SUNIL KHAN :

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN :

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

(a) whether the employees of Burn Standard Company Limited (BSCL), Braithwaite and Company Limited (BCL), Tyre Corporation of India Limited (TCIL) and Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company Limited (BWEL) are getting pay scales still at the level of 1987 scale;

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

(c) the steps being taken to revise the pay scales in such PSUs keeping in view the high inflation rate prevailing in the market?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) :

(a) No, Sir. The employees of Burn Standard Company Limited (BSCL), Braithwaite and Company Limited (BCL), and Bharat Wagon and Engineering Company Limited (BWEL) are getting 1992 scale of pay. Only the employees of Tyre Corporation of India Limited (TCIL) are getting 1987 scale of pay.

(b) TCIL, BSCL and BWEL are loss making and BIFR referred Companies. Only BCL has been revived during 2005-06 and has been discharged from purview of BIFR on 29.06.2006. The DPE guidelines for pay revision stipulate the following:—

- (i) In respect of sick enterprises referred to the BIFR, revision of pay scales would be strictly in accordance with rehabilitation packages approved or to be approved by the BIFR and after providing for the additional expenditure on account of pay revision in these packages; and
- (ii) The resources for meeting the increased obligation for salaries and wages must be internally generated and must come from improved performance in terms of productivity and profitability and not from Government subvention.

Since BSCL, BCL, BWEL and TCIL are not generation enough resources to pay for the higher pay scale of 1997, therefore these PSEs could not give 1997 pay scales to their employees.

(c) The steps taken include revival of BSCL, BWEL and TCIL through restructuring/revival proposals. So far as BCL is concerned, all out efforts are being made to improve the financial condition after its restructuring.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps/LPG Agencies

*413. SHRI BAGUN SUMBRUI :

SHRI CHANDRA DEV PRASAD RAJBHAR :

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

(a) the number of retail outlet dealerships of MS/HSD and LPG agencies allotted by IOC/HPCL/BPCL/IBP in the country particularly in Delhi and Haryana during the last three years;

(b) the number of Petrol Pumps/LPG agencies likely to be opened during 2007-08, State-wise and company-wise;

(c) the number of LPG agencies and petrol pumps allotted to SCs/STs during the last three years, State-wise and company-wise;

(d) whether full quota of SCs/STs was not covered while allotting the agencies/retail outlets;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA) : (a) During the last three years, i.e., 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07, the public sector oil marketing companies, viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and IBP Co. Limited (IBP), have allotted 12120 RO dealerships of Motor Spirit/High Speed Diesel (MS/HSD) and 639 LPG distributorships in the country including the States of Delhi and Haryana. The details are as under:—

Year	All India		Delhi		Haryana	
	RO	LPG	RO	LPG	RO	LPG
2004-05	4951	509	10	0	68	0
2005-06	5173	81	4	0	73	0
2006-07	1996	49	3	1	79	0
Total	12120	639	17	1	220	0

(b) During the year 2007-08, 3,554 RO dealerships and 188 LPG distributorships are likely to be opened by OMCs. The State-wise and Company-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(c) During the last three years, i.e., 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07, 2444 RO dealership of Motor Spirit/High Speed Diesel (MS/HSD) and 144 LPG distributorships were allotted to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SCs/STs) in the country. The State-wise and Company-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(d) to (f) OMCs have reported that the number of LPG agencies/Retail Outlets allotted to persons belonging to SCs/STs categories is in line with the 25% reservation provided for these categories in the selection guidelines. However, there is a slight shortfall of 0.15% in allotment of petrol pumps in case of IOC and 0.3% in allotment of LPG agencies in case of HPCL. The main reasons for shortfall are non-availability of suitable candidates, complaints/court cases pending against the selection process.

Statement-I*State-wise number of RO dealerships/LPG distributorships likely to be opened during 2007-08*

State/UTs	IOC		HPC		BPC		IBP**
	RO*	LPG	RO	LPG	RO	LPG*	RO
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Andhra Pradesh		9	65	21	71		23
Arunachal Pradesh		0	0	0	0		4
Assam		0	3	0	4		3
Bihar		0	40	3	27		20
Chhattisgarh		0	28	0	20		7
Goa		0	4	1	8		0
Gujarat		5	50	4	51		15
Haryana		0	35	1	51		14
Himachal Pradesh		3	2	1	6		4
Jammu and Kashmir		5	20	3	8		1
Jharkhand		0	11	2	24		5
Karnataka		1	45	3	73		18
Kerala		0	40	0	56		23
Madhya Pradesh		1	57	8	48		4
Maharashtra		7	88	5	84		46
Manipur		1	0	0	1		1
Meghalaya		0	4	0	1		9
Mizoram		0	1	0	0		2
Nagaland		0	0	0	0		2
Orissa		0	26	0	31		10
Punjab		17	65	3	61		19

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Rajasthan		0	50	4	60		11
Sikkim		0	0	0	0		0
Tamil Nadu		1	55	8	61		25
Tripura		3	0	0	0		0
Uttaranchal		0	5	3	6		4
Uttar Pradesh		6	69	23	35		34
West Bengal		3	34	5	16		33
Union Territories							
Andaman and Nicobar Islands		1	0	0	0		0
Chandigarh		0	0	1	0		0
Dadra and Nagar Haveli		0	0	0	0		0
Damand and Diu		0	0	0	0		0
Delhi		0	1	1	2		1
Lakshadweep		0	0	0	0		0
Pondicherry		0	2	0	10		1
Total	1600	63	800	100	815	25	339

* State-wise details not yet finalized.

** Does not deal with LPG.

Statement-II

*Number of RO dealerships/LPG distributorships allotted to SCs/STs during the last three years
(i.e., 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07)*

State/UTs	IOC		HPC		BPC		IBP	
	RO	LPG	RO	LPG	RO	LPG	RO	LPG
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Andhra Pradesh	124	23	105	8	56	8	7	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Arunachal Pradesh	2	0	0	0	2	5	0	0
Assam	27	0	1		5	0	0	0
Bihar	14	3	28	0	3	0	1	0
Chhattisgarh	17	4	31	2	33	0	9	0
Goa	3	0	3	1	8	0	0	0
Gujarat	49	2	56	0	56	0	18	0
Haryana	64	3	61	0	41	0	18	0
Himachal Pradesh	23	0	15	0	3	0	8	0
Jammu and Kashmir	18	1	23	2	25	0	0	0
Jharkhand	13	1	14	1	2	0	6	0
Karnataka	19	0	86	0	75	0	28	0
Kerala	53	0	61	0	31	1	32	0
Madhya Pradesh	49	0	61	1	92	0	5	0
Maharashtra	37	8	100	4	108	0	32	0
Manipur	3	7	0		0	0	0	0
Meghalaya	31	1	9	0	4	0	8	0
Mizoram	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Nagaland	8	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Orissa	48	2	36	1	32	0	0	0
Punjab	76	4	110	0	80	0	37	0
Rajasthan	112	1	123	3	92	0	7	0
Sikkim	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	127	5	103	12	68	5	19	0
Tripura	1	0		0	0	0	0	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Uttaranchal	14	0	0	3	3	0	6	0
Uttar Pradesh	145	11	90	7	45	14	30	0
West Bengal	45	1	33	1	23	1	23	0
Union Territories								
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Daman and Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delhi	1	0	1	0	1	2		0
Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pondicherry	6	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Total	1136	80	124	27	890	37	294	0

**Independent Regulator In Hydrocarbon
Sector**

*414. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY :
SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR :

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

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to set
up an independent regulator for upstream and downstream
segments in the Hydrocarbon sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other steps taken by the Government to
regulate the price structure of various petroleum products?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL
GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA) : (a) and (b) Government has
no proposal to set up an Independent Regulator for
upstream segment in the Hydrocarbon Sector. Upstream
segment of Hydrocarbons is regulated by the Government
through Directorate General of Hydrocarbons

However, Government has decided to set up a
Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) to
regulate the refining, processing, storage, transportation,
distribution, marketing and sale of petroleum, petroleum
products and natural gas excluding production of crude oil
and natural gas so as to protect the interests of consumers
and entities engaged in specified activities relating to
petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas and to
ensure uninterrupted and adequate supply of petroleum,

petroleum products and natural gas in all parts of the country and to promote competitive markets and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The PNGRB Bill, 2006 received the Presidential assent on 31.3.2006 and the PNGRB Act, 2006 was notified in the Gazette of India on 3.4.2006 as Act No. 19 of 2006.

(c) In order to formulate a long-term pricing policy in respect of petroleum products, the Government had constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister to examine different aspects of pricing and taxation of petroleum products. The Committee submitted its report on 17.2.2006.

The Government has accepted the following recommendations of Dr. Rangarajan Committee Report:-

- (i) Implementation of principle of trade parity with reduction in customs duty on petrol and diesel from 10% to 7.5%;
- (ii) Permitting autonomous adjustment in prices of sensitive petroleum products by Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) without prior consultation with the Government; and
- (iii) Restricting, 'in principle', subsidy on PDS

Kerosene to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families only.

[Translation]

Railway Projects

*415. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR :

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the projects undertaken by the Railways in the backward and remote areas during the last three years, Zone-wise;

(b) the progress of work done so far on these projects and the expenditure incurred thereon during the said period; and

(c) the time by which these projects are targetted to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) :

(a) to (c) Zone-wise details of the New Line and Gauge Conversion projects taken up by Railways in the last three years primarily on socio-economic considerations for providing Broad Gauge connectivity to backward, remote and under developed areas alongwith their Kilometres, Cost, Expenditure incurred upto March, 2007, Outlay 2007-08, targets wherever fixed is attached as statement.

Statement

(Figures are in Crores of Rupees)

Sl. No.	Zonal Railway	Name of the Project	Plan Head	KMS	Cost	Outlay 2007-08	Expenditure incurred during last 3 years	Target
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	East Central	Chhapra-Muzzafarpur	New Line	84.65	379	2.50	0.00	Not fixed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2.	East Central	Darbhanga-Kusheshwar Asthan	New Line	70.14	205	8.00	0.00	Not fixed.
3.	East Central	Motihari-Sitamarhi	New Line	76.7	211	4.47	0.00	Not fixed.
4.	North Eastern	Hathua-Bhatni	New Line	79.64	230	40.00	57.25	Hathua-Bathua Bazar (22 Kms)-2007-08
5.	North Eastern	Chhitauni-Tumkuhi Road	New Line	58.88	235	5.00	0.01	Not fixed.
6.	North Western	Ajmer-Phulera-Ringus-Rewari	Gauge Conversion	295	469	125.00	139.26	Phulera-Ringus-Rewari (210 Kms) - 2007-08
7.	Northeast Frontier	Araria-Galgolia (Thakurganj)	New Line	100	300	0.50	0.00	Not fixed.
8.	Northeast Frontier	Azra-Bymihat	New Line	30	200	1.00	0.00	Not fixed.
9.	Northeast Frontier	Dimapur-Kohima (Zubza)	New Line	88	850	1.00	0.00	Not fixed.
10.	Northeast Frontier	Aluabari Road-Siliguri	Gauge Conversion	76	170	15.00	0.00	Not fixed.
11.	South Central	Jaggayapet-Mallacheruvu	New Line	19.1	53.2	10.00	4.20	Jaggayapet-Mallacheruvu (19 Kms) - 2007-08
12.	South Central	Manoharabad-Kotapalli	New Line	148.9	379	0.01	0.45	Not fixed.
13.	South Central	Obulavaripalle-Krishnapatnam	New Line	113	426	10.00	8.27	2009-10
14.	South Central	Vishnupuram-Janapahar	New Line	11	42.1	2.00	0.01	Not fixed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15.	South East Central	Chhindwara-Nagpur	Gauge Conversion	149.5	384	70.00	10.74	Not fixed.
16.	South Western	Kolar-Chickballapur	Gauge Conversion	96.5	99.4	64.00	5.00	Not fixed.
17.	Southern	Tindivanam-Gingee-Tiruvannamalai	New Line	70	125	10.00	0.00	Not fixed.
18.	Southern	Tindivanam-Nagari	New Line	179.2	456	10.00	0.00	Not fixed.
19.	Southern	Dindigul-Pollachi-Palghat and Pollachi-Coimbatore	Gauge Conversion	224.9	343	30.00	0.01	Podanur-Coimbatore (6 Kms) - 2007-08
20.	Southern	Manmadurai-Virudhnagar	Gauge Conversion	66.55	97.2	25.00	0.01	Not fixed.
21.	Western	Pratapnagar-Chhota Udepur	Gauge Conversion	99.27	228	50.00	30.42	Pratapnagar-Bodeffi (85 Kms) - 2007-08
22.	Western	Bharuch-Samni-Dahej	Gauge Conversion	62.36	166	2.60	0.01	2008-09
23.	Western	Rajpipla-Ankleshwar	Gauge Conversion	62.89	115	10.00	0.00	Not fixed.

Outsourcing of Works by IRCTC

*416. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of various works awarded for execution by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) under the policy of outsourcing during the last three years and the current year and the steps taken to bring about transparency in this matter;

(b) the details of financial performance of IRCTC under internet-ticketing and railway tourism during the said period;

(c) whether the Railways have made arrangements for use of modern technology for developing IRCTC; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) :

(a) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) under policy of outsourcing has executed the following major works during the last three years and the current year:—

- (i) Post implementation of support, development maintenance of internet ticketing website;
- (ii) Design, development of modular stalls at stations;
- (iii) Re-designing of lay-out of pantry car;
- (iv) Design of base kitchens of New Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata;
- (v) Operation and maintenance of packaged drinking water plants (Rail Neer) at Nangloi (Delhi) and Danapur (Patna);
- (vi) Development and support of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)'s corporate portal;
- (vii) Development of Rail Enquiry Application (REA) for integrated train enquiry system;
- (viii) Development of Tourism portal of Railways;
- (ix) Development and Maintenance of Mumbai Suburban season ticketing system; and
- (x) Post implementation support for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).

The above works were awarded through transparent tendering system under competitive bidding process.

(b) Details of financial performance of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) under Internet ticketing and Railway Tourism are as under:—

Internet Ticketing

(Rupees in crores)

Particulars	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07 (provisional)
No. of Tickets	728404	1281033	2573612	6823481
Total Income	3.72	7.10	12.76	25.81
Total Expenditure	5.30	6.31	9.25	19.79
Profit/Loss (before tax)	-1.58	+0.79	+3.51	+6.02

Railway Tourism

(Rupees in crores)

Particulars	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07 (provisional)
Total income	7.09	6.62	6.26	8.71
Total Expenditure	7.69	6.99	7.57	10.22
Profit/Loss (before tax)	-0.60	+0.37	+1.31	+1.51

(c) and (d) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has adopted modern technologies for internet ticketing and integrated train enquiry system that are running on the applications like computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) and National Train Enquiry System (NTES) designed and maintained by Center for Railway Information System (CRIS). All the

Zonal Offices of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) are connected through Rail Tel network with the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) servers.

Besides, IRCTC is setting up mechanical launderettes having state of the art technology at various important stations near the washing lines under public private partnership (PPP) model and have already undertaken renovation of base kitchens / cooking units. Cell kitchens are also being set up by IRCTC on public private participation (PPP) basis to supply meals to trains. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is also setting up Automatic Vending Machines (AVMs) of latest technology to dispense hot and cold beverages and Water Vending Machines (WVMs) having latest modern technology viz. Reverse Osmosis etc. During 2006-07, 267 AVMs and 2 WVMs have been operationalised. Targets for AVMs and WVMs during 2007-08 are 600 and 700 respectively. Pilot project on Integrated Train Enquiry System (CAI Centres) is under implementation.

[English]

Gas Pipeline Projects of GAIL

*417. SHRI JUAL ORAM :

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE :

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

(a) the details of the on-going gas pipeline projects of Gail (India) Ltd.;

(b) whether the GAIL (India) Ltd. has chalked out any plan to expand their network of piped gas distribution in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the areas which are proposed to be covered under the said plan; and

(e) the time by which the proposed expansion plan is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA) : (a) Major ongoing pipeline projects of GAIL are as under:-

1. Dahej - Uran Pipeline Project (DUPL):

2. Dabhol - Panvel Pipeline Project:

The details of these projects are as under:-

S. No.	Project Name/Description	Actual/ Anticipated Completion Date	Anticipated. Cost (Rs. In Cr.)	Cumulative Expenditure (Rs. In Cr.) as on 31.03.07)	Physical Progress (as on 15.04.07)
1.	Dahej - Uran Pipeline The main pipeline is from Dahej to Panvel and a branch line is from Panvel to Uran.	May' 07	1521.23	671.96	85.2%
2.	Dabhol Panvel P/L is an extension of Dahej to Panvel pipeline. Spur lines are drawn from the above main line depending on the customers' location.	May' 07	1326.52	325.62	92.1%

Dahej - Uran pipeline (DUPL) network is envisaged for supply of RLNG from Dahej PLL terminal to customers in Uran, Trombay, Thane-Belapur and Ambevili regions in Maharashtra. Dabhol - Panvel pipeline network is an extension of DUPL for evacuation of RLNG from Dahej and Dabhol LNG terminals and natural gas from KG Basin to customers in Thal, Pune, Patalganga and Khopoli regions in Maharashtra.

(b) to (e) Government has permitted GAIL (India) Limited to invite "Expression of Interest" for taking capacity in five sections of gas pipeline on common carrier basis as pr following details:-

- Dadri - Bawana - Nangal pipeline
- Chainsa-Gurgaon-Jhajjar-Hissar Pipeline
- Jagdishpur-Haldia Pipeline
- Dabhol-Bangalore Pipeline
- Kochi - Kanjirkkod - Bangalore/Mangalore Pipeline

In addition to above, GAIL has also envisaged capacity augmentation of existing Dahej-Vijaipur Pipeline (DVPL) and Vijaipur-Dadri Pipeline (Gas Rehabilitation & Expansion Project) for transportation of gas.

Dadri-Bawana-Nangal Pipeline

The Dadri-Bawana-Nangal pipeline will be an extension from the already existing main transmission pipeline GREP (Vijaipur-Dadri) with tap-off at downstream of Dadri.

Chainsa-Gurgaon-Jhajjar-Hissar Pipeline

The Chainsa - Gurgaon - Jhajjar - Hissar pipeline is starting from Chainsa on the GREP pipeline and passing through Gurgaon, Jhajjar and Hissar.

Jagdishpur-Haldia Pipeline

The Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline is starting from Jagdishpur and passing through the states of Bihar and Jharkhand. It will have provision for bi-directional flow, i.e., from Haldia to Jagdishpur/Jagdishpur to Haldia.

Dabhol-Bangalore Pipeline

Dabhol - Bangalore pipeline starts from Dabhol and passes through Bangalore in the state of Karnataka with a provision for a spur line to Goa state. The pipeline will pass through the Districts of Ratnagiri and Kholapur in Maharashtra, Districts of Belgaum, Dharwad, Haveri, Davanagere, Chitradurga, Tumkur and Bangalore in Karnataka.

Kochi-Kanjirkkod - Bangalore/Mangalore Pipeline

The Kochi Kanjirkkod - Bangalore/Mangalore pipeline starts from Kochi and passes through Kanjirkkod in the state of Kerala, extending to Bangalore in the state of Karnataka with a spur line from Kanjirkkod to Mangalore. The pipeline to Bangalore will pass through Palghat, Coimbatore, Tiruppur, Erode, Salem and Krishnagiri while the spur line to Mangalore will pass through Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargod.

Planned Commissioning date for all the five pipeline above is 36 months from the date of publication of Notification in the official gazette under sub-section (1) of Section 3 of the Petroleum and Minerals (Acquisition of Right of User in Land) Act, 1962.

Oil and Gas Blocks Offered Under NELP-VI

*418. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL :
SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA :

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

(a) whether there is any proposal to award new oil and gas blocks under the sixth round of bidding under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Empowered Committee of Secretaries has given its recommendations in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the appropriate amount likely to be realized through bids?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA) : (a) to (e) Government of India has already awarded and signed Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) in respect of 52 blocks (Onland, Offshore

and Deepwater Blocks) for exploration of oil and gas under the sixth round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VI) with various Exploration and Production (EandP) companies on 2nd March, 2007. The blocks were awarded to the successful bidders through transparent international competitive bidding process duly approved by the Government, which considered the recommendations of the Empowered Committee of Secretaries and the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs. The details of the 52 blocks are given in the enclosed statement. The operator has to purchase the data pertaining to the block for which he submits the bid. During NELP-VI, data worth Rs. 77.59 crores was sold. In the even of discovery and commercial production of oil and gas from the awarded blocks, Government will get royalty and profit petroleum as stipulated under respective PSCs.

Statement

NELP-VI Block Details

S. No.	Basin	Block Name	Approx. Area (Sq. KM.)	Ref. No. On Map	Off Shore/State	District
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Deep Water Blocks (24)						
1.	Kerala-Konkan	KK-DWN-2004/1	12324	D-1	Western Off.	N.A
2.	Cauvery	CY-DWN-2004/1	10302	D-4	Eastern Off.	N.A
3.		CY-DWN--2004/2	12059	D-5		N.A
4.		CY-DWN--2004/3	12017	D-6		N.A
5.		CY-DWN--2004/4	12025	D-7		N.A
6.		CY-DWN--2004/1	13451	D-8		N.A
7.		CY-DWN--2004/2	9994	D-9		N.A

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	Krishna Godavari	KG-DWN-2004/1	11951	D-10		N.A
9.		KG-DWN-2004/2	11851	D-11		N.A
10.		KG-DWN-2004/3	6205	D-12		N.A
11.		KG-DWN-2004/4	11904	D-13		N.A
12.		KG-DWN-2004/5	11922	D-14		N.A
13.		KG-DWN-2004/6	10907	D-15		N.A
14.		KG-DWN-2004/7	11856	D-16		N.A
15.	Mahanadi - NEC	MN-DWN-2004/1	9885	D-17		N.A
16.		MN-DWN-2004/2	11813	D-18		N.A
17.		MN-DWN-2004/3	11316	D-19		N.A
18.		MN-DWN-2004/4	8822	D-20		N.A
19.		MN-DWN-2004/5	10454	D-21		N.A
20.		NEC-DWN-2004/1	7790	D-22		N.A
21.		NEC-DWN-2004/2	8706	D-23		N.A
Shallow Offshore Blocks (6)						
22.	Gujarat - Saurashtra	GS-OSN-2004/1	6589	1	Western Off.	N.A
23.	Gulf of Cambay	CB-OSN--2004/1	2616	2		N.A
24.	Mumbai	MB-OSN--2004/1	1520	3		N.A
25.		MB-OSN--2004/2	741	4		N.A
26.	Palar	PR-OSN--2004/1	9417	5	Eastern Off.	N.A
27.	Krishna-Godavari	KG-OSN--2004/1	1131	6		N.A

*N.A. – Not Applicable

S. No.	Basin	Block Name	Approx. Area (Sq. KM.)	Ref. No. On Map	Off shore/State	District
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Onland Blocks (25)						
28.	Mizoran	MZ-ONN-2004/1*	3213	7	Mizoram (2)	Aizawl, Serchhip, Mamit and Lunglei
29.		MZ-ONN-2004/2*	3619	8		Lunglei, Saiha, and Lawangtlai
30.	Assam	AA-ONN-2004/1	144	9	Assam (5)	Sibsagar
31.		AA-ONN-2004/2	218	10-A and B		Dibrugarh
32.		AA-ONN-2004/3*	1252	11		Lakhimpur and Dhemaji
33.		AA-ONN-2004/4*	95	12		Tinsukia
34.		AA-ONN-2004/5*	46	13		Tinsukia
35.	Purnea	PA-ONN-2004/1*	2537	14	Bihar (1)	Araria, Kishanganj and Purnia
36.	Ganga	GV-ONN-2004/1*	8354	15	Uttar Pradesh (1)	Ambedkar Nagar, Sultanpur, Jaunpur, Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Mau, Ballia, Deoria, Sant Kabir Nagar, Basti and Gorakhpur
37.	South Rewa	SR-ONN-2004/1*	13277	16	Madhya Pradesh	Shahdol, Sidhi, Umaria, Anuppur and Dindori

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38.	Vindhyan	VN-ONN-2004/1*	5801	17	Rajasthan (5)	Bundi, Kota, Chittaurgarh, Bhilwara
39.		VN-ONN-2004/2*	4466	18		Jhalawara, Kota & Baran.
40.	Rajasthan	RJ-ONN-2004/1	4613	19		Ganganagar, Hanuman Garh
41.		RJ-ONN-2004/2	2196	20		Bikaner, Jaisalmer
42.		RJ-ONN-2004/3	1330	21		Jaisalmer, Bikaner
43.	Cambay	CB-ONN-2004/1	32	22	Gujarat (5)	Mehsana
44.		CB-ONN-2004/2	423	23		Anand and Kheda
45.		CB-ONN-2004/3	113	24		Bharuch, Vadodara and Anand
46.		CB-ONN-2004/4	70	25		Bharuch
47.		CB-ONN-2004/5	75	26		Bharuch and Vadodara
48.	Deccan Syncline	DS-ONN-2004/1*	2649	27	Maharashtra (5)	Dhule, Jalgaon and Nandurbar
49.	Krishna-Godavari	KG-ONN-2004/1	549	28	Andhra Pradesh (2)	E.Godavari and Yanam (UT)
50.		KG-ONN-2004/2	1140	29		W. Godavari and Krishna
51.	Cauvery	CY-ONN-2004/1	214	30	Tamil Nadu (2)	Cuddalore and Nagapattinam
52.		CY-ONN-2004/2	375	31		Ariyalur

*Frontier Blocks.

Import of Defence Equipments

*419. SHRIMATI SATHEEDEVI :

SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of defence equipment production units functioning in the country;

(b) whether the Government is importing many defence equipments from abroad;

(c) if so, the names of the countries from where these are imported; and

(d) the total expenditure incurred on import of defence equipments during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) to (d) 47 Defence production units – 8 Defence Public Sector Undertakings and 39 Ordnance Factories located at different parts of the country are functioning under the Department of Defence Production. Part of the equipment requirements of the Defence Forces is being met through import. Major foreign sources/countries with which contracts were concluded for acquisition of defence items include Russia, USA, UK, France, Israel, Ukraine, Germany, Italy, etc.

The expenditure incurred on import of defence equipment during 2003-2004, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 is as under:—

Year	Revenue	Capital	Total (Rs. in Crore)
2004-05	4221.10	8431.84	12652.94
2005-06	3524.29	15740.95	19265.24
2006-07	4211.47	7890.02	12101.49

[Translation]

Late Running of Trains

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

(a) whether late running of trains in the country is causing a lot of inconvenience to the passengers and loss of revenue to the Railways;

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

(c) whether an Expert Committee is proposed to be constituted by the Railways on punctuality of train services; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) :

(a) No, Sir.

The overall punctuality performance of Mail/Express trains from April 2006 to March 2007 (month-wise) is as under:-

Months	Broad Gauge (%)	Metre Gauge (%)
April, 06	91.7	91.1
May, 06	91.2	96.9
June, 06	91.8	97.3
July, 06	93.7	98.4
August, 06	93.8	97.3
September, 06	92.0	97.6
October, 06	92.4	99.3
November, 06	91.9	99.5
December, 06	88.8	99.5
January, 07	87.9	99.5
February, 07	90.9	99.3
March, 07	92.9	98.8

(b) Following steps are being taken by Indian

Railways to improve operations and the punctuality of passenger carrying trains:-

1. Intensive, round the clock monitoring of trains at all three levels viz. Divisional Zonal Head Quarters and Railway Board.
2. Launching of punctuality drives from time to time.
3. Running of trains at maximum permissible speed subject to observance of safety limits and speed restrictions.
4. Improvements in Time tabling to provide a clear path.
5. Improvements in standard of maintenance of assets to reduce equipment failures.
6. Counseling and motivating staff to ensure punctual running.
7. Liaison with State Government to tackle the Law and Order problems and miscreant activities.
8. Up-gradation of technology of track, rolling stock and signaling.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Guidelines for Freight Incentive Schemes

3902. SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have notified policy guidelines for freight incentive schemes on tariff including an incentive scheme for traditional empty flow direction on March 28, 2006 wherein discount on freight upto 30% on transportation of goods is allowed on the return journey;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some of the Railway Divisions are not complying with the above guidelines;

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

(e) whether limestone raw material is being deprived of freight incentive scheme by the Northern Railway;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor;

(g) whether the Railways have received any request from the Government of Himachal Pradesh regarding the above matter to remove the discrepancy in the scheme and extend the benefit of concessional tariff rate on transportation of goods by trains from northern region to other region, particularly in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Jharkhand; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Railways had notified policy guidelines for freight incentive schemes on tariff including an incentive scheme for traditional empty flow direction. 30% freight discount in lean season and 20% freight discount in busy season was granted on incremental traffic in the notified Traditional Empty Flow Directions under the Incentive Scheme for Traditional Empty Flow Direction, subject to certain terms and conditions.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) Raw Material to Steel Plants was excluded from the purview of the scheme of March 28, 2006. It is no longer so.

(g) and (h) Yes, Sir. As per Rate Circular No 64 of 2006, sanction of the Ministry of Railways was accorded

to grant freight concession on movement of Limestone from Northern Railway to Eastern Railway and South Eastern Railway under the Long Term Special Incentive Scheme. Northern Railway was asked to examine the specific proposal in detail under Long Term Special Incentive Scheme and was allowed to grant freight concession upto 20% and 30% in busy and lean season respectively, provided the proposal was financially viable. Further, concession on Limestone has been permitted in the current Incentive Scheme for Traditional Empty Flow Direction issued vide Rate Circular No 25 of 2007 which is effective from 04.4.2007.

[English]

Execution of Works by IRCON

3903. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the time from when defence works (MAP) by IRCON International Limited have been going on in Allahabad and Jhansi;

(b) the date from which labour license was obtained by IRCON for this work;

(c) the time by which this work is likely to be completed;

(d) the number of contractors whose contracts have been extended and the number of those whose contracts have been cancelled alongwith the basis on which contracts have been cancelled;

(e) whether provisions of Labour Act were adhered to before obtaining labour licenses and minimum wages law is being abided by in the said works; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) The time from when defence works (MAP) by IRCON International Limited have been going on in Allahabad and Jhansi is as under:-

Name of the works	Date of starting
MAP Allahabad	10.09.2004
MAP Jhansi	26.10.2004

(b) IRCON was not required to take the labour licence under Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970. DG/MAP, Ministry of Defence, is the principal employer as registered with Regional Labour Commissioner, Kanpur, for the MAP works for these stations. Labour licence is required to be obtained by the contractors who engage contract labour.

(c) The completion time of these works are as under:-

Name of works	Date of completion
MAP Allahabad	31.3.2008
MAP Jhansi	31.3.2008

(d) :

Name of works	Contracts extended/ cancelled/withdrawn	Reason for cancellation of contracts
MAP Allahabad	Extended - 4 (Four) Cancelled - Nil Party withdrawn - 1 (One)	Not applicable
MAP Jhansi	Extended - 13 (Four) Cancelled - 1 (One) Party withdrawn - 2 (Two)	Poor performance of the contractor

(e) and (f) Yes, by the contractors of IRCON who engage contract labour. The minimum wages law is being

abided by all the contractors who have engaged contract labour. The certificates in this regard have been obtained from the said contractors before making payments against monthly bills in the said works.

Manufacturing of Water Bowsers

3904. SHRI RAKESH SINGH : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any difference in the prices of the same kind of vehicles being manufactured by the Government and private vehicle manufacturing companies to meet the requirement of Army in the country;

(b) if so, whether inspite of higher prices the order for manufacturing Water Bowsers to meet the requirement of Army is being placed with the private companies instead of Vehicle Factory, Jabalpur;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government proposes to reconsider its decision and place the order of the said Water Bowsers with the Vehicle Factory, Jabalpur; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAO INDERJIT SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir. Considering basic price of the 2 KLtr Water Bowser vehicles, without statutory taxes, price of private manufacture is less than price of Vehicle Factory, Jabalpur (VFJ). However, issue price of ex-VFJ vehicle is cheaper, compared to the issued price of the vehicle of the private manufacturer.

(b) and (c) Order to private manufacturer has been placed considering immediate operational requirement of the Army and inability expressed by VFJ to meet the same. The said order is placed only after taking No Objection Certificate (NOC) from Vehicle Factory, Jabalpur/Ordinance Factory Board in this regard.

(d) and (e) In view of reply above, the questions do not arise.

[English]

Railway Projects

3905. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of (i) Rangiya-Murkongselek gauge conversion, (ii) Azra-Bymihat; and (iii) Dimapur-Kohima New Line projects which were declared as National projects;

(b) the amount allocated and spent on these projects during 2006-07 alongwith the allocation made for 2007-08 both from internal resources as well as from the budgetary support; and

(c) the target set for completion of these railway projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) Details of outlay, expenditure during 2006-07 and allocation from Normal Railway Plan during 2007-08 and status of the following National Projects are as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

Project	Outlay during 2006-07	Expenditure upto March, 07	Outlay during 2006-07	Present status
1	2	3	4	5
Rangiya-Murkongselek	10	2.10	22	Part detailed estimate for Rangiya-Rangpara North section has been

1	2	3	4	5
				sanctioned. Soil exploration and preparation of plans etc. taken up. Tenders for bridges processed on Rangliya-Rangpara North section.
Azra-Burnihat	0.01	0	1	Preparatory works taken up.
Dimapur-Kohima	0.01	0	1	Preparatory works taken up.

All these projects have been declared as "National Projects." However, the mode of funding is to be decided. The matter has been processed for further necessary action. No target for completion of these projects has been fixed.

[Translation]

Distribution of Electricity in Military Cantonment Area

3906. SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has accorded permission to any private Electricity Distribution Company to supply electricity in cantonment area during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the justification for permitting the private electricity distribution companies keeping in view the security and defence reasons; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

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

[English]

National Wine Board

3907. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government proposes to establish a National Wine Board in order to promote grape production and processing in the country;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the Board is likely to start working?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY) : (a) to (c) Government proposes to establish a National Wine Board in order to promote grape production and processing in the country.

The main objectives to establish a National Wine Board are as under:—

- to promote infrastructure facilities for grape and other fruits processing and wine making industry.
- to promote cooperative efforts among grape growers and processing industries.

- to undertake research and development in new technologies.
- to give training to highly skilled manpower.
- to give proper guidance to grapes/fruits growers and disseminate best viticulture practices.
- to set up quality testing facilities.
- to promote marketing and export.
- to advise Government on various policy issues and technical issues relating to grapes/fruits/wine etc.

The proposed Board will start functioning after approval of the Government is obtained.

[Translation]

New Railway Line between Ajmer and Kota

3908. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

- (a) the progress made in regard to survey for laying new railway line between Ajmer and Kota;
- (b) the proposed route of the said new railway line;
- (c) the agency involved in the said survey;
- (d) the amount sanctioned and spent for this purpose; and
- (e) the time by which the survey work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) The survey between Ajmer and Kota has been taken up. The proposed line will be passing via Nasirabad, Bundi.

- (c) The survey work is being done departmentally.
- (d) The cost of the survey is Rs.10.50 lakh.

The outlay provided for 2006-07 was Rs. 4 lakh and an amount of Rs. 6.5 lakh has been provided for the year 2007-08.

(e) The survey work is likely to be completed by June, 2008.

Stoppage of Intercity at Mahidpur Road Station

3909. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

- (a) the rake composition of Nizamuddin-Indore-Nizamuddin Intercity train service;
- (b) the details of sale of tickets of said train at Mahidpur Road railway station in January, February and March 2007 for up/down both ways;
- (c) the required essential number of sale of tickets at a station for providing stoppage of said train; and
- (d) the action taken to provide permanent stoppage to said train at Mahidpur Road station?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) Composition of 2415/2416 Indore-Nizamuddin Intercity Express is General Class-cum-luggage-cum-Brake Van-2, General Class-4, Sleeper Class-12, AC-three Tier-3, AC-two Tier-1, First AC-Cum-AC-two Tier-1=23 coaches.

(b) The per day average sale of tickets at Mahidpur Road railway station for the pair of 2415/2416 Indore-Nizamuddin Intercity Express train is as under:-

Month	2416 UP	2415 DN
January 07	15	19
February 07	14	12
March 07	14	15

(c) The minimum tickets required to be sold is 40 per day per train for sleeper class for a distance of 500 kms. or its money equivalent.

(d) Permanent stoppage of 2415/2416 Indore-Nizamuddin Intercity Express at Mahidpur Road is not commercially justified.

[English]

Hazira-Dabhol Gas Pipeline

3910. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the target fixed for completion of Hazira-Dabhol gas pipeline project alongwith present status thereof;

(b) whether the Union Government proposes to curtail present share of Gujarat from the Hazira-Dabhol gas pipeline;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Union Government has received any representation in this regard;

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

(f) the steps taken by the Union Government to protect the interest of Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) The expected target for completion and operation of Hazira-Dabhol gas pipeline project is 20th May, 07. As of date 97% pipeline has been welded and 92% lowered. The commissioning activities have been taken up simultaneously.

(b) and (c) There is no such proposal.

(d) to (f) No, Sir.

[Translation]

Renewal of Licences of Reserved Category Contractors

3911. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any provision to renew the licenses of the contractors of reserved category has been made in the Catering Policy, 2005;

(b) if so, whether the said renewal process has started; and

(c) if so, the names of the stations and contractors whose licenses have been renewed so far by Railways/ IRCTC as per the said policy?

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

(b) and (c) Zonal Railways and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) have been instructed to renew contracts of reserve category catering units. Accordingly, such contracts are being renewed as and when they are due for renewal subject to satisfactory performance and payment of all dues.

The Fire of Ashtra Missile

3912. SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE :
SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI :
SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the 'Ashtra', the indigenously developed air-to-air missile, has been successfully tested; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :
(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) One ballistic flight and two control flights were

undertaken during March 2007 from Integrated Test Range (ITR), Balasore. The flight executed precisely all pre-determined and pre-programmed manoeuvres and achieved the mission objectives set for them.

[English]

Mature Man Management in Army

3913. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a need for "more mature man management" in the Army to combat the growing incidents of fratricidal killings and suicides in the Force and high pay package to the soldiers to adequately compensate for the risks and hazards they face in the course of duty;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is also considering orientation course for officers in Armed Forces; and

(d) if so, the extent to which the Government has considered this man management and pay hike to the Armed Forces in the country?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) to (d) In order to prevent incidents of suicide and fratricides in the Army, various steps have been taken which also include measures for better man management. Some of these measures are:-

- (i) Study by Defence Institute of Psychological Research, Delhi to identify factors, which lead to these incidents and suggest remedial measures;
- (ii) Impart training to Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) to act as counsellors in sensitive areas;
- (iii) Increased formal and informal interaction between senior and junior officers, improved accessibility

of leaders and frequent interaction of junior leaders with soldiers, better man management and prompt attendance to grievances;

- (iv) Strengthening time tested reporting and feedback system in the unit;
- (v) Liberalised leave policy to attend to domestic problems;
- (vi) Identification and counselling of persons who are at higher risk of combat stress by Regimental Medical Officers, junior leaders and unit commanders;
- (vii) Counselling by religious teachers;
- (viii) Psychological counselling by psychiatrists where required;
- (ix) Training capsules in relaxation exercise including yoga/meditation; and
- (x) Rotation of units and individuals to minimize exposure to stress.

These measures are being monitored by the senior officers. All officers and other personnel in the Services have been sensitized to the above issues.

Government have also decided to strengthen the Zilla Sainik Boards (ZSBs) to make them more responsive to the problems and difficulties of the soldiers and their families and establish a network so that the problems of families of soldiers are intimated to the ZSBs who may follow up the matter with the concerned civil authorities. The nearest nominated unit also should be in touch with ZSBs and give feedback to the unit of the soldier.

Armed Forces are already having a well organized system of in-service training programme for officers to upgrade their skills to enable them to meet the emerging needs and challenges.

Government has set up 6th Central Pay Commission to go into the question of pay and allowances and service conditions etc. of Central Government employees including defence personnel. The three services have submitted a joint memorandum to the 6th Central Pay Commission.

[Translation]

Historical Monuments in Punjab

3914. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the details of protected monuments located in Punjab;

(b) the amount spent on the maintenance of the said monuments during the last three years;

(c) the revenue earned by the Government from the said monuments during the above period; and

(d) the norms for declaring any structure as protected monuments?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) There are 31 monuments/sites in Punjab which have been declared as of national importance as per list enclosed as statement.

(b) The amount spent on conservation, preservation, and maintenance of these monuments during the last three years is as under:-

2004-05	Rs. 66.21 lakhs
2005-06	Rs. 62.26 lakhs
2006-07	Rs. 91.83 lakhs

(c) The details of revenue earned from these monuments in Punjab during the last three years is as under:-

2004-05	Nil
2005-06	Rs.30,000/-
2006-07	Rs. 35,000/-

(d) The Ancient monuments are protected and declared as of national importance as per section 4(I) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. "Ancient Monument" means any structure, erection or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment; or any cave, rock-sculpture, inscription or monolith, which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for not less than one hundred years, and includes:-

- (i) the remains of an ancient monument;
- (ii) the site of an ancient monument; and
- (iii) such portion of land adjoining the site of an ancient monument as may be required for fencing or covering in or otherwise preserving such monument.

Statement

The Detailed List of Centrally Protected Monuments under the Jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India in Punjab

S.No.	Name of the monument/site	Locality	District
1	2	3	4
1.	Gateway of Mughal Sarai Akbar or Jahangir on the old Delhi and Lahore Road	Amanat Khan	Amritsar

1	2	3	4
2.	Gateway of Mughal Sarai Akbar or Jahangir on the old Delhi and Lahore Road	Fatehabad	Amritsar
3.	Road Bagh Road	Amritsar	Amritsar
4.	Fort	Bhatinda	Bhatinda
5.	Mound know as Mud Fort	Abohar	Ferozpur
6.	Saragarli Memorial (Removed vide notification No. 818 dated 13.3.1927)	Ferozpur	Ferozpur
7.	Baradari (generally known as Anarkali)	Batala	Gurdaspur
8.	Shamsher Khan's tomb	Batala	Gurdaspur
9.	Takht-e-Akbari	Kalanaur	Gurdaspur
10.	Mughal Kos Minar	Cheema Kalan	Jalandhar
11.	Mughal Bridge	Dakhni	Jalandhar
12.	Mughal Kos Minar	Dakhni	Jalandhar
13.	Sarai including gateways	Dakhni	Jalandhar
14.	Mughal Kos Minar	Jahangir	Jalandhar
15.	Theh Gatti (Mound)	Nagar	Jalandhar
16.	Mughal Kos Minar	Nakodar	Jalandhar
17.	Tombs of Mohd. Momin and Hazi Jamal	Nakodar	Jalandhar
18.	Sarai including gateway	Nurmahal	Jalandhar
19.	Mughal Kos Minar	Shampur	Jalandhar
20.	Mughal Kos Minar	Tut Kalan	Jalandhar
21.	Mughal Kos Minar	Uppan (Uppal)	Jalandhar
22.	Mughal Kos Minar	Veerpind	Jalandhar
23.	Kos Minar	Ghungrali Rajputan	Ludhiana
24.	Kos Minar	Lashkri Khan	Ludhiana
25.	Kos Minar	Ludhiana (Dhandari Kalan)	Ludhiana

1	2	3	4
26.	Kos Minar	Ludhiana (Sherpur)	Ludhiana
27.	Ancient Site	Sunet	Ludhiana
28.	Kos Minar	Sanehwal	Ludhiana
29.	Ancient site near college compound	Ropar	Ropar
30.	Ancient Buddhist Stupa and site, Sanghol.	Fatehagarh Sahib	Ropar
31.	Summer Palace of Maharaja Ranjit Singh	Amritsar	Punjab

[English]

Blacklisted Non-Governmental Organisations

3915. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the Non-Governmental organisation blacklisted during 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 for misappropriation of funds provided for social services under various schemes of the Ministry;

(b) the amount embezzlement for which charges have been made alongwith other charges that have been made against each of them;

(c) the details of investigation made in each of these cases and outcome thereof; and

(d) the details of amount recovered from these NGOs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN) : (a) and (b) Whenever it is found that the recommendations of the State Governments are forged or that the organization is not working or the number of beneficiaries is much less than claimed or the quality of services is not commensurate with the quantum of grant-in-aid, the organizations are blacklisted after following due procedure. The details are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) and (d) The State Governments have been requested to seize the assets created out of the Government assistance, dispose of the same, deposit the money thus collected with the Government and recover the balance amount as arrears of land revenue.

Statement

Details of NGO's blacklisted during 2003-04 to 2006-07 under various schemes of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Sl.No.	Name and address of the Organisation	Amount Involved (Rs.)
1	2	3
1.	Kamla Mahila Avam Bal Kalyan Samiti, 9, Mandi tiraha, Plakhua Distt. Ghaziabad, UP	2,97,305

1	2	3
2.	Geeta Gramin Samaj Sewa Samiti, Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh	4,77,970
3.	Shiv Samaj Kalyan Samiti, Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh	3,50,240
4.	Shri Ballabh Shiksha Prasar Samiti, Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh	11,63,970
5.	Aradhana Gramin Seva Samiti, Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh	16,38,810
6.	Sadhna Gramin Seva Samiti, Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh	7,28,250
7.	Orissa Voluntary Association for Rural Socio Development, At Kalipat, Post Gopikud, Jagatsinghpur, Orissa	5,49,090
8.	National Youth Service Action and Social Development Research Institute, Santhasara, Post Santhapur, Via Gondia, Distt. Dhenkanal, Orissa	6,08,439
9.	Talagarda Harijan Sahi Mahilia Samiti, At Gaikanpali, Post Taparla, Via Gopalpur, Distt. Sundergarh, Orissa	71,550
10.	Peoples Organization of Orientation and Renovation, At and PO Nuagaon, Via Srigida, Distt. Keonjhar, Orissa	1,71,630
11.	Shri Damodaran Sanjeevaiah Memorial High School, Sector-6, Bhilai Nagar, Distt. Durg, Chhattisgarh	1,17,000
12.	Ayush Foundation, D-4, Panchvati Apartments, Panchvati Cross Road, Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad, Gujarat	66,195
13.	Gram Chetna Seva Samiti, House of Shri Dhanajay Rathor, Reti Phatak, Kila Gate, Loha Mandi, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh	(i) Non Res Pr. School=5,11,200 (ii) Type and Short-hand = 85,410 (iii) Hostel (Sec) = 1,87,110
14.	Adarsh Shivam Social Development Society, House of Shri S.C. Tiwari, Bharoli Road, Near S.P. Office, Bhind, MP.	73,755
15.	Shantidoot, Biharshareef, Patna	3,40,200
16.	Tapasvi sewa charitable trust, Nadiad, Kheda, Gujarat	3,40,200

1	2	3
17.	B.R. Ambedkar De addiction centre, Ahemdabad Gujarat	3,40,200
18.	Central English Academy, Central English Academy Bhawan, Near Dr. NC. Ghosh Lane, New Jakkanpur, Patna, Bihar	3,40,200
19.	Youth Mobilisation for National Advancement, 604, Indraprastha, West Boring Canal Road, Patna	6,53,400

[Translation]

Condition of Railway Quarters

3916. CH. MUNAWAR HASSAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways are not providing facilities in its quarters as per their entitlements to its employees in various divisions of railways;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) whether in the absence of proper maintenance of quarters located at Naya Bazar, Delhi the allottees and their families are facing a number of difficulties;

(d) if so, whether the Railways propose to take steps for providing facilities in said railway quarters as per entitlement of the allottees including arrangements for drinking water; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the steps are taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) Subject to availability of resources, priorities of works and other factors, Railways endeavour to provide and maintain required facilities in the quarters as per entitlement of the employees. However, all the desirable facilities are not available in some of the Railway quarters due to the constraints mentioned above.

(c) to (e) In Naya Bazar Colony, Delhi, there are 137

number of Type-I Railway quarters. Railways have endeavoured to provide all the basic facilities including arrangements for drinking water in all the staff quarters as per their entitlements. Basic amenities are available in these quarters except in 10 old quarters which are proposed for renovation during 2007-08. Corporate Welfare Plan has also been prepared for taking up various works in staff quarters in all Railways, such as roof treatment, replacement of doors, augmentation of water supply, rewiring and replacement of electrical logistics, reconstruction of over aged units etc.

[English]

Rehabilitation of Tsunami Affected Families

3917. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether he has recently visited and made a survey of the Tsunami affected States particularly the Andaman and Nicobar Islands;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has taken any steps to restore normal life in the above States and to expedite the relief and rehabilitation measures to the affected families;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) and (b) Raksha Mantri visited Andaman and Nicobar Islands on 24th and 25th March 2007 and was briefed on the operational and administrative responsibilities of Andaman and Nicobar Command. He also interacted with the troops, ex-servicemen and officers of Andaman and Nicobar Administration.

(c) to (e) The Government has taken appropriate steps to restore normal life in the Islands. The measures made include rebuilding of infrastructure, assistance to affected families etc.

Food Samples

3918. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of food samples taken by medical health department of Railways during 2001, 2002 and 2003 respectively and the number out of them which were found adulterated or unsafe; and

(b) the action taken in the cases where samples were found adulterated or unsafe?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) (i) Number of Food Samples Taken Under PFA Act:—

Year	No. of samples taken	No. of samples found unsatisfactory	Action taken on unsatisfactory Samples
2001	6813	274	Prosecution is launched in the competent court of law as per provisions of PFA Act, 1954 and in case of minor offences, departmental action e.g. fine, etc. is imposed.
2002	7357	321	
2003	6720	230	

(ii) Number of Food Samples Taken Under Quality Control :—

Year	No. of Samples taken	No. of Samples found unsatisfactory	Action taken on Unsatisfactory Samples
2001	17623	1048	Commercial department is informed to initiate penal action as per provisions of the contract with catering contractors/ departmental remedial action.
2002	17608	1150	
2003	17050	1033	

For the samples collected under Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, prosecution is launched in the competent court of law as per provision of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 and in case of minor offences departmental action is initiated.

For the samples collected under Quality Control, information is given to the concerned commercial department at divisional/zonal level to initiate penal action as per provisions of the contract with the catering contractors/departmental action.

National Heritage Sites

3919. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the name and number of national heritage sites State-wise;

(b) funds allocated and utilized on their conservation during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government proposes a new law on preservation and conservation creation and maintenance of database State-wise of national heritage sites and antiquities and also to utilize funds from MPLADS for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) There are 3667 monuments/sites which have been declared as of national importance. The State-wise list is enclosed as statement.

(b) The funds allocated and utilized for their conservation, preservation, maintenance and development of environment during the last three years are as under:

(Rupees in lakhs)

Year	Allocation	Expenditure
2004-05	Rs. 9344.00	Rs. 9288.00
2005-06	Rs. 10367.06	Rs. 10194.54
2006-07	Rs. 10860.43	Rs. 10816.06

(c) and (d) There is no proposal to enact a new law for the preservation and conservation, maintenance of State-wise database of heritage sites and antiquities or for the utilization of funds from MPLADs.

However, the Government has set up a National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities for preparation of a national database on monuments and antiquities. As the budgetary allocations for heritage conservation is not adequate, a proposal has been made to consider funding the renovation and maintenance of monuments out of MPLAD funds.

Statement

List of Centrally Protected Monuments under the Jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India

Sl.No.	Name of State	Nos. of Monuments
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	137

1	2	3
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	5
3.	Assam	53
4.	Bihar	70
5.	Chhattisgarh	47
6.	Daman and Diu (U.T.)	12
7.	Goa	21
8.	Gujarat	202
9.	Haryana	90
10.	Himachal Pradesh	40
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	69
12.	Jharkhand	12
13.	Karnataka	507
14.	Kerala	26
15.	Madhya Pradesh	286
16.	Maharashtra	286
17.	Manipur	1
18.	Meghalaya	8
19.	Nagaland	4
20.	N.C.T. Delhi	175
21.	Orissa	78
22.	Pondicherry (U.T.)	7
23.	Punjab	31
24.	Rajasthan	162

1	2	3
25. Sikkim		3
26. Tamil Nadu		413
27. Tripura		5
28. Uttar Pradesh		742
29. Uttaranchal		42
30. West Bengal		133
Total		3667

**Special Allowance to Employees of
BRO and MES**

3920. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the soldiers serving in the counter insurgency (CI) grid in the North-East and Jammu and Kashmir are entitled for a special allowance ranging from Rs.1600/- to 3900/-;

(b) if so, whether employees of Border Roads Organisation and Military Engineering Service are also entitled for the same on the same grounds;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to sort out this anomaly?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) The soldiers deployed in notified Counter Insurgency Operations are entitled for Special Compensatory Counter Insurgency Allowance (SCCIA) at the rates which range from Rs.1500 to Rs.3900 per month subject to the fulfilment of laid down conditions.

(b) to (d) The Civilians as well as Defence Service Personnel working in Boarder Roads Organisation (BRO)

and Civilians of Military Engineer Services (MES) are not entitled to SCCIA since they are not actually involved in the conduct of counter insurgency operations. However, the Defence Service Personnel of MES are entitled for SCCIA. It may be added that Civilian employees of BRO and MES working in some specified districts in Jammu and Kashmir are, however, entitled to certain incentives/special benefits as per order issued by Department of Personnel and Training.

**Stealing of Army Identities by Militants in
Jammu and Kashmir**

3921. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the large number of cases of stealing army identities in Kashmir by militants have come to the notice of the Government as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated April 2, 2007;

(b) if so, the details of such cases came to the notice of the Government during the last two years;

(c) whether SIM cards recovered over last 3 months from captured militants in Jammu and Kashmir were procured by the militants by using fake identify cards of army personnel;

(d) if so, whether any inquiry has been conducted by the Government in this regard;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) to (c) Two cases in Jammu and Kashmir have come to notice wherein militants have impersonated Army personnel to obtain SIM cards.

(d) to (f) No such inquiry has been conducted by the Army as Army personnel are not involved in the case.

Investigation in such offences fall under the responsibility of State Police.

Sub-Wholesalers of Kerosene

3922. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Union Government has decided to introduce sub-wholesalers of kerosene;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any State Government has raised objection for this and requested to drop the proposed action;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) and (b) The Government have approved an innovative pilot project for radically revamping the PDS kerosene distribution network with the primary objective of ensuring that this heavily subsidized product is actually made available in the required quantities at subsidized prices to the intended beneficiaries; and, secondly, to thus cap, reverse and eventually eliminate the diversion of PDS Kerosene for adulteration. The pilot project under the name of Jan Kerosene Pariyojana (JKP) was launched with effect from 2nd October, 2005 initially for a period of 6 months. Government has been reviewing the JKP from time to time and is taking necessary action to further streamline the system. The JKP pilot project has been launched in 414 blocks spread over 24 States in the country. The State Governments of Gujarat and Rajasthan have decided not to continue with implementation of JKP pilot project in 24 blocks and 13 blocks in the States with effect from 1.7.2006 and 1.10.2006 respectively.

Based on the Diagnostic Study conducted by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and

reviews taken by the Government, the pilot scheme was initially extended for 3 months upto 30th June 2006 and again upto 30th September 2006. It has now been further extended upto 30th June 2007.

This scheme provides, inter-alia, for setting up of 5-10 sub-wholesale points in each block between the wholesalers and retailers with a view to strengthening the distribution network.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. Many of the State Governments preferred not to have the three-tier system for kerosene distribution as they felt that creation of sub-wholesalers would result in increase in retail selling price of Public Distribution System (PDS) Kerosene apart from making it difficult for their agencies to monitor the distribution system.

It was decided by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas that in the States where it was not possible to implement the three-tier structure, efforts for creating such structure may be abandoned and distribution of SKO may continue through the existing two-tier structure.

Opening of Sainik School

3923. SHRI M. SHIVANNA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government of Karnataka has submitted a proposal to start Sainik School in Kudige, Kodagu district;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of Karnataka has allotted 55.93 acres of land to start the Sainik School at Kudige. It has conveyed its willingness to fulfill all obligations for opening

of a new Sainik School including the financial commitment of Rs. 25 crore spread over six to seven years for construction of permanent infrastructure of the school and the recurring expenditure of about Rs. 1.3 crore per annum.

(c) An inspection of the site selected for establishing Sainik School has been carried out. A confirmation from Service Hqrs. regarding availability of officers for being posted as Principal, Headmaster and Registrar in the school has been received.

Buddhist Tourism

3924. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether any agreement has been signed for tourism exchange/renewed interest in Buddhist tourism, particularly from South Asia;

(b) whether Japan or China have also shown interest in this regard;

(c) If so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of tourist arrivals in India from different countries during each of the last three years and the foreign exchange earned therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (c) Bilateral cooperation Agreements have been entered with several countries including China to promote India's tourism products including Buddhist tourism.

(d) Foreign exchange earnings for the last 3 years is as follows:—

(Rs. in crores)

2003	2004	2005
Rs. 16429.00	Rs. 21603.00	Rs. 25172.25

The list of tourists arrivals from different countries during the last 3 years is enclosed as statement.

Statement

Tourist Arrivals in India by Country of Nationality during 2003, 2004 and 2005

Nationality	2003	2004	2005
1	2	3	4

North America

Canada	107671	135884	157643
U.S.A.	410803	526120	611165
Total	5184774	662004	768808

Central And South America

Brazil	4528	7397	7005
Mexico	3563	4570	5398
Others	13563	16198	23183
Total	21654	28165	35586

Western Europe

Austria	16903	21093	27187
Belgium	17309	24007	25596
Denmark	11327	15805	20170
Finland	8001	12525	16258
France	97654	131824	152258
Germany	76868	116679	120243
Greece	3455	4468	4793

1	2	3	4
Ireland	7083	8996	10052
Italy	46908	65561	67642
Netherlands	40565	51211	52755
Norway	8400	10631	11194
Portugal	8158	10648	11457
Spain	30551	42895	45247
Sweden	18098	26154	28799
Switzerland	24463	28260	34311
U.K.	430917	555907	651083
Others	1306	1633	3074
Total	847966	1128297	1282119
Eastern Europe			
Czechoslovakia	3466	4114	4783
Poland	6336	8445	10983
C.I.S.	38526	61187	75242
Others	6924	8680	10437
Total	55252	82426	101445
Africa			
Egypt	3382	3781	4048
Kenya	16563	17538	19816
Mauritius	16308	19823	19760
Nigeria	5713	6659	10049
South Africa	23873	32148	39229

1	2	3	4
Tanzania	8515	9953	11193
Others	18999	22591	30706
Total	93353	115493	134801
West Asia			
Bahrain	4182	4414	4923
Israel	32157	39083	42866
Oman	12352	14927	14979
Saudi Arabia	9961	11929	12444
Turkey	5528	7008	7906
U.A.E.	21374	22668	24560
Yemen Arab Rep.	7717	8826	9423
Others	10325	13953	16720
Total	103596	122808	133821
South Asia			
Afghanistan	10079	12705	14025
Iran	17539	24733	28691
Maldives	18345	21099	33915
Nepal	42771	51534	77024
Pakistan	10364	67416	88609
Bangladesh	454611	477446	456371
Sri Lanka	109098	128711	136400
Bhutan	4082	7054	6934
Total	668689	790698	841969

1	2	3	4
South East Asia			
Indonesia	9078	11408	12640
Malaysia	70750	84390	96276
Myanmar	3609	4932	5652
Philippines	8091	10492	11422
Singapore	48368	60710	68666
Thailand	25754	33442	41978
Others	3276	3736	4774
Total	168926	209110	241408
East Asia			
China (Main)	21152	34100	44897
China (Taiwan)	12685	18179	18894
Japan	77996	96851	103082
Korea (South)	35584	47835	49895
Others	3089	4662	6799
Total	150506	201627	223567
Australasia			
Australia	58730	81608	96258
New Zealand	13283	16762	20463
Others	1836	2574	3057
Total	73849	100944	119778
Others	10233	14471	21818
Stateless	15516	1434	13490
Grand Total	2726214	3457477	3918610

[Translation]

**Extension of Intercity Express
Upto Bagaha**

3925. SHRI KAILASH BAITHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal to extend link intercity plying from Narkatiyaganj to Hajipur upto Bagaha; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be extended?

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

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

**Recommendations of Ajay Vikram Singh
Committee**

3926. SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the recommendations of Ajay Vikram Singh Committee regarding 'Times Scale' promotion of defence services officers have been accepted by the Army and Air Force but not by the Indian Navy;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :
(a) The Ajay Vikram Singh Committee was constituted to make recommendation for restructuring of the officers' cadre of the Army. With a view to reduce the age profile and supersession levels, and also to improve the vertical mobility in the Army, time scale promotion upto the rank of Colonel in the Army was approved on the basis of the

recommendations of the Ajay Vikram Singh Committee. Similar benefits of time scale promotion upto the rank of Captain in Indian Navy and upto the rank of Group Captain in Air Force were also approved.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Locking System on Tanks and Lorries

3927. SHRI UDAY SINGH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Oil Corporations have started fitting the unapproved locking system on the tank/lorries engaged in the transportation of petrol and diesel;

(b) whether the provision is bound to reach immediately on the spot for opening the locks etc. to prevent fire/blast for the safety of the public in case of accident of tank/lorries;

(c) whether this system is in violation of different condition of the licence and requirements of explosive rules; and

(d) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken against the officials of oil terminals of PSUs at Panipat for violating the explosive rules?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have started fitting security locking system on tank trucks to curb adulteration which is duly approved by Petroleum Explosive Safety Organization (PESO) formerly Department of Explosives.

(b) In case of accident of vehicle, a person can immediately reach the site of accident for opening the locks etc. The locks provided in tank trucks help in preventing leakage of the product, thereby minimizing the chances of fire and it also helps environmental protection. Transporter/tank truck crew are trained to take action in case of fire. Fire equipment is available at all times with tank truck. All

the tank truck crew also carry the certificate for handling petroleum products.

(c) No, Sir. The system is approved by Chief Controller of Explosives, Nagpur.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Award of BBA/MBA Degrees to Hotel Management Graduates/Post Graduates

3928. SHRI NAKUL DAS RAI : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to award the degree of BBA (Bachelor of Business Administration) and MBA (Master of Business Administration) in place of the degrees of B.Sc. (Hospitality Administration) and M.Sc. (Hospitality Administration) respectively being awarded for the Graduates and Post Graduates passing out from the Government run Institutes of Hotel Management under the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering in view of the predominance of management elements in the curriculum for these courses;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) There is no proposal under consideration to changeover the present system of B.Sc. and M.Sc. to BBA and MBA.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) The present system of awarding IGNOU degrees namely B.Sc. (Hospitality Administration) and M.Sc. (Hospitality Administration) is adequately serving the needs of the hospitality industry.

[Translation]

Selling of Medicines of Army Hospitals in Markets

3929. SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA :

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY :

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether some cases of selling the medicines from Army Hospitals in the markets have come to the notice of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken to check such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) to (c) Recently, one retired Army personnel was apprehended by Delhi Police with some medicines meant for Armed Forces Hospitals, in his possession. Further inquiry by the police revealed the involvement of a serving soldier of Army Hospital (Research and Referral) Delhi Cantonment. A First Information Report has been lodged by Delhi Police on 13th March 2007 in the matter. Army authorities have also ordered a Court of Inquiry to investigate the matter.

(d) Though security measures are already in place to avoid such instances, which include surprise checks at dispensaries and medical stores, monitoring of inventories and checks by security personnel, the same have been intensified further.

Ban on Goods Trains

3930. SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE :

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR :

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have received any information regarding Pakistan's putting a ban on all the goods trains bound for India;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the reasons for taking such action by Pakistan; and

(d) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

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

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Tourist Information Centres

3931. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Tourist Information Centres set up and presently functioning in various countries abroad and in the country with its strength of officers/staff;

(b) whether the Government has reviewed the functioning of such offices at regular intervals.

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) The Ministry of Tourism has 13 India Tourism Offices in various countries abroad and 20 Indian Tourism Offices in India. The total strength of officers and staff in Overseas India Tourism Offices is 59 and in domestic India Tourism Offices it is 247.

(b) and (c) Ministry of Tourism regularly reviews the functioning of India Tourism Offices both in India and abroad to ensure effective marketing of India Tourism products as well as liaison and coordination with State Governments/Union Territories and all stakeholders.

(d) Does not arise.

Increase in the Railway Network

3932. PROF. CHANDER KUMAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the latest railway network (route kilometres) in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal to increase the railway network in those States where it is less; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) The State-wise railway network (route kilometres) in the country as on 31.3.2006 (latest available) is given below:

State/Union Territory	Route Kms.
1	2
Andhra Pradesh	5,185
Arunachal Pradesh	1
Assam	2,284
Bihar	3,330
Chhattisgarh	1,186
Delhi	205
Goa	69
Gujarat	5,283
Haryana	1,595
Himachal Pradesh	285
Jammu and Kashmir	138
Jharkhand	1,955
Karnataka	3,002

1	2
Kerala	1,050
Madhya Pradesh	4,903
Maharashtra	5,528
Manipur	1
Mizoram	2
Nagaland	13
Orissa	2,281
Punjab	2,134
Rajasthan	5,838
Tamil Nadu	4,171
Tripura	64
Uttaranchal	345
Uttar Pradesh	8,546
West Bengal	3,911
Union Territory	
Chandigarh	16
Pondicherry	11
Total	63,332

Note : Remaining States/Union Territories have no railway line.

(b) and (c) Planning and execution of Railway projects for expansion of the network is done in an integrated and need based manner keeping the national perspective in view. Geographical boundaries of a State, per se, do not form a criterion for determining Railway investments, especially in a scenario where many Railway projects span

across more than one State. However, a number of new line projects have been taken up throughout the country which on completion would add to the route kilometres in various States.

Production of Titanium Dioxide

3933.DR. K.S. MANOJ : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Titanium Dioxide used for manufacturing aircraft are produced in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether ISRO has engaged in any MoU with the Kerala Metals and Minerals Ltd. for the production of Titanium Sponge;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory has developed any process for the production of Titanium Sponge; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) and (b) Titanium Dioxide is not, as such, used for manufacturing of aircrafts. However, Titanium Alloys are used for manufacturing of aircrafts. Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory (DMRL), Hyderabad has developed technology for production of Titanium Sponge which is used for producing these Titanium Alloys.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. In fact, there is tripartite Memorandum of understanding (MoU) among Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) of ISRO, Kerala Metals and Minerals Ltd. (KMML), and DMRL for production of Titanium sponge at KMML.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. DMRL has developed technology for production Titanium Sponge of very high quality for production of Titanium alloys, which are suitable for application in aircraft industries.

Setting up of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Centre at Chitradurga

3934.SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up an unmanned Aerial Vehicle Centre at Chitradurga;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the land for the project has been acquired;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the time by which it is likely to be set up; and

(f) the steps taken or being taken for rehabilitation/ resettlement of displaced persons?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) and (b) No, Sir. However, there is a proposal to set up an Aeronautical Test Range at Chitradurga for which three agencies namely, Civil Aviation Authority; Indian Air Force; and Government of Karnataka have been approached for preliminary discussions.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) It will take about three years after the acquisition of land.

(f) Based on the request made by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Government of Karnataka has initiated discussions with the affected people for their rehabilitation/resettlement.

Occupancy and Earnings of Trains

3935.SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have any data showing occupancy and earnings of individual trains;

(b) if so, the approximate number of the trains running with low occupancy during 2005-06 and 2006-07, Zone-wise;

(c) whether the Railways have made any study for low occupancy of such trains;

(d) if so, the measures taken by the Railways in this regard; and

(e) the steps taken for optimum benefits from the operations of such trains by the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) Study of occupancy and earning of trains is a continuous exercise being carried out by Zonal Railways to take corrective steps to improve the earning and occupancy wherever the occupancy is found low. Some trains have been cancelled due to low occupancy while quotas/compositions of trains have been changed in respect of some other trains with low occupancy so as to improve their patronization. No centralized statistics of train-wise occupation/earning is maintained covering both reserved and unreserved segments.

(d) and (e) The various steps which are being taken to improve the occupancy of less patronised trains areas are as under:—

- (i) Introducing fast services and reducing running time of existing trains;
- (ii) Making the timings of trains more convenient, if possible;
- (iii) Studying the profiles of trains through Passenger Profile Management (PPM) project to make necessary modifications like re-distribution of reservation quota, augmentation/reduction of load of train etc.;

(iv) Introducing new type of trains catering to specific requirements of passengers; and

(v) Cancellation of poorly patronised trains.

Permission to Foreign Airlines for Equity Participation in Domestic Airlines

3936.SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has any plan to allow equity participation by Foreign Airlines in the domestic airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Committee on Management of Airports

3937.SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE :

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI :

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA :

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI :

SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has constituted a Committee on the Management of airports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the salient features of the recommendations made by the Committee;

(c) the Government's reaction to the recommendations; and

(d) the details of the recommendations which have been accepted and implemented by the Government?

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

(b) to (d) A High Level Inquiry Committee (the R.C. Jain Committee) constituted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation had made major recommendations on the organizational set up, operational issues, Air Traffic Management and Communication, Navigation and Surveillance systems, Security, Emergency procedures, Customs, Cargo, Immigration, Airport facilities and Coordination in its report submitted on 14th July, 2000. The report was sent to the Airports Authority of India, Director General of Civil Aviation, Commissioner of Security (Civil Aviation), Ministry of Home Affairs, Customs, Immigration Department, etc. for implementing the recommendations, wherever feasible. The status of the implementation of the recommendations is reviewed from time to time.

[English]

Educational Backwardness Among Muslims

3938. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is aware of educational backwardness among the Muslims;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps being taken by the Government to improve the educational backwardness among Muslims?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) and (b) Government had constituted a High Level Committee to prepare a report on the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community

of India. The report of the Committee has been tabled in the Lok Sabha on 30th November, 2006. It is also available in the website www.minorityaffairs.gov.in Chapter four of the report deals with educational conditions of Muslims.

(c) An important objective of the Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities is to ensure that the benefits of various governmental schemes for the underprivileged reach the disadvantaged sections of the minority communities, including Muslims. Point No. A of the programme contains schemes for improving the educational opportunities available to minorities. The 15 Point Programme is also available in the website www.minorityaffairs.gov.in.

[Translation]

Increase in Reservation Quota for Physically Challenged Persons

3939. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL :
SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA :

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to increase the reservation quota for physically challenged persons keeping in view the increase in their population;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN) : (a) No, Sir. There is no evidence regarding increase in the population of physically challenged persons.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The present reservation of 3% is considered sufficient.

[English]

Development of Convention Tourism

3940. SHRI DR. M. JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has decided to develop Convention Tourism in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the cities that have been identified for development as destinations for holding international conferences, etc.?

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

(b) and (c) Ministry of Tourism is promoting Meetings, Convention, and Conferences through the 'Incredible India' Campaign, interactive CDs on the subject and through its offices in India and overseas. The Ministry extends support for setting up of large and small Convention Centres under the Scheme of Assistance for Large Revenue Generating Projects.

The Ministry of Finance also has a scheme of viability gap funding for setting up convention centres.

[Translation]

Renaming of Airports

3941. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI :
SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA :
SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the airports renamed in the country during the last three years;

(b) whether some proposals for renaming of airports are pending with the Union Government;

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

(d) the time by which these airports are likely to be renamed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) In the last three years, Nagpur airport and Leh airport have been renamed as Dr. Ambedkar International Airport and Kushok Bakula Rimpochhe Terminal respectively w.e.f. 20.4.2005.

(b) to (d) Request for renaming of following airports have been received:-

Aurangabad, Bhuj, Dabolim (Goa), Vadodara, Nanded, Raipur, Gondia, Belgaum, Madurai, Trivandrum, Bangalore International airport, Silcher, Jodhpur, Amritsar, Khajuraho, Srinagar, Dehradun, Lucknow, Jaipur and Varanasi.

The existing policy is generally to retain the name of cities for domestic airports, since passengers in general and especially foreign tourists and other visitors who may not be familiar with the local history find it easier to identify the airport when it is named after the city, which it serves.

Allocation of Funds for Development of Tourism

3942. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA
DESHMUKH :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the funds allocated and released to the States for development of tourism, particularly in backward and rural regions, during the Tenth Five Year Plan, State-wise;

(b) whether any new schemes have been formulated by the Government for development of tourism during the said plan;

(c) If so, the extent to which these schemes have been implemented; and

(d) the major tourism projects undertaken during the said plan period?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) The details are given in the enclosed statement.

(b) to (d) The schemes including revised schemes for development of tourism which were implemented during the 10th Plan are as follows:-

1. Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits
2. Assistance for Large Revenue Generating Projects
3. Incentives to Accommodation Infrastructure
4. Overseas Promotion and Publicity
5. Domestic Promotion and Publicity
6. Computerization and Information Technology
7. Assistance to IHMs/FCIs/NCHMCT etc.
8. Capacity Building for Service Providers

Statement

The Funds Allocated and Released to the States for Development of Tourism during the 10th Five Year Plan

(Rs. in lakhs)

S. No.	State	No. of Sanctioned projects	Sanctioned Amount	Released Amount
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1	6.25	5.00

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Andhra Pradesh	33	8428.24	7024.90
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	39	6087.85	4995.88
4.	Assam	41	6635.61	5248.87
5.	Bihar	26	6632.44	4908.29
6.	Chandigarh	10	508.45	415.93
7.	Chhattisgarh	37	7746.70	5452.25
8.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	4	37.86	32.98
9.	Daman and Diu	9	581.85	469.01
10.	Delhi	45	7123.36	5709.07
11.	Goa	7	157.26	135.26
12.	Gujarat	25	3726.79	2669.92
13.	Haryana	44	4895.42	3527.75
14.	Himachal Pradesh	55	7134.19	5566.25
15.	Jammu and Kashmir	64	14020.86	10393.53
16.	Jharkhand	12	4280.44	3316.95
17.	Karnataka	47	9052.02	6421.04
18.	Kerala	61	13809.94	11008.30
19.	Lakshadweep	1	7.00	5.60
20.	Madhya Pradesh	62	9724.34	7707.63

1	2	3	4	5
21. Maharashtra	52	8267.75	6737.33	
22. Manipur	17	1162.43	841.11	
23. Meghalaya	20	2668.69	2085.36	
24. Mizoram	30	6038.02	4782.98	
25. Nagaland	36	7441.48	6559.08	
26. Orissa	37	7235.39	5487.18	
27. Pondicherry	9	1685.16	1348.50	
28. Punjab	29	5544.82	3807.90	
29. Rajasthan	50	8183.85	6912.14	
30. Sikkim	49	7496.31	5623.37	
31. Tamil Nadu	62	10345.34	7895.38	
32. Tripura	21	1702.48	898.13	
33. Uttar Pradesh	44	9590.24	7863.17	
34. Uttaranchal	42	7673.42	6176.25	
35. West Bengal	39	5535.25	4161.07	
Total	1160	201167.50	156193.36	

[English]

Recommendations of Arjun Sengupta Committee

3943. SHRI SARVEY SATYANARAYANA :
SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN :

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

(a) whether the Government has taken any decisions on separation of ownership and management

of PSUs and granting them complete functional autonomy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is properly implementing the recommendations of Arjun Sengupta Committee; and

(d) if so, the details thereof as on date?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) :
(a) to (d) The Ad-Hoc Group of Experts (AGE) headed by Dr. Arjun Sengupta has made various recommendations on empowerment of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). The Government has accepted some of recommendations of AGE and granted greater functional autonomy to Navratna, Miniratna and other profit making CPSEs in the areas of capital expenditure, establishment of joint ventures/subsidiaries, human resources management and approval of foreign tours of functional directors, etc. The remaining recommendations made by AGE relating to ownership issues, audit of Government companies, Article 12 of Constitution, Parliament accountability, vigilance management in CPSEs, etc. are under consideration.

National Culture Fund

3944. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Culture Fund seeks support of Corporate Sector etc. to adopt or maintain monuments;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the success achieved in this regard during the last three years; and

(c) the response received from the corporate houses?

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

(b) and (c) The Fund aims at inviting the participation of the corporate sector in the task of promoting, protecting and preserving India's cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. The Fund requests the corporate sector to assist the NCF by adopting a monument of their choice for its conservation and preservation by signing an MoU and work is carried out under the aegis and supervision of Archaeological Survey of India.

The details of project undertaken for monuments with the help of Corporate Sector are given in the enclosed statement.

Progress of the projects is monitored by Project Implementation Committee set up for each project.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the Monument	Name of the Corporate Sector	Present Status
1	2	3	4
1.	Jantar Mantar, New Delhi	M/s. Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels, New Delhi	On going
2.	Lodhi Garden Tombs, New Delhi	M/s. Steel Authority of India Ltd.	-do-
3.	Jaisalmer Fort Rajasthan	World Monuments Fund, New York	-do-
4.	Konark Sun Temple, Orissa	Indian Oil Foundation and Indian Oil Corporation	-do-
5.	Taj Mahal, Agra	M/s. Indian Hotels Company Ltd.	-do-
6.	Hamayun's Tomb, New Delhi	Agha Khan Trust, Geneva	Completed

1	2	3	4
7.	Pardesi Synagogue Clock Tower, Cochin	World Monument Fund, New York	Completed

New Tourist Destinations

3945. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the projects received by the Government for the renovation and for setting up of new tourist destinations in different parts of the country during the last one year till March 31, 2007;

(b) the number of projects, out of them approved by the Government as on March 31, 2007;

(c) whether the Government has identified the new trend of world tourism which is applicable for India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Tourism extends central financial assistance for the tourism infrastructure development projects prioritized in consultation with State Govts./UTs for development of identified existing and new tourist destinations. Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned 128 projects amounting to Rs. 601.65 crore for development of destinations and circuits during the year 2006-07.

(c) and (d) Ministry of tourism has taken initiative to develop and promote new tourism products related to MICE Tourism, Medical and Wellness Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Cruise Tourism and Rural Tourism.

[Translation]

Introducing Y-Max Scheme at Railway Stations

3946. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways propose to introduce a scheme for using Y-Max technique at some railway stations in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the salient features of the scheme; and

(d) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) RailTel, a Public Sector Undertaking under the Ministry of Railways, is planning to provide broadband services at select railway stations using Wi-Max technology under public-private partnership.

(c) Using this technology, it will be possible to provide broadband services and Voice Over Internet Protocol services at the railway stations as well as towns/villages in the vicinity of railway stations. The stations will become hot spot zones and any passenger with suitable laptop/other device will be able to access internet facility.

(d) The investment on infrastructure to provide these services would be made by the private partner.

[English]

Development of Onshore Marginal Fields

3947. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO :

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

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has entered into service contract for development of onshore marginal fields;

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

(c) the reasons for not developing these marginal fields itself?

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

(b) The details of blocks offered are as under:-

(i) Khambel, West Bechraji and Hirapur blocks in Cambay Basin to M/s. Prize Petroleum Company Limited.

(ii) Bihubar, Barsilla, Laxmijan blocks in Assam-Arakan Frontier Basin to M/s. Assam Company Limited.

(iii) Bantumilli block in KG Basin to M/s Hydrocarbon Resources Development Co. (P) Ltd.

(iv) Charaideo Assam Shelf to M/s. Shiv Vani Oil and Gas Exploration.

(v) Karaikal, Vadatheru and Neyveli blocks in Cauvery basin and Mulikipalli, Sirikattapalli, Chintanapalli, Magatapalli and Medapadu blocks in KG Basin to M/s. KEIRSOS Maritime Limited.

(vi) Manepalli block in KG basin to M/s. BG Shirke Construction Technology.

(vii) Ghotaru, Kharatar, Bankia blocks in Rajasthan basin to M/s. Deep Industries Limited.

Besides, South Patan and Kamboi blocks in Cambay basin have been awarded to M/s. Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Limited, for which contract is yet to be signed.

(c) ONGC has entered into service contracts to reduce cost of development since these fields have lesser quantity of hydrocarbons distributed in several layers and are located far from existing infrastructure facilities.

Smuggling of Arms

3948. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether some insiders within the Army are smuggling arms out of the arsenal;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in the matter;
- (d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (e) the action taken by the Government against the officials found guilty; and
- (f) the steps the Government has taken to check smuggling of arms?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :
(a) to (f) As per reports received from the Army, no such incident has come to notice in recent times.

[Translation]

Computerised Reservation Centre in Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra

3949. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Railways are aware that passengers at several railway stations in Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra are facing a lot of difficulties in the absence of computerised reservation centres;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the action taken by the Railways in this regard;
- (d) whether the railways also propose to set up at least one computerised reservation centre in each district of the country; and

- (e) 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.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Provision of Passenger Reservation System (PRS) is at present available in 535 districts in the country and sanctioned in the remaining districts.

[English]

ECO Tourism

3950. SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN :
SHRI HITEN BARMAN :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

- (a) the proposals received by the Government for development of tourist infrastructure and promotion of eco-tourism during the last year and the current year, so far, State/UT-wise;

- (b) the proposals sanctioned by the Government during the above period and financial assistance provided therefor during the above period, State/UT-wise; and

- (c) the funds earmarked for development of eco-tourism during the current Plan Period?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Tourism extends Central Financial Assistance to the State/Union Territory Governments for development of tourist infrastructure and promotion of tourism including eco-tourism on the basis of the proposals received from them subject to availability of funds and inter-se priority. The Central Financial Assistance extended to the State/ Union Territory Governments in the financial year 2006-07 are given in the enclosed statement. No proposal has been received from the State/Union Territory Governments in the current financial year 2007-08.

- (c) The fund earmarked in the current financial year 2007-08 for Product Infrastructure Development for Destination and Circuit Scheme of the Ministry, including infrastructure development for eco-tourism is Rs.546.00 crore.

Statement

State-wise Tourism Projects Sanctioned during 2006-07

(Rs. in lakh)

Sl.No.	State/UT	Name of the Project	Amount Sanctioned
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Destination development of Laknavaram Lake as eco tourism destination in Warangal District	468.63
		Development of Golconda Qutub Sahib Tomb-Hakimpet-Shaikpet Sarai	500.00
		Integrated development of Beach Circuit comprising of Bhavikonda-Thotlakonda Pavuralakonda-Appikonda	571.93
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	Preservation of Heritage site (Stone Rampart) at yabgo, Dambuk Lower Dibang Valley District	283.22
		Development of Tourism Circuit Dirak-Wakro-Tezu-Hayuliang-Walong	772.26
		Construction of Tourist Complex at Parasuram Kund	462.68
		Development of Tourist Resort at Hollangi in Papumpare	167.14
3.	Assam	Construction of Integrated Convention Centre	454.28
		Development of Kamakhya and Satellite Pilgrimage Township of help	436.54
		Development of Sivasagar	369.05
		Integrated Development of Tourism Circuit-Orang-Tezpur-Bhalukpong-Biswanath-Chairiali-Gohpur	798.00
		Destination Development of Brahmaputra River front and Cruise vessel	385.52
4.	Bihar	Development of tourist circuit Bodhgaya-Rajgir-Nalanda	922.42

1	2	3	4
		Development of Kanwarai route circuit from Sultanganj to Deoghar	443.12
5.	Chhattisgarh	Integrated development of Baiga Circuit	683.80
		Infrastructure and Destination development of Rajmergarh (Amarkantak)	275.73
		Infrastructure and Destination development of Malhar	216.21
		Infrastructure and Destination development of Rajim	295.95
		Integrated development of tourism circuit of Jagdalpur-Nagamar-Matchkote-Pulcha-Koleng	730.20
		Development of Chitrakote	278.45
		Integrated development of Kamar Tourism Circuit	562.86
		Infrastructure and destination development of Bhoramdeo	331.97
6.	Gujarat	Integrated development of tourism circuit on Junagarh-Verabal-Porbandar-Dwarka	329.83
7.	Haryana	Development of Batkhal Lake	181.13
		Development of Panipat-Kurukshetra-Pinjore circuit	1630.03
8.	Himachal Pradesh	Development of Rohru and Chanshal	260.00
		Development of Sarahan and Shrikhand	416.00
		Development of Dharamsala	340.00
		Development of pilgrim circuit in Himachal Pradesh	780.00
		Development of Mandi-Vilaspur circuit	800.00
9.	Jharkhand	Development of tourist circuit Ranchi-Rajrappa-Hazaribagh-Itkhor	775.00
		Development of Sahebganj Rajmahal	131.47
		Development of Deoghar	417.57
10.	Karnataka	Beautification of Baro Sadhanakeri Park, Dharwad city	308.22

1	2	3	4
		Development of Muthyalamadu (Part Valley) near Bangalore	293.81
		CFA for Destination development of Linganamakki Garden at Jogfalls	494.98
		Integrated development of wilderness tourism circuit	226.88
11. Kerala		Destination development of Neyyar Dam	302.53
		Destination development of Kumarakom	234.35
		Destination development of Padmanabhapuram Palace Complex	308.19
		Integrated development eco tourism circuit on Neyyar-Panmudi-Thenmals-Konni-Gavi-Thekkady-Munnar-Chinnar-Parambikulam-Netklampathy-Neyyar wildlife sanctuary	581.78
		CFA for development of craft village at Iringal	392.00
		Destination development of Malankara Dam	332.41
		Destination development of Vazhani	305.54
		Destination development of Vagamon	334.46
		Development of Ranipuram as eco tourism destination	357.08
		Development of Peechi as a tourist destination	131.93
		Destination development of Dharamadam Island and Muzhappilangad beach	356.00
		Heritage circuit development of Thalassery and surrounding	429.62
12. Madhya Pradesh		Destination development of Mandu	471.74
		Destination of Narmada Parikrama circuit Part-II	774.99
		CFA for development of Narmada Parikrama circuit Part-I	665.00
		Development of Panna as a tourist destination	421.36
		Destination development of Jabalpur	460.43
		Development of Bhopal as a tourist destination	499.47

1	2	3	4
	Development of Maihar		296.79
13. Maharashtra	Development of New Mahabaleshwar Hill Station		15.00
	Integrated development Mumbai Fort Circuit		728.44
	Destination development of Kunkeshwar		314.04
	Infrastructure and destination development of Mahabaleshwar Phase-II		480.57
	Integrated development of Kolhapur circuit		704.03
	Development of Aurangabad Art and Craft Centre		442.16
14. Manipur	Development of Eco-tourism part at Imphal		345.29
	Development of Tourist Destination at Imphal		418.00
15. Meghalaya	Development of Tourist Destination Tura		487.00
	Circuit Development of Williamnagar-Jakarem-Nartianer-Jowai		800.00
16. Mizoram	Development of Tourist Destination Chalfih Tlang		499.00
	Development of Chatlang in Aizwal		487.45
	Development of Eastern Tourist Circuit-Keitum-N. Vanlaiphal-East Lungdar-Khawbung-Farkawn-Zokhathar-Hnahlan		782.78
	Development of Southern Tourist Circuit-Hrangchawkawn-Twipui-Lawngtia-Saitha-Vawmbuk-Sangau-Oathwanlaithai		768.10
17. Nagaland	Circuit Development Zunehboto-Tuensang Kiphiri		678.00
	Development of Aizuto-Zunehboto		438.94
	Destination development of Tuophema		464.72
	Circuit development of Governor's Camp (Workha)-Nui land-Jalikei		728.00
18. Sikkim	Circuit development of Lepcha Heritage Centre		171.22
	Development of Pilgrimage Tourism and other infrastructure at sang in East Sikkim		375.55

1	2	3	4
	Destination development of Saramsa		452.55
	Trekking Trail from Yangyang/Dhappar to Ghallay Dunga		115.07
	Development of Soreng in West Sikkim		498.96
	Development of tourist infrastructure at Aritar, Phodong		145.17
	Beautification and other Tourist Infrastructure at Tsongmo		384.64
	Development of Community Park at Bojey and Water garden at Hee pul		441.81
19. Orissa	Development of Simlipal		297.12
	Development of Chandipur-Talsari-Udaypur-Chandaneswar-Remuna-Panchlingeshwar-Nilagiri circuit		800.00
	Development of Koraput circuit :- Koraput-Deomali-Jeytori-Uppkolab-Gupteswar		692.00
	Development of eco tourism at Bhitarkanika		382.22
	Development of Satkosia		424.50
	Development of Gopalpur on Sea		115.00
	Development of Chilika Lake		389.00
	Development of Sakhi Gopal		166.92
20. Pondicherry	River site and beach development of Mahe		500.00
21. Punjab	Development of Freedom Trail		784.45
	Development of pilgrim circuit in Punjab		800.00
	Development of Kapurthala		361.00
	Development of Roopnagar		331.27
22. Rajasthan	Development of Udaipur		276.68
	Conservation restoration and preservation of Gagronpur Fort		281.71
	Development of Jaisalmer		315.45

1	2	3	4
23. Tamil Nadu	Development of Madurai as a destination		787.03
	Development of Puliancholai as a destination		97.02
	Development of Chennai-Kanchipuram-Thirukajhukundram-Mamallapuram tourist circuit		452.78
	Destination development of Kanyakumari		258.52
	Destination development of Thanjavur		427.46
24. Tripura	Destination Development at Chaturbhuji Devtari		274.00
25. Uttaranchal	Development of Jannotri Dham		448.99
	Development of Binsar-Bairnath-Bageshwar		728.54
	Development of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Route		371.15
	Wayside amenities at 7 places at Kuamun region		73.58
	Development of Harwar-Rishikesh		567.50
26. Uttar Pradesh	Development of various places in Aligarh District		497.04
	Development of Agra West Gate entry		758.00
	Revitalisation of Varanasi		786.00
	Development of Simoni Tourist Complex		397.86
	Development of Brij Chaurasi Kos Parikrama tourist circuit in Mathura		441.53
	Development of Mahabharat tourist circuit		445.63
	Development of Agra West Gate entry Phase-I		613.60
	Development of Beautification of Ram ki Paidi Ayodhya		112.85
27. West Bengal	Development of Tea tourist circuit in North Bengal		715.85
	Night Safari park at Jore Pokhari in Darjeeling		15.00
	Development of Kalimpong		498.38
	Tourism infrastructural facilities at Goke		355.49

1	2	3	4
		Development of beach tourism circuit in Purba Medinipur district	598.02
		Development of Eastern Dooars tourists circuit in Jalpaigudi district	683.58

Bathinda Refinery

3951. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA :

SHRIMATI PARAMJIT KAUR GULSHAN :

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

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn towards news-item captioned "Bathinda refinery hits FDI roadblock" appeared in the daily 'Tribune' dated March 31, 2007;

(b) if so, whether the work on the refinery has been held up;

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

(d) the present status of the construction work of the refinery alongwith the target fixed for completion;

(e) whether the completion work has been rescheduled;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken by the Government for timely completion of the work?

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

(b) to (d) M/s. Engineers India Limited (EIL) have been appointed as the Project Management Consultant (PMC). M/s. SBI Capital Markets Limited (SBICAP) have carried out the financial appraisal of the project and are the lead managers for debt syndication requirement for the project.

The infrastructure works such as land development, boundary wall, site grading, internal roads and drainage, raw water supply, approach roads to refinery site etc. have been completed. Various other infrastructure works are being taken up. Selection of the process licensors for the licensed units is in progress. Basic Design Engineering Packages for the non-licensed units are under preparation by EIL. Detailed engineering work is in progress. Construction works for various buildings at refinery site are in progress.

(e) and (f) The project schedule, as worked out by EIL, is 48 months from the date of re-commencement of activities and is targeted for mechanical completion by September, 2010. Pursuant to the conclusion of 'Deed of Assurance' with the Government of Punjab, the progress on the project is as per schedule.

(g) The progress of the project is being closely monitored so as to ensure its timely completion. In addition, annual targets have been set and incorporated in the 'Memorandum of Understanding' signed with the companies.

[Translation]

Development of FPI

3952. DR. CHINTA MOHAN :

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN" :

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

(a) whether the Government has decided to accelerate the expansion and development of food processing industry in the country by entering into an agreement with the French Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the role ascertained for Governments of the two countries under the above agreement; and

(d) the agreements entered into for food processing industry so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (d) In order to accelerate the expansion and development of Food Processing Industries in the country, the Ministry of Food Processing Industry, under the Plan Scheme of promotional activities in the Food Processing Sector, aims to facilities value added exports and cooperation with various countries in the areas of Technology, R and D, Laboratories and infrastructure like Cold Chain and Mega Food Parks.

There has not been any agreement with French Government on Food Processing Sector. However, during visit of a business delegation led by French Minister Mr. Nicolas Forissier, detailed discussion had taken place in the areas of setting up of Mega Food Parks, development of wine sector in the country, technology collaboration on Cold Chain, Food Processing Machinery, Meat Processing, etc. This is being followed up.

Purchase of Military Cargo Aircraft from US

3953. SHRI RABINDER KUMAR RANA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to sign an agreement of buying six military cargo aircrafts from the United States;

(b) if so, the details of the contract made between the two countries; and

(c) the time by which the aircrafts are likely to be purchased?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) A Letter of Request has been issued to the Government of United States in December, 2006 indicating the requirement of C-130J transport aircraft for the Air Force.

(b) and (c) No contract has been concluded for purchase of the aircraft.

[English]

Centrally Protected Monuments in Orissa

3954. SHRI B. MAHTAB : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of centrally protected monuments in Orissa;

(b) the amount spent on maintenance and upkeep of these monuments during the last three years including current year; and

(c) the revenue earned by the Government from these monuments during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) There are 78 monuments/sites in Orissa which have been declared as of national importance as per list enclosed as statement.

(b) During the last three years the following amount has been spent on conservation, preservation and maintenance of these monuments:-

2004-05	Rs. 388.17 lakhs
2005-06	Rs. 296.35 lakhs
2006-07	Rs. 298.98 lakhs

During the current financial year 2007-08, an amount of Rs. 325.00 lakhs have been allocated for conservation, preservation and maintenance of centrally protected

monuments/sites in Orissa. Of which expenditure of Rs. 2004 Rs. 123.46 lakhs
34.98 lakhs has been incurred so far.

2005 Rs. 120.81 lakhs

(c) The following revenue has been earned from
the ticketed monuments in Orissa during the last three years: 2006 Rs. 150.03 lakhs

Statement

*The detailed list of Centrally Protected Monuments under the jurisdiction of
Archaeological Survey of India in Orissa*

S.No.	Name of the monument/site	Location	District
1	2	3	4
1.	Chausatti Jogini temple together with three minor shrines	Jharial	Bolangir
2.	Ruined fortress	Agrahat, Bandals, Chaudar, Chhatisa, Govind Jew, Patna, Jaj, Bhariab, Kapaleswar, Kedareswar, Mundmal	Cuttack
3.	Ruins of the Buddhist temples and images	Bandareswar	Cuttack
4.	Bhubaneswar Mahadev temple	Bhabanipur (Balai Taluk)	Cuttack
5.	Hill containing many valuable sculptures, images and inscriptions, etc., of Buddhistic age. On the top, there is a math and a small temple of Mahakal	Chandia	Cuttack
6.	Ancient monuments of Barabati Fortress and the ruins and remains of all ancient edifices, gateways, etc., save the mosque	Cuttack	Cuttack
7.	Churagarh Fort locally known as Sarangarh, excluding the area acquired by the State Government	Dadhapatna	Cuttack
8.	Four colossal images in the compound of Jaipur the sub-divisional Officers Quarters, namely:- 1. Chamunda, 2. Indrani, 3. Kalijuga, 4. Varahi	Jaipur	Cuttack
9.	Three Buddhist images	Jaipur	Cuttack

1	2	3	4
10.	Ruins of Buddhist temples and images	Naltigiri (Lalitagiri)	Cuttack
11.	Hill containing many valuable sculptures and images	Ratnagiri	Cuttack
12.	Mahratta bridge locally known as the Athamualia (eighteen arches bridge) and also as Tentulimal bridge	Siriapur	Cuttack
13.	Monolith called Chandeswar Pillar	Siriapur	Cuttack
14.	Simhanatha Mahadeva temple	Simhanatha Pitha, Mauza Gopinathpur	Cuttack
15.	Pancha Pandava temple	Ganeshwarpur	Cuttack
16.	Durga temple	Baideswar	Cuttack
17.	Ancient site at Baneswaranasi	Padamal Pattana	Cuttack
18.	Mahimamani Temple	Ragadi (Banki)	Cuttack
19.	Ancient site at Chowdar	Chowdar	Cuttack
20.	Bringesvara Mahadeva temple	Bajrakot	Dhenkanal
21.	Rock-cut Vishnu	Rasol	Dhenkanal
22.	Gangadharaswami temple	Kottakolla	Ganjam
23.	Jagdiswaraswami temple	Kottakolla	Ganjam
24.	Bhima temple	Mahendragiri	Ganjam
25.	Kunti temple	Mahendragiri	Ganjam
26.	Yudhistra temple	Mahendragiri	Ganjam
27.	Ashoka rock inscriptions at Jaugada	Pandya	Ganjam
28.	Prehistoric sites	Baidyapur	Mayurbhanj
29.	Ruins of ancient fort	Haripurgarh	Mayurbhanj
30.	Prehistoric sites	Kuchai	Mayurbhanj
31.	Prehistoric sites	Kuliana	Mayurbhanj

1	2	3	4
32.	Paintings on the rock locally known as Ravana Chhaya and other ancient monuments and remains	Sitabhanji	Keonjhar
33.	Ancient site of Asurgarh fort	Asurgarh	Kalahandi
34.	Temple of Nilamadhava and Sidheswara	Gandharadhi	Phulbani
35.	Paschima Samnatha, Bhubaneswara and Kapilesvara temples	Baudh	Phulbani
36.	Bhaskareswar temples	Baragarh	Puri
37.	Brahmeswar temple with its minar shrines in the compound	Baragarh	Puri
38.	Nabakeswar Temple	Baragarh	Puri
39.	Rameswar Temple	Baragarh	Puri
40.	Magheswar temple with its minar shrine	Besuaghai	Puri
41.	Ananta Basudeva temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
42.	Bakeswar temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
43.	Chitrakami temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
44.	Jameswar temple with its minar shrine	Bhubaneswar	Puri
45.	Lord Lingraj Temple with all the minar temples in the compound namely:-	Bhubaneswar	Puri
	1. Amania well		
	2. Astmurti		
	3. Chandeswar Deb		
	4. Gopaluni temple		
	5. Ladukeswar temple		
	6. Parbati temple		
	7. Sabitri Deve temple		
	8. Sakreswar temple		
	9. Sathidosi temple		

1	2	3	4
46.	Maitreswar temple with all the minar temples in the compound	Bhubaneswar	Puri
47.	Makareswar temple with its minar	Bhubaneswar	Puri
48.	Markandeswar temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
49.	Mukteswar temple with its minar shrines but excluding the Murich Kunda	Bhubaneswar	Puri
50.	Paramguru temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
51.	Papnasini Tank	Bhubaneswar	Puri
52.	Parsurameswar temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
53.	Raja Rani temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
54.	Sahasralinga Tank	Bhubaneswar	Puri
55.	Sari Deul	Bhubaneswar	Puri
56.	Sidheswar temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
57.	Sisiresvara temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
58.	Varahi temple	Bhubaneswar	Puri
59.	Rock inscription of the edicts of Ashoka and the sculpture of elephant	Dhauli	Puri
60.	Small rock cut cell with a niche and an inscription of Santikara	Dhauli	Puri
61.	Chausath Yogini temple known as Mahamaya temple	Hirapur	Puri
62.	All ancient caves, structures and other monuments or remains situated on the Oudaygiri and the Khandagiri hills except the temple of Parasnath on the top of the Khandagiri hill and also the temple in front of the Barabhuji and the Trisula Caves	Jagmara	Puri
63.	Sun Temple	Konark	Puri

1	2	3	4
64.	Bridge of eighteen openings over the Madhupur stream known as Athara Nala Bridge.	Puri	Puri
65.	Shri Jagannath Temple and subsidiary shrines	Puri	Puri
66.	Daksha Prajapati temple	Raghunathpur	Puri
67.	Ancient remains inside and outside the rampart	Sisupalgarh	Puri
68.	Vikramkhola rock inscriptions	Vikramkhola	Sambalpur
69.	Dharma Mahakal Temple	Ratnagiri	Jajpur
70.	Jagannath Temple	Jajpur Town	Jajpur
71.	Trilochaneswar Temple	Jajpur Town	Jajpur
72.	Varahanatha Temple	Jajpur Town	Jajpur
73.	Buddhist site (excavated)	Udaigiri	Jajpur
74.	Ancient Buddhist Site, Langudi Hill	Mauza Panimuhani, Fazilpur and Salipur	Jajpur
75.	Kapileswar Mahadev Temple	Hatuari	Dhenkanal
76.	Chandrasekhar Temple (Group of Monuments and Ancient Steps)	Yogapitha Kapilas	Dhenkanal
77.	Annakoteswar Temple	Latadeipur	Dhenkanal
78.	Anantsayi Vishnu	Sarang	Dhenkanal

Sale of Auto LPG by RIL

3955. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reliance Industries Ltd. has sought Government's permission for sale of Auto LPG from its Jam Nagar Refinery;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has assessed the impact of the proposed Reliance Auto LPG on the State run refineries; and

(d) if so, the plan drawn up and steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The proposal is under consideration of the Government.

**Development of Non-metro Airports with
Private Participation**

3956. SHRI AMITAVA NANDY :

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH :

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU :

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has decided to develop 35 non-metro airports with private sector participation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some trade union leaders have opposed this move of the Government;

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

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Government have decided that Airports Authority of India (AAI) would undertake the development and modernisation of 35 non-Metro airports, including Terminal Buildings. The city side development of select airports from amongst these 35 non-Metro airports will be taken up in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

(c) and (d) Airports Authority Employees Union (AAEU) had opposed modernisation of 35 Non-Metro airports through the privatization route.

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

**Stoppage of Puri-Guwahati Express at
Midnapur Station**

3957. SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is no stoppage of 5639/5640 Puri-Guwahati Express at Midnapur station;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Railways have received requests for providing stoppage of said train at Midnapur station;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

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

(b) and (e) Examined but not found commercially justified.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The requests including from Hon'ble Member of Parliament have been received.

[Translation]

Water Vending Machines at Stations

3958. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE :

SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE :

SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways propose to install quality water vending machines at railway stations; and

(b) if so, the details of railway stations where such machines are to be installed, particularly in Maharashtra, State/zone-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. These machines will be set up by Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) through tendering system subject to financial viability and availability of space at several stations in the country including stations in the State of Maharashtra.

[English]

**High Speed Train under Public
Private Partnership**

3959. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railways are considering to establish high speed train corridors under Public-Private Partnership;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways have identified sectors for introduction of the said corridor; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (d) It has been decided to carry out pre-feasibility studies for one high speed corridor each in the Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern regions of the country. At the stage of implementation of these corridors, all alternatives including Public-Private Partnership will be considered. No section has been identified for construction of high speed corridor.

Concession on Freight Rate on Salt

3960. SHRI HARIN PATHAK :

SHRI HARILAL MADHAVJI BHAI PATEL :

SHRI MAHESH KANODIA :

SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have extended any concession in the freight rate on salt in this year;

(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) Sir, concession in freight rates for the booking of ordinary non-refined salt, meant for human consumption, already exists.

[Translation]

**Transfer and Appointment through
Bogus Letters**

3961. SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3170 on 14 December, 2006 regarding appointments on fake documents and state :

(a) whether the requisite information has been collected so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the information is likely to be collected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) Information has already been furnished on 8.3.2007 in fulfillment of the assurance given to the Lok Sabha in reply to Unstarred Question No. 3170 on 14.12.2006. However, the same is repeated hereunder:-

85 such cases (transfers 7 and appointments 78) came to the notice of the Railways during the last one year. The following is the position of these cases:-

— Removed from service	9
— Dismissed from service	5
— Compulsorily retired from service	1
— Penalty of withholding of one set of Privilege Pass imposed	1

— Cases closed after inquiry	10
— Cases in which charges not proved and closure under examination	2
— Suspended and process of disciplinary action on	2
— Disciplinary action initiated	8
— Department action/inquiry on	20
— Cases under investigation/verification	12
— Cases under Police investigation	15

Three Railway employees who are allegedly involved in entertaining fake documents are under suspension. While the role of two of them is still under investigation, one has been issued chargesheet for imposition of major penalty.

[English]

LNG Deal with Iran

3962. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA :
SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH :

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

(a) whether India has decided to pay 50% higher price than the one agreed upon in June last year to buy 5 million tonnes of LNG from Iran;

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

(c) the additional revenue burden likely to be borne by India; and

(d) the benefits likely to be accrued from the said deal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) The proposed import of 5 MMTA LNG from Iran would meet fuel and feedstock requirement of various power, fertilizer and other sector units.

[Translation]

Processing of Fishes

3963. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by the Government for the development of infrastructure for the preservation and processing of fishes in the country especially in the coastal region of Maharashtra;

(b) whether any scheme is being run for providing grants-in-aid to the private entrepreneurs and other agencies for the construction of cold storages and purchasing of machines for the processing of fishes;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the amount of grants-in-aid approved during the last three years, State-wise;

(e) the names of the companies/private entrepreneurs and agencies especially of the Maharashtra whom grants have been approved for purchasing fish processing machine; and

(f) the details about other States in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY) : (a) to (c) The Government has taken various steps for the development of the infrastructure for the preservation of fishes in the country including coastal region of Maharashtra. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries through its plan schemes during 10th plan has been promoting Infrastructure development, food park, packaging center, integrated cold chain facilities for preservation of fishes including scheme for providing

financial assistance in the form of grant in aid for setting up, technological upgradation / modernization and expansion of fish processing industries to all implementing agencies @ 25% of the cost of plant and machinery and technical civil works subject to maximum of Rs. 50 lakhs in general areas or 33.33% subject to a maximum of Rs. 75 lakhs in difficult areas such as Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and North Eastern States, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and ITDP areas.

Further, the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has implemented a centrally sponsored scheme on development of marine fisheries infrastructure and post harvest operations inter-alia including a component on 'Strengthening of Post Harvest Infrastructure' during 10th Plan to develop fish preservation and marketing infrastructure such as retail vending kiosks, aqua shops, insulated/refrigerated vehicles, fish display

cabinets. The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Ministry of Commerce is also implementing various schemes for infrastructure development, testing kits and mini laboratories in fisheries to promote exports.

(d) The state-wise information on amount of grants in aid released by Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) during the last three years for setting up/expansion/modernisation of fish processing units is given in the enclosed Statement-I. The financial assistance provided by MPEDA for the years 2001-02 to 2005-06 is given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(e) In Maharashtra, M/s. Partytime Ice Pvt. Ltd., MIDC Panvel, Navi Mumbai has been provided assistance of Rs. 25.00 lakhs during 2004-05 by MFPI.

(f) Relevant information is given in the enclosed Statement-III.

Statement-I

Financial assistance released during the years 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 for Setting up/Expansion/Modernisation of Fishery Processing Units by Ministry of Food Processing Industries

(Amount Rs. in lakhs)

S. No.	State	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
		No. of Units	Amount released	No. of Units	Amount released	No. of Units	Amount released
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	9	191.88	3	56.84	2	50.00
2.	Goa	1	25.00	2	47.57	1	22.58
3.	Gujarat	1	24.12	1	24.12	—	—
4.	Karnataka	3	56.19	1	25.00	1	50.00
5.	Kerala	3	48.36	3	49.79	4	103.29
6.	Maharashtra	1	25.00	—	—	—	—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7. Manipur	—	—	—	—	—	2	11.15.
8. Orissa	2	50.00	—	—	—	1	25.00
9. Tamil Nadu	2	30.98	4	87.30	4	46.03	
10. West Bengal	2	46.41	1	12.10	3	68.87	
Total	24	497.94	15	302.72	18	382.92	

Statement-II*Financial assistance provided by MPEDA to Exporters*

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Scheme for	2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05		2005-06	
	Physical (No.)	Financial	Physical (No.)	Financial	Physical (No.)	Financial	Physical (No.)	Financial	Physical (No.)	Financial
Subsidy for Pre-Processing Centres	55	413.4	64	576.57	35	369.15	35	519.68	60	930.8
Subsidy for Mini-Lab	30	14.65	13	8.31	18	11.56	11	8.09	8	4.51
Subsidy for Quick Testing Kit	—	—	3	2.6	13	11.88	6	5.45	6	5.83

Statement-III

Name of the companies/private entrepreneurs and agencies having been provided financial assistance for setting up/ expansion/modernisation of fish processing industries by the MFPI during the last three years

Year	State	Sl. No.	Name of Company
1	2	3	4
2004-05	Andhra Pradesh	1.	M/s Nekkanti Seafoods

1	2	3	4
		2.	M/s Ananda Foods
		3.	M/s Swam Rekha Exports Pvt. Ltd.
		4.	M/s Vaibhav Sea Foods
		5.	M/s Apex Exports
		6.	M/s Gayatri Sea Foods
		7.	M/s Vaibhav Sea Foods
		8.	M/s Apex Exports
		9.	M/s Jagdish Marine Exports
Goa		10.	M/s Ulka Sea Foods
Gujarat		11.	M/s Silver Sea Foods
Karnataka		12.	M/s Blue Water Foods and Exports
		13.	M/s Aqua Fresh Foods
		14.	M/s Indo Fisheries
Kerala		15.	M/s Cherukattu Industries
		16.	M/s Mangla Sea Products
		17.	M/s Capithan Exporting Company
Maharashtra		18.	M/s Party time Ice Pvt. Ltd.
Orissa		19.	M/s Falcon Marine Exports Ltd.
		20.	M/s Falcon Marine Exports Ltd.
Tamil Nadu		21.	M/s Water base Ltd.
		22.	M/s Abad Overseas Pvt. Ltd.
West Bengal		23.	M/s Rajban Seafoods
		24.	M/s Veejay Impex

1	2	3	4
2005-06	Andhra Pradesh	25.	M/s MSC Marine Exports
		26.	M/s Gayatri Sea Foods
		27.	M/s Jagdish Marine Exports
	Goa	28.	M/s Quality Foods
		29.	M/s Ulka Sea Foods
	Gujarat	30.	M/s Silver Sea Foods
	Karnataka	31.	M/s Indo Fisheries
	Kerala	32.	M/s Capithan Exporting Company
		33.	M/s Rabia Sea Foods
		34.	M/s ABM Marines
		35.	M/s Aishwarya Sea Foods
	Tamil Nadu	36.	M/s Baby Marine Foods
		37.	M/s Edhayam Frozen Foods
		38.	M/s Gadre Marine Exports
		39.	M/s MM Ice Pvt. Ltd.
	West Bengal	40.	M/s Welcome Fisheries
2006-07	Andhra Pradesh	41.	M/s MSC Marine Exports
		42.	M/s Quality Foods
	Goa	43.	M/s Blue water Foods and Exports
	Karnataka	44.	M/s Premium Marine Enterprises
	Kerala	45.	M/s Kay Kay Exports
		46.	M/s International Freezfish
		47.	M/s Anns Indian Aroma

1	2	3	4
	Manipur	48.	M/s Youth progressive organisation
		49.	M/s Social Development Educational organisation
	Orissa	50.	M/s Teekay Marines
	Tamil Nadu	51.	M/s Edhayam Frozen Foods
		52.	M/s Aishwarya Sea Foods
		53.	M/s Britto Exports
		54.	M/s Baby Marine Foods
	West Bengal	55.	M/s Sea Foods
		56.	M/s Calcutta Sea Foods
		57.	M/s Shimpo Exports

Promotion of Indian Culture

3964. SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB PATIL : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is aware that the Indian youth is losing his interest in the Indian cultural values;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the concrete steps being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to run programme/campaign to create awareness among the Indian youth towards the Indian cultural values alongwith the details thereof, State-wise;

(d) whether there is any proposal to set up a cultural centre in Maharashtra; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Ministry of Culture undertakes a number of schemes / programmes to promote Indian Art and Culture. In addition a new Plan scheme of Promotion and Dissemination of Awareness about Indian Culture and Heritage has also been proposed during the XIth Plan period.

(d) and (e) A proposal for setting up of a Multi purpose Cultural Complex at Nanded, Maharashtra has been sanctioned in December, 2006 for which a grant of Rs. 150 lakhs, as first instalment has been released in the financial year 2006-07.

[English]

Special Economic Zones

3965. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the number of existing Special Economic Zones in the field of tourism in the country;

(b) whether the Government of Kerala has submitted a proposal for sanction and assistance for a special Economic Zone for tourism along Poovar-Kovalam coastal line in Trivandrum district of Kerala; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Nil.

(b) and (c) A concept proposal was received in the Ministry of Tourism from the State Government of Kerala for Establishment of a Tourism Special Economic Zone in Vell-Kovalam-Poovar area. However, there is no scheme in the Ministry of Tourism for establishment of such zones.

[Translation]

Maintenance of Tourist Places

3966. SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the amount provided by the Government for maintenance of cultural and historical sites during the last two years, State-wise;

(b) the steps taken to ensure that above amount is properly utilized by the State Governments;

(c) whether the maintenance of such tourist places have been entrusted to private institutions/agencies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Details of funds sanctioned and released for development of infrastructure including renovation and refurbishment of cultural and historical sites by the Ministry of Tourism during the last two years, State-wise are given in the enclosed statement.

(b) To ensure proper utilization of the sanctioned amount, the physical and financial progress of the projects is monitored by the Ministry of Tourism and the State Governments also and the second installment is released only when the Utilization Certificate for the previous installation is received.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Statement

State-wise Tourism Projects sanctioned during the last two years of Tenth Five Year Plan

(Rs. in lakh)

S. No.	State/UT	2005-06			2006-07		
		No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	Amount Released	No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	Amount Released
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	7	2615.82	1700.00	3	1540.56	1195.44
2.	Assam	10	2140.00	1698.45	9	2453.39	1813.21
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	10	2240.16	1655.21	12	188.80	1497.24

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4.	Bihar	3	1212.23	722.49	2	1937.29	974.59
5.	Chhattisgarh	7	1775.59	1436.54	16	3540.17	2491.12
6.	Goa	1	10.00	8.00	0	0.00	0.00
7.	Gujarat	5	2011.58	1169.04	7	443.65	359.51
8.	Haryana	7	639.71	515.77	5	1836.16	902.39
9.	Himachal Pradesh	6	1645.00	921.00	8	1871.00	1226.13
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	22	6656.01	5320.31	29	5233.82	3392.90
11.	Jharkhand	5	1227.27	697.76	3	956.35	769.99
12.	Karnataka	8	1706.52	1001.21	4	1323.89	1081.81
13.	Kerala	13	4858.88	3889.90	18	4474.02	3441.61
14.	Madhya Pradesh	12	3047.39	2419.54	10	3668.47	2797.75
15.	Maharashtra	9	2075.04	1662.99	13	2839.05	2271.98
16.	Manipur	2	49.80	39.84	9	939.35	647.48
17.	Meghalaya	1	5.00	4.00	9	1435.29	1147.93
18.	Mizoram	10	2273.41	1687.29	9	2613.38	2040.80
19.	Nagaland	9	2528.97	1873.17	8	2340.32	1862.51
20.	Orissa	10	2309.61	1586.44	13	2826.84	1974.66
21.	Punjab	5	1437.67	1150.13	13	3223.37	1968.68
22.	Rajasthan	7	2591.87	2086.40	8	9853.84	763.06
23.	Sikkim	14	2844.56	2213.74	13	2609.42	1647.77
24.	Tamil Nadu	19	4264.62	3007.68	11	1866.41	1496.87
25.	Tripura	3	716.26	569.43	4	291.27	96.01
26.	Uttaranchal	13	2738.00	2193.18	16	1907.50	1434.34

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
27.	Uttar Pradesh	18	3905.23	3126.03	7	3329.06	2663.24
28.	West Bengal	5	98.35	792.48	10	2978.32	2195.35
29.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1	6.25	5.00	0	0.00	0.00
30.	Chandigarh	1	13.70	13.70	2	15.00	14.00
31.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	2	29.79	25.92	0	0.00	0.00
32.	Delhi	2	20.00	17.00	5	2400.09	1209.54
33.	Daman and Diu	4	262.28	208.61	0	0.00	0.00
34.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	1	7.00	5.60
35.	Pondicherry	2	469.39	375.51	1	500.00	400.00
Total		253	61316.96	45793.76	278	64242.08	45783.51

Note:- Thi includes the projects relating to Circuits, Destinations, Large Revenue Generating Projects, Rural Tourism (Software and Hardware) Projects, IT, Event, Fair and Festivals Projects.

[English]

Modernisation and Expansion of IAF

3967. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to modernise the weapon system of the Indian Air Force;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the IAF also propose to go for expansion of its forces;

(d) if so, the areas on which greater emphasis is likely to be given; and

(e) the total funds earmarked for the modernisation and expansion of IAF?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) to (e) Government constantly review the security environment and accordingly decide to modernise, carry out expansion, make other arrangements for adequate preparedness and provide necessary funds in the budget. It would not be in the interest of national security to disclose further details.

[Translation]

Centrally Protected Monuments in MP

3968. SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of Centrally protected monuments in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) the amount spent on protection and preserva-

tion of these centrally protected monuments during the last three years and the current year so far; and

(c) the revenue earned by the Government from these monuments during the above said period?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) 286 monuments/sites in Madhya Pradesh have been declared as of national importance as per list enclosed as statement.

(b) The amount spent conservation, preservation and maintenance of these monuments during the last three years is as under:

2004-05 Rs. 378.44 lakhs

2005-06 Rs. 520.00 lakhs

2006-07

Rs. 697.93 lakhs

During the current financial year 2007-08, an amount of Rs. 585.00 lakhs have been allocated for conservation, preservation and maintenance of centrally protected monuments/sites in Madhya Pradesh. Of which expenditure of Rs. 6.47 lakhs has been incurred so far.

(c) The details of revenue earned from these monuments in Madhya Pradesh during the last three years are as under:

2004-05 Rs. 264.98 lakhs

2005-06 Rs. 278.58 lakhs

2006-07 Rs. 328.21 lakhs

Statement

The detailed list of Centrally Protected Monuments under the jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India in Madhya Pradesh

Sl. No.	Name of Protected Monuments	Palace	District
1	2	3	4
1.	Temples	Baihar	Balaghat
2.	Fort	Garhi	Balaghat
3.	Old Fort	Lanji	Balaghat
4.	An old temple within the limits of Piparwara forest Village	Raigarh	Balaghat
5.	Temple of Koteswara Mahadeva and Hanuman	Kashitola	Balaghat
6.	53 images locally known as Sada Bhada	Sonkhar	Balaghat
7.	Brick Temples (two)	Kherat	Bhind
8.	Open Air Museum	Kherat	Bhind
9.	Fort	Alter	Bhind

1	2	3	4
10.	Kamlapati Palace	Bhopal	Bhopal
11.	Chausath Yogini Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
12.	Chitragupta Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
13.	Chopra or square tank	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
14.	Devi Jagdambi temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
15.	Kandariya temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
16.	Lashman temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
17.	Lalguan Mahadeva temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
18.	Mahadeva Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
19.	Matangeswara Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
20.	Nandi Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
21.	Parvati Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
22.	Varaha Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
23.	Vishvanath Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
24.	Adinath Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
25.	Brahma Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
26.	Colossal statue of Shri Hanuman	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
27.	Ghantia Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
28.	Kakra Marh	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
29.	Parsvanatha Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
30.	Santinatha Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
31.	Vamana Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
32.	Javari Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur

1	2	3	4
33.	Duladeo Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
34.	Jatakari or Chaturbhuj Temple	Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
35.	Inscription in the fort of Bachau	Bachhaon	Chhatarpur
36.	Temple remains and mounds at Bijamandal	Jatkara near Khajuraho	Chhatarpur
37.	Gond Fort	Deogarh	Chhindwara
38.	Nohta (Mahadeva) Temple	Nohta	Damoh
39.	Rajnagar (Ruined) For	Rajnagar	Damoh
40.	Rangmahal Palace	Hatta	Damoh
41.	(Siva) Temple of Kunora Bari	Kunora Bari	Damoh
42.	Jata Shankar Fort	Jatashankar	Damoh
43.	Matha at Raneh	Raneh	Damoh
44.	(Siva Temple) Old Temple	Kodal	Damoh
45.	The remains of an old sculptures temple built without mortar and attributed to Chandelas	Kanoda (Konora)	Damoh
46.	A hill Fort	Singorgarh	Damoh
47.	Ruined Fort	Mariadoh	Damoh
48.	Sakhar Temple (Ruined Shiva Temple)	Sakhara	Damoh
49.	Sculptures at Phutera tank	Phutera tank	Damoh
50.	Flat roofed temples below the hill	Kundalpur	Damoh
51.	Jain Temples on Hill No. 1 to No. 58	Kundalpur	Damoh
52.	Beer Singh Palace	Datia	Datia
53.	Rock inscription (Edict) of Ashoka	Gujjara	Datia
54.	Sidheshwara Temple	Nemawar	Dewas
55.	Unfinished Temple	Nemawar	Dewas

1	2	3	4
56.	Alamgir Gate	Mandu	Dhar
57.	Ancient Hindu Baoli	Mandu	Dhar
58.	Andheri Baoli	Mandu	Dhar
59.	Asharfi Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
60.	Baz Bahadur's Palace	Mandu	Dhar
61.	Bhagwania Gate	Mandu	Dhar
62.	Bhangi Gate	Mandu	Dhar
63.	Champa Baoli	Mandu	Dhar
64.	Chistikhan's Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
65.	Chor Kot	Mandu	Dhar
66.	Chor Kot Mosque	Mandu	Dhar
67.	Nahar Jharokha compound	Mandu	Dhar
68.	Dai-ka-Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
69.	Daike Chhoti Behen Ka Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
70.	Darya Khan's Tomb	Mandu	Dhar
71.	Delhi Gate	Mandu	Dhar
72.	Dharmashala in the compound of Hoshang's Tomb	Mandu	Dhar
73.	Dilawar Khan's Mosque	Mandu	Dhar
74.	Ek Khamba Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
75.	Gada Shah's Palace	Mandu	Dhar
76.	Gada Shah's Shop	Mandu	Dhar
77.	Gadi Darwaza	Mandu	Dhar
78.	Hammam	Mandu	Dhar

1	2	3	4
79.	Hathi Pole gate	Mandu	Dhar
80.	Hathi Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
81.	Hindola Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
82.	Hoshang Shaha's Tomb	Mandu	Dhar
83.	Jahaz Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
84.	Jahangirpur gate	Mandu	Dhar
85.	Jama Masjid	Mandu	Dhar
86.	Kapoor Talao and the ruins on its bank	Mandu	Dhar
87.	Lal Bag	Mandu	Dhar
88.	Lal Bungalow	Mandu	Dhar
89.	Lohani Gate	Mandu	Dhar
90.	Lohani Caves	Mandu	Dhar
91.	Jali Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
92.	Nahar Jharokha	Mandu	Dhar
93.	Mahmud Khilji's Tomb	Mandu	Dhar
94.	Malik Mughith's Mosque	Mandu	Dhar
95.	Mosque near Sopi Tank	Mandu	Dhar
96.	Mosque North-west of Darya Khan's Tomb	Mandu	Dhar
97.	Mosque near Tarapur Gate	Mandu	Dhar
98.	Nameless Tomb west of Shila Tank	Mandu	Dhar
99.	Neelkantha (Nilkantheswar)	Mandu	Dhar
100.	Rampol gate and the mosque apposite to it	Mandu	Dhar
101.	Royal Palace in the west of Champa Baoli and Hammam	Mandu	Dhar

1	2	3	4
102.	Roopmati's Pavilion	Mandu	Dhar
103.	Carvan Sarai	Mandu	Dhar
104.	Sat Kothari Caves	Mandu	Dhar
105.	Somavati Kund	Mandu	Dhar
106.	Songadh Gate	Mandu	Dhar
107.	Tarapur Gate	Mandu	Dhar
108.	Tavali Mahal	Mandu	Dhar
109.	Tomb and Mosque between Chor kot mosque and Chhappan mahal	Mandu	Dhar
110.	Tomb North of Daryakhan's tomb	Mandu	Dhar
111.	Tomb North of Alamgir Gate	Mandu	Dhar
112.	Tripolingate	Mandu	Dhar
113.	Tower of Victory	Mandu	Dhar
114.	Ujali Baoli	Mandu	Dhar
115.	Water palace	Mandu	Dhar
116.	Ruins in the west of Rewa kund	Mandu	Dhar
117.	Bhojshala and Kamal Maula's Mosque	Dhar	Dhar
118.	Lat-ki-Masjid	Dhar	Dhar
119.	Buddhist Caves No. 1 to 7	Bagh	Dhar
120.	Water palace	Sadalpur	Dhar
121.	Rock cut temple	Wasvi	Dhar
122.	Jains temple No. 1 to 5	Budhichanderi	Ashok Nagar
123.	Chanderi Fort	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar
124.	Bada Madarsa	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar

1	2	3	4
125.	Battisi Baoli	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar
126.	Badal Mahal Gateway	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar
127.	Jama Masjid	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar
128.	Kati Ghati	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar
129.	Koshak Mahal	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar
130.	Tomb of Nizam-ud-din's	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar
131.	Shahzadi ka Roza	Chanderi	Ashok Nagar
132.	Monastery	Kadwaha	Ashok Nagar
133.	Temple No. 2 to 7	Kadwaha	Ashok Nagar
134.	Loose Sculptures	Thubon	Ashok Nagar
135.	Mahadeva temple	Amrol	Gwalior
136.	Ancient site	Pawaya	Gwalior
137.	Tila Monument	Pawaya	Gwalior
138.	Tomb of Abul Fazal	Antri	Gwalior
139.	Tomb of Tansen and two mosque's	Gwalior	Gwalior
140.	Gwalior Fort:	Gwalior	Gwalior
	i. Badal Mahal or Hindolagate		
	ii. Gwalior or Alamgiri gate		
	iii. Ganesa gate	iv. Chaturbhuj temple	
	v. Lakshmangate	vi. Mansingh's palace	
	vii. Rock-cut Jaina colossi	viii. Sas Bahu temple	
	ix. Teli-ka-Mandir	x. Urwai Gate	
141.	Tomb of Mohammad Ghauz	Ghauspura	Gwalior

1	2	3	4
142.	Rock Shelter	Baldeo Kundi	Gwalior
143.	Caves popularly known as Pandav Caves	Pachmarhi	Hoshangabad
144.	Old Mughal Fort	Joga	Hoshangabad
145.	Adamgarh rock shelter with paintings	Kalmadi Rasulia	Hoshangabad
146.	Rock Shelter known as Pulti lane near Sambourne cave	Karian	Hoshangabad
147.	Dorothy deep Rock Shelter	Pachmarhi	Hoshangabad
148.	Stature of a boar (Vishnu : Varah), an image of Mahadeo and figures of other Hindu and Jain Gods scattered over four Tumuli and under a Bargat tree	Karanpur	Jabalpur
149.	Varaha Near Karitalai	Karanpur	Bala Jabulpur
150.	Tortoise and fish hereby known as Kachha and Maccha	Karitalai	Jabalpur
151.	The whole site of Kankali Devi Temple and Durgadevi temple	Tigwan	Jabalpur
152.	Vishnu-Varaha Temple	Bilhari	Jabalpur
153.	Tapsi-Math	Bilhari	Jabalpur
154.	Madan Mahal on the top of hill upon a large boulder rock	Garha	Jabalpur
155.	Temple of Somnath and ruins of several temples	Burgaon	Jabalpur
156.	Rock edict of Ashoka, Rupnath	Padaria	Jabalpur
157.	Ruined temple near the sources of the Kiyan river	Marha Deori	Jabalpur
158.	Shiva Temple on a craved stone chabutra measuring 10' x 10' 4' and 8 stone Jain Images	Nanhwara	Jabalpur
159.	Karanbel (Tripuri)	Tewar	Jabalpur
160.	Temple of Gauri Shankar within the Chausath Yogini	Bheraghat	Jabalpur
161.	Temple of Chausath Yogini	Bheraghat	Jabalpur
162.	Large effigy on Vishnu Varaha	Panagarh	Jabalpur

1	2	3	4
163.	Ancient Mound	Kakarehta	Jabalpur
164.	Ladaki Ka Tila	Bilhari	Katni
165.	Rammukteswara Temple	Kukaramath	Mandia
166.	Gond fort called Satkhanda and the tower on Rajghat called Shahburja and the temple inside the fort	Mandia	Mandia
167.	Begum Mahal	Chaugan ding dindori	Mandia
168.	Sporting Palace by name Dal-Badal	Chaugan ding dindori	Mandia
169.	Shiva's temple	Khaddeori	Mandia
170.	Brahmanical Rock temple	Dhamnar	Mandsaur
171.	Buddhist Caves (No. 1 to 51)	Dhamnar	Mandsaur
172.	Nav Toran temple	Khor	Mandsaur
173.	Yashodharman's pillar of Victory	Sondhani	Mandsaur
174.	Ekattatso Mahadeva temple	Mitaoli	Morena
175.	Gadhi	Padavali	Morena
176.	Temple	Padavali	Morena
177.	Siva temple (Locally known as Kakanmath temple)	Suhania	Morena
178.	Temple No. 1 to 22	Naresar	Morena
179.	Group of temples	Bateshwar	Morena
180.	Tomb of Shah Nawaz Khan	Bhurhanpur	Burahanpur
181.	Tomb of Adil Shah Faruki	Bhurhanpur	Burahanpur
182.	Tomb of Shah Shuja and compound	Bhurhanpur	Burahanpur
183.	Tomb of Nadir Shah and compound	Bhurhanpur	Burahanpur
184.	Raja's Chhatari near Bardhaghat	Bhurhanpur	Burahanpur
185.	Bibi-Sahib's Masjid and compound	Bhurhanpur	Burahanpur

1	2	3	4
186.	The palace situated in the fort	Bhurhanpur	Burahanpur
187.	Hammam Khana	Chowk Mohalla	Burahanpur
188.	Tomb of Shah Numa	Asirgarh	Burahanpur
189.	Churiwalonki Masjid	Bhurhanpur	Burahanpur
190.	The Whole fort including all walls	Asirgarh	Burahanpur
191.	Mahadeva temple near Inspection Bungalow with compound wall	Asirgarh	Burahanpur
192.	Idgah, front wall with open platform	Asirgarh	Burahanpur
193.	Mhal Gulara palaces and building on both sides of Utoali river and two masonry dams in the river	Mahal Gulara	Burahanpur
194.	Ahukhana site with compound wall, the pavilion and tank	Anukhana	Burahanpur
195.	Chaubis avtar temple with its contents	Mandhata	Nimar (East)
196.	Chand Suraj Gateway	Mandhata	Nimar (East)
197.	Siddeswara of Sidhanath temple	Mandhata	Nimar (East)
198.	Mamleshwara alias amleswara temple	Mandhata	Nimar (East)
199.	Chaubara Dara	Khargaon	Nimar (West)
200.	Jain temple No. 1 to 3	Khargaon	Nimar (West)
201.	Temple of Mahakaleswara No. 1 and 2	Khargaon	Nimar (West)
202.	Temple of Nilkantheswara	Khargaon	Nimar (West)
203.	Excavated site	Kasrawad	Nimar (West)
204.	Brindaban dedicated to the memory of srimant Bajirao Peshwa	Raverkhedi	Nimar (West)
205.	Main gate and remaining portion of the Peshwa residence or fortress	Raverkhedi	Nimar (West)

1	2	3	4
206.	The Chhatra inside the Sarai	Raverkhedi	Nimar (West)
207.	Old Sarai	Raverkhedi	Nimar (West)
208.	Ajaigarh fort and its remains	Ajaigarh	Panna
209.	Two temples ascribed to Gupta period	Ajaigarh	Panna
210.	Parvati temple	Nachna	Panna
211.	Chaumukhnath temple	Nachna	Panna
212.	(i) Saivite temple	Bhojpur	Raisen
	(ii) Ancient Rock Engravings		
213.	Fort (including walls Gates and other ruins monuments in the fort)	Raisen	Raisen
214.	Buddhist monuments	Sanchi	Raisen
215.	Buddhist stupas with adjacent land	Sonari	Raisen
216.	Buddhist stupas	Muralkhurd	Raisen
217.	Buddhist stupas and remains	Andher	Raisen
218.	Stupa and other remains	Sonbhadra	Raisen
219.	Pre-historic rock shelters	Bhimbetka	Raisen
220.	Inscriptions	Alhaghat	Rewa
221.	Fresco paintings	Gahir	Rewa
222.	Gurgi and Rohunta remains	Gurgi	Rewa
223.	Inscription in Cave	Keoti	Rewa
224.	Rock Shelters with megaliths, monasteries and inscriptions	Barhat	Rewa
225.	Temple	Bamora	Sagar
226.	Fort	Deori	Sagar
227.	Fort	Dhamoni	Sagar

1	2	3	4
228.	Tomb and Mosque of Balijati Shah	Dhamoni	Sagar
229.	Rani Mahal	Dhamoni	Sagar
230.	Ancient site	Eran and Pahlezipur	Sagar
231.	All structure in or connectuion with the Mahal (fort of the Dangri rulers (Shish Mahal)	Garhpehra	Sagar
232.	Fort	Gourjhamar	Sagar
233.	Temple of Mahadeo or Mata	Maronda	Sagar
234.	Satgarh	Maronda	Sagar
235.	Tomb of Panj pirs	Khimalasa	Sagar
236.	The walls of the city with gate	Khimalasa	Sagar
237.	The walls of the citaded (fort)	Khimalasa	Sagar
238.	Old Mosque well, gateway of the fort and Nagina Mahal	Khimalasa	Sagar
239.	Mahadeva temple	Pali	Sagar
240.	Fort including the monuments inside namely:- i. Two Gates, ii. Moti Mahal iii. Dargah of Gulmali shah and three graves iv. Shish Mahal, v. Small Mosque vi. Dargah in ruins, vii. Samadhi viii. Dohla tank, ix. Ruined Palace x. Badal Mahal together with adjacent land	Rahatgarh	Sagar
241.	Buddhist Remains	Barhut	Satna
242.	Remains (Shiv Temple)	Bhumra	Satna
243.	Durga Temple	Ashta	Seoni

1	2	3	4
244.	Standing Jain Image of Digamber Sect known as Nagbada and the various fragmentary stone images and architectural stone pieces	Ghansor	Seoni
245.	Karna Temple	Amarkantak	Anuppur
246.	Siva Temple	Amarkantak	Anuppur
247.	Pataleswara Temple	Amarkantak	Anuppur
248.	Caves bearing inscriptions of last Century AD	Silhara	Shahdol
249.	Virath Temple and remains	Sohagpur	'Shahdol
250.	Large Siva Temple	Mahua	Shivpuri
251.	Small Siva Temple	Mahua	Shivpuri
252.	Monastery (Khokhaimath)	Ranod	Shivpuri
253.	Monastery	Surwaya	Shivpuri
254.	Siva Temple	Surwaya	Shivpuri
255.	Open Air Museum	Surwaya	Shivpuri
256.	Gadhi Surways	Surwaya	Shivpuri
257.	Mohajamata temple	Terahi	Shivpuri
258.	Monastery	Terahi	Shivpuri
259.	Torana gate	Terahi	Shivpuri
260.	Siva temple and Monastery	Chandrehi	Sidhi
261.	Buddhist stupas alongwith saru-maru monastic complex	Panguraria	Sehore
262.	Painted Rock Shelters, Buddist stupas and other remains	Talpura	Sehore
263.	Ancient Mound	Bhairgarh	Ujjain
264.	Ancient Mound (Vishya Tekri)	Undasa	Ujjain

1	2	3	4
265.	Ancient Mound (Kumbhar tekri)	Undasa	Ujjain
266.	Bijamandal Mosque	Vidisha	Vidisha
267.	Lohanji Hill Capital	Vidisha	Vidisha
268.	Dashavatqva temple	Badoh	Vidisha
269.	Jain temple	Badoh	Vidisha
270.	Gadarmal temple	Badoh	Vidisha
271.	Ancient Site	Besnagar	Vidisha
272.	Heliodours Pillars locally known as Khan	Besnagar	Vidisha
273.	Athakamba temple	Gyaraspur	Vidisha
274.	Bajramath temple	Gyaraspur	Vidisha
275.	Hindola torans	Gyaraspur	Vidisha
276.	Buddhist stupa	Gyaraspur	Vidisha
277.	Mala Devi temple	Gyaraspur	Vidisha
278.	Bhimagaja	Pathari	Vidisha
279.	Caves	Pathari	Vidisha
280.	Caves No. 1 to 20	Udaygiri	Vidisha
281.	Ruins of a Gupta temple on hill top	Udaygiri	Vidisha
282.	Bara Khambi	Udaypur	Vidisha
283.	Udayaswara or Hilkanthanswara Mahadeva Temple	Udaypur	Vidisha
284.	Town Hall alias Gandhi Bhawan	Shivpuri	Shivpuri
285.	Prehistoric Painted Rock Shelters at Chatarbhuj Nala	Bhanpura	Mandsaur
286.	Prehistoric Painted Rock Shelters at Sita Khardi	Bhanpura	Mandsaur

[English]

Third Railway Line in the Country

3969. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Railways have proposals to lay third line between various sections in the country;
- (b) if so, the sections identified for the same; and
- (c) the time by which the said work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) For laying third line, surveys on the following sections have been taken up:-

Sl.No.	Name of the section
1	2
1.	Igatpuri-Bhusaval
2.	Bhadrak-Bhusaval
3.	Baruipur-Sealdah
4.	Jhansi-Bina
5.	Ballarshah-Kazipet
6.	Kazipet-Vijaywada-Gudur
7.	Renigunta-Arakkonam
8.	Secunderabad-Bhongir
9.	Durg-Nagpur
10.	Itarsi-Nagpur-Wardha-Ballarshah
11.	Jharsuguda-Champa
12.	Chakradharpur-Bondamunda

1	2
13.	Extension of Pendrasali-Rajkharswan bypass to Chakradharpur
14.	Dongraposi-Pendrasali extended upto Rajkharswan
15.	Kharagpur-Jharsuguda
16.	Rajkharswan-Adityapur
17.	Bhopal-Itarsi
18.	Ratlam-Vadodra
19.	Viramgam-Ahmedabad

- (c) The proposal are at survey stage and decision to take up the work or otherwise will depend on survey report.

**Construction of Houses/Flats for
Ex-Servicemen**

3970. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the programme/scheme for construction of houses/flats for ex-servicemen is being implemented in the country particularly in Jammu and Kashmir and North-Eastern States;
- (b) if so, the details of the scheme and the amount allocated under these projects during the last three years, State-wise;
- (c) if not, whether any proposal is under the consideration of the Union Government to construct such houses/flats for ex-servicemen; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU) : (a) to (d) There is no specific programme or scheme of Government

of India to construct flats/houses for ex-servicemen including in the State of Jammu and Kashmir and North-Eastern States. However, Army Welfare Housing Organisation in case of Army and Air Force and Naval Housing Board in case of Air Force and Navy provide housing to the serving and retired personnel of their respective Services on payment basis. Some of the State Governments follow a policy of reservation for retired defence forces personnel in allotment under their housing schemes for public.

Unauthorised Federation

3971. DR. RAJESH MISHRA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is aware that some private airline operators have formed a cartel known as Federation of Indian Airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of airlines that are associated with this Federation;

(c) whether the Government has approved the formation of the Federation; and

(d) if not, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) Government is aware of the formation of Airlines called Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA). CMD, Air India has been elected as its Chairman. Air India has informed that FIA is structured on the lines of some of the airline associations formed internationally. e.g. Air Transport Association in USA, Association of European Airlines in Europe, Arab Air Carriers Organisation in Middle East, African Airline Association in Africa and Association of Asia Pacific Airlines.

(b) Air India, Indian, Jet Airways, Air Sahara, Kingfisher, Air Deccan, Spicejet, Go Air, IndiGo and Paramound Airways are associated with this federation.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No action is contemplated against the FIA at present as no illegal action by the association has come to the notice of the Government.

Technology Offered by Shell Global Solutions

3972. SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Shell Global Solutions has expressed its desire to provide technology for extracting oil from old oil wells of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation on the basis of oil sharing through its Indian arm Shell India Private Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) to (c) Shell Exploration Company had desired to carry out Increased Oil Recovery/Enhanced Oil Recovery (IOR/EOR) for some fields of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) but the proposal was not considered feasible by ONGC.

[Translation]

Railway Projects in Jharkhand

3973. SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI :
DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of proposed rail projects for which agreement was entered into with the Government of Jharkhand during 2002-03;

(b) whether any timeframe was fixed for completion of said projects;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the said projects are likely to be completed within the fixed timeframe; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) The names of projects for which the State Government of Jharkhand is sharing two-thirds of the project cost as per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Ministry of Railways and the State Government of Jharkhand on 19.02.2002 are as mentioned hereunder:- (i) Koderma-Tilaiya new line; (ii) Koderma-Ranchi new line; (iii) Giridih-Koderma new line; (iv) Deoghar-Dumka new line; (v) Dumka-Rampurhat new line; and (vi) Ranchi-Lohardaga gauge conversion with extension upto Tori,

(b) to (e) The projects were proposed to be completed within a period of 5 years from the date of signing the MoU. However, these projects could not be completed in the stipulated timeframe due to delay occurred in land acquisition and receipt of forestry clearance, adverse law and order conditions and failure of contractors. The release of matching funds by the State Government has also been not in time.

[English]

Near Misses Incidents

3974. SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is aware that near misses incidents between aeroplanes in the crowded skies has increased many fold in the recent years;

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

(c) the steps the Government has taken/proposed to be taken to avoid such collision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) The number of air-miss incidents has not shown any significant increase in the last few years. The number of air-miss incidents per lakh movements for the last four years are 2.041 in 2003; 2.081 in 2004; 2.506 in 2005 and 2.559 in 2006. The marginal increase is due to substantial increase in Air Traffic Density in the past few years. Further, better surveillance mechanisms like installation of Airborne Collision Avoidance System/Traffic Collision Avoidance Systems on aircraft and increase in RADAR coverage area have enabled reporting and monitoring of every breach of minimum separation between flights/ aircraft.

(c) Safety of aircraft operations and avoiding airmiss incidents is ensured by making installation of Airborne Collision Avoidance System (ACAS) and Mode "S" transponder on aircraft with certified seating capacity of more than 30 or pay load capacity more than 3 tonnes mandatory. Apart from this, Airports Authority of India (AAI) has installed Automatic Dependant Surveillance and Controller Pilot Data Link Communication (CPDLC) at Delhi and Mumbai airports. Minimum Safe Altitude Warning (MSAW) system is also in vogue which provides radar warning to ATCs, enabling them to alert the pilots timely. Most of the busy airspace in the country has been covered by Mono pulse Secondary Surveillance Radars (MSSRs) installed at Major airports which provide information on aircraft altitude to ATCOs. Training procedure of ATC is amended and modernised. Further refresher courses and proficiency checks for controllers are being carried out regularly. Specific coordination procedures have also been framed for transfer of traffic from one unit to another. DGCA has also advised AAI to ensure strict compliance of Air Traffic Control procedures and instructions.

Tourist Spots in Assam

3975. SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to revive tourist spots in Assam under the Prime Minister Reconstruction Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of amount earmarked for the same?

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

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Certificate of Airworthiness to Aircraft

3976. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Certificate of Airworthiness to aircraft is issued by DGCA;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria fixed for scrutiny of such requests by DGCA;

(d) the minimum time in which applications for such certificate are cleared; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to streamline the process of scrutiny of such applications by DGCA?

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

(b) Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issues Certificate of Airworthiness to each civil registered aircraft before its operation as per Rule 50 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937 and Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) Section 2, Series 'F' Part-III.

(c) DGCA scrutinizes such request as per CAR Section 2, Series 'F' Part III. Thereafter partially completed Certificate of Airworthiness is sent to the DGCA Regional

(Field) office. The Regional office carries out physical inspection of the aircraft and its technical documents. On satisfactory inspection, the Certificate of Airworthiness is issued for the aircraft.

(d) Minimum 5 days time is required for scrutiny of application and issue of Certificate of Airworthiness.

(e) A provision has been made on DGCA Website for on-line applications for issue of Certificate of Airworthiness.

Transport Facilities at Mumbai Airport

3977. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has terminated the contract of private agencies to run private bus services from domestic airport to International airport inside the premises of Mumbai airport;

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

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

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Fleet Strength of IA/AI

3978. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY :
SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the fleet strength of Air India (AI) and Indian Airlines (IA) separately, at present;

(b) the average fleet age of AI and IA, separately;

(c) whether due to aged fleet/old aircraft, planes of national carriers develop snag very frequently;

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

(e) the steps taken by the Government to avoid such frequent snags in national carriers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) Air India and Indian Airlines have 38 and 74 aircraft respectively in their fleet including aircraft on lease.

(b) The average fleet age of Air India and Indian Airlines aircraft is 14.6 years and 16.2 years respectively.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) All the aircraft in Air India/Indian Airlines fleet are maintained to the highest airworthiness standards and meet all the requirements as stipulated by the Director General of Civil Aviation as well as to regulatory authorities of the aircraft manufacturing countries.

Benefit of State OBCs in Central Government Service/Education

3979. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether a candidate holding State OBC certificate is entitled for getting reservation benefits in Central Government service and admission in educational institutions run by the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the definition of creamy layer as per Union Government's directives in case of OBCs; and

(d) the criteria being followed by the State

Governments to select a particular community as OBCs?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The creamy layer has been defined vide Government of India Office Memorandum (OM) No.36012/22/93-Estt.(SCT) dated 8th September, 1993 as amended vide OM No.36033/3/2004-Estt. (Res.) dated 9th March, 2004. As per these, children of certain categories of persons holding constitutional posts, Officers of certain categories of persons working in the Central/State Governments, Public Sector Undertakings, Armed Forces including Para Military Forces and the other persons having gross annual income of Rs. 2.5 lakh or above or possessing wealth above the exemption limit as prescribed in the Wealth Tax Act for a period of three consecutive years are included in creamy layer.

(d) As per the judgement of Supreme Court in India Swahney's case, Government of India and the State Governments have separately set up Commissions for Backward Classes for recommending inclusion and exclusion of any castes as Backward Classes. The State Governments will take decision for inclusion or exclusion of any particular caste/community in their respective State Lists of OBCs on the basis of advice of State Commissions.

Special Reservation Counters

3980. SHRI C.H. VIJAYASHANKAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of special reservation counters existing in the country;

(b) whether the number of such counters are sufficient to cater the needs of commuters; and

(c) if not, the steps being taken by the Railways to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) There are no special reservation counters as such. However, subject to sufficient demand and availability of reservation counters, exclusive reservation counters are earmarked at various computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) centres for ladies, senior citizens, former Members of Parliament, Member of Legislative Assembly/Council, Physically Handicapped Persons, accredited journalists, freedom fighters etc. This position is reviewed from time to time depending upon the demand pattern and availability of reservation counters. It is a continuous process. No centralised statistics of such counters is maintained.

National Policy for PWD

3981. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has finalized a National Policy for Persons with Disabilities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has compiled a compendium on some of the important judgements of Supreme Court and High Courts on the matters relating to rights and protection of the disabled persons including disabled senior citizens;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken in compliance of some of the important orders of the court?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The National Policy announced in February 2006 recognizes

Persons with disabilities as a valuable human resource for the country and seeks to create an environment that provides them with equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society. The focus of the policy is on prevention of disabilities and on rehabilitation.

(c) to (e) The office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities has brought out a compendium entitled "Judgements on Disability Issues: Case Digest, 2005". This has been brought out to provide guidance to practioners of law, lay persons and persons with disabilities.

Air Attack on Southern Coastal Areas/Borders

3982. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD :

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE :

SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH :

SHRI SAJJAN KUMAR :

DR. RAJESH MISHRA :

SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Air Force has not been preapred to tackle any air attack on Southern Coastal areas and borders as reported in the Navbharat Times' dated March 27, 2007;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) the countries providing assistance to LTTE; and

(e) the preventive measures taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) to (c) Radar deployment for air defence purpose is based on threat perception and surveillance requirements.

The Air Defence measures are continuously reviewed, assessed and strengthened depending upon the exigencies of situation.

(d) and (e) All the important countries in the world such as US, Canada and all the members of European Union (EU) have banned LTTE as a terrorist organisation and do not therefore provide material assistance. India too has banned LTTE being a terrorist organization.

Laying of Water Pipelines Across the Railway Tracks

3983. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI :

SHRI MAHESH KANODIA :

SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is necessary for the States to get permission from the Railway authorities for laying water pipelines across the railway track;

(b) if so, whether the delay in permission causes the delay in implementation of the pipelines projects;

(c) the number of such proposals received from the various States that are pending with the Railways for the last three years particularly from Gujarat; and

(d) the time by which such permissions are likely to be granted?

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

(b) Railways try their best to give permission expeditiously. However, the permission can be given only if the proposal is complete, feasible and does not affect safety of trains, and only after the concerned State Govt. has deposited the required fees and met all other requirements. Nevertheless, time is required by railways to process such cases and assess the feasibility and merits of the case etc. The delay is usually on part of the State Govts. Usually their application is not complete

in all respects and prescribed fees is not deposited promptly.

(c) A total of 249 such proposals are pending over Indian Railways. State-wise data is not maintained.

(d) Permissions will be granted expeditiously by railways, subject to prescribed rules, provided there is no delay on part of State Govts.

Extension of Barasat-Hasnabad Railway Section

3984. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways are considering the extension of existing Barasat-Hasnabad railway section deep into Sundarbans; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Does not arise.

Replacement of Bridge at Yamuna

3985. SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways plan to construct a replacement bridge on the existing one on Yamuna;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this replacement is likely to go through the Salimgarh fort, a part of Red Fort;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the ASI has pointed to the Railways the danger of damaging the structures in the fort and possibilities of loosing the world heritage status; and

(f) if so, the action proposed to be taken bearing the world heritage status in mind?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A work for construction of a new bridge on replacement account over river Yamuna in Delhi-Shahadara-Ghaziabad section of Northern Railway, was sanctioned in the year 1997-98. The new bridge is being constructed at a distance of 30 metres towards north of existing bridge.

(c) and (d) The track on west end approach of the new bridge passes through the corner of the land of Swatantrata Sainani Smarak (Salimgarh Fort). However, it does not pass through Red Fort. The track is crossing Salimgarh Fort wall. As the new bridge is being constructed 30 meters away from the existing bridge, the track alignment on the approaches is also to be diverted. This leads to change in the location where track is crossing the Fort wall (near top of the wall). About 1000 sqm of the comor area of the land will be required for diverting the alignment.

(e) Yes, Sir. In a meeting held with Hon'ble Minister for Tourism and Culture on March, 26, 2004, Hon'ble Minister after considering the inescapability in public interest had agreed for exchange of 1000 sqm of ASI land as per the proposed alignment. However, ASI in their letter dated 19.5.06 have raised objections particularly in view of a new opening to be made near the top of the Fort wall for passing the tracks. No issue of loosing World heritage status, if any, has been raised.

(f) The issue has been take up at the level of Ministry of Culture to find a solution in view of the importance of construction of the new bridge. A final decision will be taken up after necessary consultation with Ministry of Culture.

[Translation]

Guna-Etawah Railway Line

3986. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of new rail lines approved in the country during the last three years and the number of those approved rail lines on which construction work is going on alongwith the details of those rail lines on which work has not been started till date;

(b) the time since when Guna and Etawah rail lines in Madhya Pradesh has been approved and the reasons for delay in completion of this rail line; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) In the last 3 years, 14 nos. of new lines have been taken up. Work is progressing on all new line projects as per availability of resources.

(b) and (c) Guna-Etawah (348.25 km.) new rail line was sanctioned in 1985-86. Entire section except Bhind-Etawah (36 km.) has already been completed and commissioned. There has been delay in completion of this 36 km. section due to non transfer of Forest land and Wild Life Sanctuary by Government of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Work shall be completed within one year after the land is made available.

[English]

Discovery of Oil and Gas in Bihar

3987. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any oil and gas reserves have been identified for the first time in Purnea, as the first sniff of oil in Bihar.

(b) if so, the nature and estimated volume of the new oil find; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken to fully explore and exploit these reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) No, Sir.

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

Oil Conservation

3988. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO :
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :

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

(a) whether oil conservation through efficient utilisation can be looked upon as a quicker, efficient and economic source of new energy;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Union Government to adopt more efficient technologies available around the world and to use market driven approaches;

(c) whether there is an urgent need to establish a system framework and approach to relies the overall conservation potential;

(d) if so, whether the Union Government has set any system for overall conservation of precious oil; and

(e) if so, the result achieved in regard to oil conservation?

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

(b) to (d) In order to create awareness on the importance and need for conservation through efficient utilisation of petroleum products among consumers and assist them in this regard, Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) was set up as a registered society under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

in 1978. Its mandate is to promote conservation of petroleum products in the major consuming sectors of transport, industry, household and agriculture through direct technical assistance, research and development, educational and training programme and mass awareness campaign.

(e) During 2006-07 (April 06 – December 06), PCRA conducted 184 energy audits in the Industrial sector. The Savings identified through these studies was 60590 Kilo Litres of Oil Equivalent (Rs. 115 crores) and the savings realised through follow up studies was 11600 KLOE (Rs. 22 crores). PCRA's Driver Training Programmes have also accrued additional benefits to Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation (RSRTC) in terms of 7% reduction in maintenance cost amounting to Rs. 54 crores per annum.

Demarcation of Water in Seas

3989. SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has taken steps to demarcate the waters in the seas between Sri Lanka and India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has set up Floating Masis to demarcate the mari-time boundaries in the Sourthern seas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :
(a) and (b) The International Maritime Boundary Line between Sri Lanka and India is already demarcated and notified in gazette. The relevant charts and maps are available in public domain.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Derailment of Goods Train

3990. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the bogies of a goods train had derailed near Birhuli railway crossing on the Rewa-Satna railway route on January 23, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons for such incident;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted into said incident;

(d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;

(e) whether frequent derailment of bogies put a question mark on the efficiency of the Railways; and

(f) if so, the corrective measures being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (d) It was on 24th January, 2007 that one match truck and six empty wagons of a goods train derailed near Birhuli railway crossing on Satna-Rewa section. This accident was inquired into by a Committee of Officers which concluded that the derailment occurred due to oscillations and jumping of rolling stock during run.

(e) and (f) No, Sir. In fact, as a result of various steps and measures taken by the Railways, consequential train accidents due to derailments on Indian Railways have gradually come down from 280 in 2001-02 to 218 in 2002-03, 202 in 2003-04, 138 in 2004-05, 131 in 2005-06 and further to 96 (Provisional) in 2006-07.

Oil Bonds

3991. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has issued fifth instalment of Oil Bonds recently;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the amount estimated to be collected by the issuance of instalment for Oil Bonds; and

(d) the manner in which the amount collected by issuing Oil Bonds will be utilised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government have issued interest bearing Oil Bonds worth Rs. 4971 crores in the fifth tranche on 29.3.2007 to the public sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs). The Bonds are issued towards partial compensation of losses suffered by them in marketing of sensitive petroleum products.

(c) and (d) The details of Oil Bonds issued during the year 2006-07 are given below:-

	Amount (Rs. in crore)
IOC	13943.21
BPC	5247.90
HPC	4929.89
Total	24121.00

The OMCs would be utilising the amount of Oil Bonds towards partial compensation of under-recoveries in sale of petroleum products and for business development.

Construction of Hostels for SCs

3992. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR :

SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL :

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA :

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of hostels constructed for the students belonging to the Scheduled Castes in the country during the last three years alongwith their location, State/ UT-wise;

(b) the number of approved hostels for the SC students which have not been constructed so far and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the financial assistance provided to the said hostels during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN) : (a) to (c) The details of number of hostels sanctioned and the central assistance released during the last 3 years to various State Governments for construction of hostels under the scheme of hostels for SC girls and boys are given in the enclosed statement. According to the provisions of the scheme, a period of five years is allowed for completion of construction of hostels.

Statement

Financial assistance provided to State/UTs during the year 2004-05 to 2006-07 under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Hostels for SC Girls and Boys

Boys Hostel

S. No.	State/UTs	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
		Amount sanctioned and released (Rs. in lakhs)	No. of hostels	Amount sanctioned and released (Rs. in lakhs)	No. of hostels	Amount sanctioned and released (Rs. in lakhs)	No. of hostels
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	25	2	516.2	44	246.3	17
2.	Chhattisgarh	171.6	4	242.68	12	345.09	19
3.	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	951.83	12	0	0
4.	Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	6.39	0	0	0
5.	Jharkhand	103.47	6	111.44	9	182.13	7
6.	Karnataka	447.68	23	0	0	408	23
7.	Kerala	24	1	0	0	0	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8.	Madhya Pradesh	0	0	108	4	711.43	25
9.	Rajasthan	0	0	0	0	307.05	15
10.	Tamil Nadu	1275.75	81	0	0	0	0
11.	Tripura	100	1	151.89	1	0	0
12.	Uttar Pradesh	0	0	169.58	3	0	0
13.	Uttaranchal	95.81	3	0	0	0	0
Total		2243.31	121	2258.01	85	2200	106

Girls Hostel

1.	Andhra Pradesh	675	54	125	10	1012.5	81
2.	Chhattisgarh	26.3	2	96.9	4	300.2	17
3.	Gujarat	0	0	60	1	109.56	1
4.	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	955.7	15	69.08	0
5.	Jharkhand	103.47	6	111.44	9	19.54	1
6.	Karnataka	150.15	9	0	0	222	12
7.	Kerala	128.21	1	0	0	0	0
8.	Madhya Pradesh	0	0	153.12	6	163.47	6
9.	Orissa	0	0	0	0	369.72	78
10.	Punjab	0	0	0	0	20	1
11.	Rajasthan	0	0	96.75	3	62.78	3
12.	Tripura	58.84	1	0	0	0	0
13.	Uttar Pradesh	0	0	226.1	4	0	0
14.	Pondicherry	50	0	242.52	0	0	0
Total		1191.97	73	2067.53	52	2348.85	200

[English]

Road Overbridges in Bhiwani

3993. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Haryana Government has given its concurrence and also required money for construction of three road overbridges on railway crossings in Bhiwani District in Haryana;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for delay in starting the construction work on the said Road Overbridges; and

(d) the steps taken by the Railways for time-bound construction of the three ROB's in Bhiwani?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) Works of Road over bridges/under bridges are not sanctioned district-wise instead these are sanctioned Railway-wise where traffic density at level crossings exceeds at one lakh TVUs (TVU—A unit obtained by multiplying the number of trains with the number of road vehicles passing over the level crossing in 24 hours) and proposals are sponsored by State Government duly fulfilling certain preliminary pre-requisites required under extant rules. However, during the Works Programme of 2007-08, 16 works were sponsored by Haryana State Government out of which following 15 works falling in Haryana have been sanctioned on cost sharing basis for which funds have also been allocated to commence the works.

1. Construction of 2 lane ROB at Nilokheri at L.C. No. 78-AB at Km. 139/8-6 on Delhi—Ambala section.
2. Construction of 2 lane ROB at Shabhad at L.C. No. 98-AC at Km. 179 on Delhi—Ambala section.

3. Construction of 2 lane ROB at Samalkha at L.C. No. 42 at Km. 70/9-11 on Delhi—Ambala section.
4. Construction of 2 lane ROB at Sonapat in lieu of L.C. No. 27B.
5. Proposed construction of 2 lane ROB at Taraori at L.C. No. 78 at Km. 135/4-6 on Delhi—Ambala section.
6. Proposed construction of 2 lane ROB at Rohtak at L.C. No. A-3 at Km. 2/13-14 on Rohtak—Gohana section.
7. Proposed construction of 2 lane ROB at Rohtak at L.C. No. 4-B at Km. 3/5-6 on Rohtak—Gohana section.
8. Proposed construction of 2 lane ROB at Rohtak at L.C. No. B-60 at Km. 70/11-12 on Delhi—Bhatinda section.
9. Construction of ROB's/RUB's in lieu of Level Crossing No. 162-C at Km. 186/2-3 on Delhi—Bhatinda section at Tohana.
10. ROB at Yamuna Nagar on L.C. No.98B/2 on Ambala—Saharanpur Sec.
11. ROB at Bahadurgarh on L.C. No.23C-Delhi—Bhatinda Sec.
12. Const. of ROB in lieu of L.C. No. 53 on Rewari—Hissar Sec.
13. Const. of ROB in lieu of L.C. No. 100 on Rewari—Sadulpur Sec.
14. Const. of ROB in lieu of L.C. No. 43 on Rewari—Hissar Sec.
15. Const. of ROB in lieu of L.C. No. 53 on Rewari—Rohtak Sec.

(c) and (d) There is no delay from Railway's side. Railway shall construct its portion i.e. bridge proper across tracks, and approaches shall be constructed by State Government. Railway shall make all out efforts to complete all the sanctioned works simultaneously with the works of approaches done by State Govt. The start of construction work is dependent on final approvals to be accorded to. General Arrangement Drawing (GAD) and Detailed Estimates by both State Government and Railways.

Extension of Platform at Satara Railway Station

3994. SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether extension of platforms to accommodate 24 boggie train at Satara Railway Station in Central Railway is likely to be undertaken; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) Satara Railway Station is situated on Pune-Miraj single line section. Work of extension of platform no. 1 is already completed to accommodate 24 coach trains. On this platform, trains can be received in both i.e. UP/DOWN directions.

[Translation]

Renewal of Contracts for Pantry Cars

3995. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3374 on December 14, 2006 regarding Award of Contracts for Pantry Car and state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the contracts for the Pantry Cars will not be renewed once it is concluded as mentioned in the reply to the said question;

(b) if so, whether the Railways are aware that in

contrary to the said reply the Pantry Cars attached to Train No. 6509-10 have been renewed till January 20, 2012 as per the letter No. 2001/IRCTC/CT 9/6509-10 dated January 23, 2007 issued by IRCTC;

(c) if so, the names of other trains in which contracts for the Pantry Cars have been renewed;

(d) the reasons of the renewal of the contracts by going against the policy; and

(e) the action taken by the Railways against the officials in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) Yes, Sir. Contracts for pantry cars awarded as per Revised Catering Policy 2005 are not renewable.

(b) to (e) Information is being obtained from Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC).

[English]

Export Orders Executed by BHEL

3996. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL : Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state :

(a) whether BHEL has been able to secure export orders in European Market for supply of compressors;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of other export orders being executed by BHEL and the foreign exchange likely to be earned therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited has secured an order from M/s. Grant Parioisse, France for supply and supervision of Erection and

Commissioning of a Compressor Package for a Urea Plant in France.

(c) BHEL has recently commissioned 60 MW Western Mountain Power Plant in Libya, the largest power plant commissioned by BHEL overseas. Presently, BHEL is executing the following major projects overseas:-

- (i) 4x125 MW Steam turbine based Thermal power plant at Kosti, Sudan.
- (ii) Two numbers Gas Turbine based Power Plants on turnkey basis at Qarn Alam and Mukhaizana for Petroleum Development, Oman.
- (iii) Three numbers Supply of Compressor packages orders to Petroleum Development, Oman.
- (iv) Two 230 KV class Substation Projects for Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation Ethiopia.
- (v) 42 MW Hydro Electric Power Plant in Salma Afghanistan and 63 MW Hydro Electric Power Plant in Bihai, Taiwan.
- (vi) Substation Projects in Kabul Afghanistan and Baghabari and Ishurdi in Bangladesh.
- (vii) Supply of Transformers for Egyptian Electricity Transmission Company, Egypt.
- (viii) Gas Turbine based Power Plant on turnkey basis at Sidhirganj for Electricity Generation Company, Bangladesh
- (ix) Gas Turbine based Power Plant on turnkey basis from Mass Global Investments, Jordan.
- (x) Supply of Gas Turbine Generator Package order for Oman.

BHEL has an outstanding export order book of over Rs. 4000 crore, which are likely to be liquidated in next two to three years earning foreign exchange for BHEL.

UAV Programme

3997. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has planned \$1 billion Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Defence Research and Development Organisation is working on the UAV programme for both military and civilian purposes;

(d) if so, the details of the programme and progress made so far in this regard;

(e) whether the European countries and Israel have shown keen interest in joint venture for India's UAV programme;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether any final decision has been taken by the Government for joint venture in this programme; and

(h) if so, the details thereof and the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is working on Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) programme for Military applications.

(d) DRDO has developed UAV, Nishant. After the user trial, Army has placed an order for 12 UAVs alongwith ground support systems, which is currently under Limited Series Production. DRDO is also taking up a programme for development of Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) UAV to meet the requirements of the three Services.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. European and Israeli companies have suo motu approached DRDO for undertaking joint development programme on UAVs. Preliminary presentations have been made by European and Israeli companies to bring out and demonstrate their capabilities on UAVs.

(e) and (h) No, Sir. Presently, DRDO is planning to undertake development of MALE UAV alongwith Indian partner only. However, if required, limited consultancy or joint development on certain key technologies regarding UAVs, may be undertaken with foreign companies.

Shortage of Staff at Kolkata Airport

3988. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA :
SHRI HITEN BARMAN :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a shortage of Indian Airlines staff in Kolkata airport; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to meet the shortage of staff there?

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

(b) Does not arise.

Institutions of Petroleum Technology

3999. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up Institutes of Petroleum Technology in the country;

(b) if so, the details and its proposed functions thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said Institutes are likely to be set up?

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

(b) The proposal is to set up 'Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Petroleum Technology' (RGIPT) at Jias, District Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh. RGIPT is envisaged to serve as the fountainhead for the nurturing of world-class technical human resources in the field of Petroleum Technology and Engineering covering the entire hydrocarbon value chain.

(c) The proposed project period for setting up of RGIPT is 2007-2016.

Railway Line to Kashmir Valley and Andaman and Nicobar Islands

4000. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have any plan to run railway line to Kashmir Valley and Andaman and Nicobar Islands;

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

(c) the time by which the train services are likely to be started there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramullah (292 km.) new line National Project has been taken upto provide rail connectivity to Kashmir Valley. The section from Badgam to Kakapore including Srinagar has been completed and train services will be commissioned after inspection by Commissioner of Railway Safety and successful trial of DMU coach which are under transportation to Valley. Further the section from Udhampur to Katra, Qazigund-Kakapore and Badgam to Baramullah are targeted for completion in 2007-08.

To provide rail service in Andaman and Nicobar

Islands, an updating survey was carried out in 2002-03 for rail line between Port Blair and Diglipur. As per the survey report, the cost of 239 km. long line was assessed at Rs. 867 crore with negative Rate Of Return. In view of unremunerative nature of the project, huge throwforward of ongoing projects and scarcity of resources the project was not taken up.

Setting up of SBUs

4001. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposed to create a new Mega Airline Company and also to set up Special Business Units (SBUs) in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the locations identified for the same; and

(c) the time by which these units are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government has recently approved the merger of Air India and Indian Airlines into a new Company and as a first step, a Company named "National Aviation Company of India Limited" has been incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956. The merger is expected to be completed in a phased manner over the next 2 years.

The new entity will have Strategic Business Units (SBUs) in the areas of integrated passenger service, MRO, Ground Handling, LCC, Cargo and other related activities. The proposed SBUs will have nation-wise operations.

Telephone Booths to Disable Persons at Railway Stations

4002. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU :
SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR :

SHRI MILIND DEORA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have decided to scrap the scheme under which the disabled had been allotted the telephone booths at the Railway stations across the country as reported in The Hindustan Times dated April 10, 2007;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the time since when the scheme was in operation;

(d) whether the Court of the Chief Commissioner for Disabilities has issued a show-cause notice to the Railway in this regard;

(e) if so, the reaction of the Railway thereto;

(f) whether the Railways have decided to provide alternate employment option to the disabled before finally scrapping the scheme; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Since 1981.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Besides above, a number of representations for renewal/extension of contracts of the existing physically handicapped Subscriber Trunk Dialling (STD)/Public Call Office (PCO) booth holders have been received from various quarters and it has been decided to extend the present contracts of persons running Subscriber Trunk Dialling (STD)/Public Call Office (PCO) booths over railway stations which were expiring on 27.4.07 for a further period of three months.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) Does not arise.

Illumination of Historical Buildings

4003. SHRI MILIND DEORA : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether in view of the Commonwealth games, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to illuminate and renovate historical monuments across the capital;

(b) if so, the number of monuments which have been identified for this purpose;

(c) the number of monuments on the Heritage list of UNESCO;

(d) the revenue/foreign exchange earned from these monuments;

(e) the time by which the work is likely to be completed; and

(f) the expenditure incurred on this work?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) and (b) The Archaeological Survey of India has identified 46 centrally protected monuments in Delhi for repairs, upgradation, illumination, provision of amenities, environment development, etc. in view of the Commonwealth Games.

(c) and (d) There are 21 monuments on the World Heritage List in India. Of this, Qutb Minar and Humayun's Tomb are in Delhi. In the year 2006-07, the revenue/foreign exchange earned from these monuments are as below:-

	Qutb Minar	Humayun's Tomb
Indian currency	Rs.4,61,35,033	Rs.2,76,83,930
US\$	9,10,080	3,06,588

(e) and (f) The estimated requirement of funds for carrying out the repairs, upgradation, illumination, etc. as stated above Rs. 23.39 crores. If the funds are made available, the work is expected to be completed by March, 2010.

Method of Drawing Samples of Petrol and Diesel

4004. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is aware of this fact that Oil Corporation's officers are not following the method of drawing samples of petrol and HSD prescribed by IS 1447:2000;

(b) whether the IS 1460 and IS 2790 had also recommended to follow the method of sampling prescribed different series of IS 1447;

(c) if so, whether the oil corporations are empowered to change the prescribed method of sampling of petroleum recommended in IS 1447;

(d) whether the Haryana Petroleum Association has submitted any representation on this issue; and

(e) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) IS 1447 (Part-I) : 2000 specifies the sampling procedure from marine tankers, stationary/shore tanks, tank trucks and sample containers, labeling etc. for Motor Spirit (MS) and High Speed Diesel (HSD). Requirements of IS 1447 have been mentioned in the MS/HSD Control Order, Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) and the chapter on 'Non-aviation Industry Quality Control Manual' issued by the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs). However, drawal of MS/HSD samples from retail outlet nozzles is not specifically mentioned in IS 1447 (Part-I) : 2000.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The requirements laid down are being followed by OMCs. Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has a system of revision of their standards from time to time. Depending upon the requirements and to make sampling procedure more effective, some modifications are done in sampling procedure from time to time. As per clause 6.1 of IS 1447 (Part-I) : 2000, alternative sampling procedures can be used if the parties involved have reached a mutual agreement.

(d) and (e) Representation from Haryana Petroleum Dealers Association has been received on issues relating to various provisions of MDG 2005, including sampling procedure. OMCs are following the sampling procedure as specified in the guidelines.

[Translation]

**Task Force under the Regional
General Managers**

4005. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have instructions to constitute a task force under the regional general managers to complete the pending railway projects on time;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the projects under West Central Railway and North Western Railway identified for this task force?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Promotion of Culture in Orissa

4006. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has taken any steps for the production and promotion of culture in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the amount sanctioned in this regard during the last three years; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Culture has taken various steps for protection and promotion of culture in various states of the including Orissa. These activities are carried out through the attached, subordinate and autonomous organizations of the Ministry Details are enclosed as statement.

(c) Does not arise.

Statement

Details of grant assistance given during the last three years for protection of culture in Orissa

S.No.	Item	Year	Amount (Rs.)
1	2	3	4
I. Multi Purpose Cultural Complex			
1.	Provided financial assistance for setting up of multi purpose cultural complexes in Orissa	2004-05	1,00,00,000

1	2	3	4
II. Financial Assistance for promotion and strengthening of local and regional museums			
1.	Orissa State Museum	2005-06	3,84,000
2.	Pali Sanskriti Kala Parishad, Puri	2006-07	4,50,000
3.	Netaji Birth Place Museum Trust, Cuttack		9,30,000
4.	Khiching Museum, Mayur Bhanj		7,60,000
5.	Tribal Museum, Koraput		13,20,000
6.	Orissa State Archaeology, Bhubaneswar		3,96,000
7.	Baripada Museum, Mayur Bhanj		1,71,000
III. Setting up of Regional Science Centres			
1.	Regional Science Centre, Bhubaneswar	2004-05	70,90,000
		2005-06	52,82,000
		2006-07	89,11,000
2.	Distt. Science Centre, Dhenkanal and Science Park, Kapilas	2004-05	23,74,000
		2005-06	21,51,000
		2006-07	26,28,000
IV. National Archives			
1.	Scheme of financial assistance to State/UT Archival Repositories, Govt. Library	2004-05	7,50,000
2.	For preservation of manuscripts/rare books to NGO's/ individuals	2004-05	2,00,000
		2005-06	75,000
V. Anthropological Survey of India			
1.	Documentation/Dissemination Plan Project	2004-05	55,23,000
		2005-06	130,10,000
		2006-07	195,16,000

1	2	3	4
VI. Centenaries and Memorials			
1.	Development and maintenance of National Memorial (Netaji Birth Place Museum Trust, Cuttack)	2004-05	75,00,000
2.	Grants given to organisations for Centenary celebration	2005-06	2,15,000
VII. Scholarships and Fellowships		2004-05	10,92,000
	(Awarded to those with Orissa address)	2005-06	6,84,000
		2006-07	19,44,000
VIII. Seminar Grant		2004-05	6,12,000
	(Awarded to those with Orissa address)	2005-06	6,84,000
		2006-07	4,97,500

IX. Akademies

Annual Budgetary allocation of Lalit Kala Academy is Rs. 20.00 lakhs to 25.00 lakhs per annum which includes the maintenance of the center and programmes in the state of the Orissa including organizing art camps, workshops etc. Allocation under these heads/schemes are not maintained State-wise.

X. Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sanghralaya

The Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sanghralaya has taken up a number of activities to protect and promote culture in Orissa. Prominent among these are:-

- (a) Carried out fieldwork among the people of Orissa and developed collection of 660 objects of the material culture of people of Orissa.
- (b) Developed 7 exhibits from Orissa in its open air

exhibition the Tribal Habitat, Coastal village and Mythological Trail.

- (c) Displayaed objects collected from Orissa in its permanent indoor exhibition Veethi Sankul, and in a number of periodical and traveling exhibitions.
- (d) Two special travelling exhibitions 'Rock art of India' and 'Sacred groves' have been mounted in various places in Orissa.
- (e) Organised a number of artist camps, art and craft demonstration workshops and museum education programmes in which traditional knowledge system from Orissa were demonstrated.
- (f) Organised presentation of performing art forms of Orissa at several occasions.

Allocation under these heads/schemes are not maintained state-wise.

XI. Miscellaneous

In addition salary and assistance is also provided under the scheme of production grants, tribal and folk arts and building grants. Allocation under these heads/schemes are not maintained State-wise.

[English]

**Doubling of Railway Line between
Hospet and Konkan**

4007. SHRI M. SHIVANNA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the work pertaining to doubling of railway line between Hospet and Konkan Railway is in an advanced stage; and

(b) if so, the status thereof and the time by which the work is likely to be completed?

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

(b) Does not arise.

**Concession in Train Fares to
Freedom Fighters**

4008. SHRI M. APPADURAI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways provide concession in train fares or free travel facility to the Freedom Fighters;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether there is any proposal to provide concession in train fares to Freedom Fighters particularly to those getting pension from Government of Tamil Nadu; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) Concession in train fares is not admissible to freedom fighters. However, freedom fighters drawing pension under the Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme of Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, are issued first class/second AC complimentary card passes within one companion in the same class. These passes are available for travel from any railway station to any railway station on Indian railways network except on Metro Railway, Kolkata. These passes are not valid on Rajdhani/Shatabdi Trains.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Assistance for Arts Projects

4009. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH :

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL :

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government provides assistance for various arts projects in the country;

(b) if so, the details of assistance provided during 2005-06 and 2006-2007;

(c) whether the Government has any plan to promote Fine Arts and Performing Arts at school level in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of scholarships provided for encouraging talented children to pursue their interests in the field during the said period, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

*[English]***Flights/Cargo Movements at Airports**

4010. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the turnover of Cochin, Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode Airports in terms of flights, passengers and cargo movement has increased during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof in respect of each airport?

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

(b) The details of aircraft movement, passengers and freight in respect of Cochin, Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode International Airports, respectively, for the last three years (i.e. 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 provisional) are as follows: Aircrafts Movement (in numbers) – 2004-05 – 18075, 10422 and 9447; 2005-06 – 20568, 11482 and 11134; 2006-07 – 30153, 18693 and 13105, passengers (in numbers) – 2004-05 – 1596126, 1160151 and 827861; 2005-06 – 1886614, 1325733 and 960362;

2006-07 – 2563236, 1781201 and 1133652. Freight (in tonnes) – 2004-05 – 22175, 23655 and 10589; 2005-06 – 21237, 24580 and 10630; 2006-07 – 22829, 31907 and 11461.

*[Translation]***Laying of New Rail Lines**

4011. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the length of the new railway lines laid during each of the last five years, zone-wise;

(b) the details of railway lines of which gauge conversion has been carried out during the said period, zone-wise; and

(c) the funds allocated and spent by the Railways on laying new railway lines and gauge conversion during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) New lines and gauge conversions completed during the last five years zone-wise is as follows:—

(NL denotes New Line and GC denotes Gauge conversion)

Railway	2002-03		2003-04		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
	NL	GC	NL	GC	NL	GC	NL	GC	NL	GC
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Central	—	42	28	—	44	—	—	—	—	80
Eastern	—	—	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—
East Central	42	—	30	—	18	—	12	51	—	54
East Coast	36	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	98	—
Northern	—	—	56	—	—	—	45	83	28	—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
North Eastern	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	165	—	107
Northeast Frontier	53	—	13	198	—	61	—	53	—	23
North Central	—	—	—	98	—	53	—	—	—	—
North Western	—	150	—	143	—	108	45	—	66	185
Southern	—	80	—	176	—	48	—	86	—	256
South Central	15	166	—	30	44	163	—	14	48	117
South Eastern	18	—	10	—	44	161	—	—	—	15
South Western	—	25	—	57	—	45	42	44	—	52
South East Central	—	—	—	—	—	48	23	—	—	—
Western	—	367	—	152	—	92	—	248	10	193

(c) Expenditure of approximate Rs. 9158 crore and Rs. 6700 crore (provisional) was incurred on the Plan Heads New line and Gauge Conversion respectively during the last five years.

[English]

Import of LNG

4012. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has a proposal to import Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from other countries;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the estimated requirement of LNG in the Eleventh Plan

(d) the domestic production expected in that period; and

(e) the quantum of gas proposed to be imported during that plan period particularly from Iran?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) to (e) In order to meet existing shortfall and growing demand of natural gas in the country, Government is also pursuing the import of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

Petronet LNG Ltd. (PLL) has signed contract with RasGas Qatar for import of 7.5 MMTPA LNG for a period of 25 years. RasGas Qatar is already supplying 5 MMTPA LNG and the supply of balance 2.5 MMTPA LNG would commence from mid 2009.

GAIL, IOC and BPCL have signed contract with National Iranian Gas Export Company (NIGEC) on June 13, 2005 for import of 5 MMTPA LNG, which is scheduled to commence from 2009. Simultaneously, the parties also signed a side letter to the LNG SPA, as per which NIGEC had to obtain the approval of their parent company,

National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), for the SPA to become effective. NIGEC has not obtained the approval of NIOC's Board till now.

PLL is setting up 2.5 MMTPA LNG Terminal, with a provision for expansion to 5 MMTPA at Kochi. PLL is at advanced stage of negotiations with Exxon Mobil for import of 2.5 MMTPA LNG from LNG project at Gorgon, Australia for Kochi LNG Terminal.

GAIL is holding discussions with various potential suppliers of LNG for import of LNG on long-term basis from the year 2009 onwards for Dabhol LNG Terminal.

The demand for Regasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) is not assessed separately. It depends on the total demand for natural gas in the country. The Working Group on Petroleum and Natural Gas Sector for the XI Plan has projected demand and supply of natural gas during 2011-12 at 279.43 MMSCMD and 285.42 MMSCMD, respectively which includes 83.12 MMSCMD of RLNG (23.75 MMTPA). Out of 285.42 MMSCMD or projected supply of gas for the year 2011-12, 202.30 MMSCMD is expected, from domestic production.

Railway Hospitals

4013. SHRI JUAL ORAM :

SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of hospitals set up by the Railways so far in the country alongwith the locations thereof;

(b) whether the Railways also have any proposal to set up at least one super specialty hospital in each zone;

(c) if so, the details and locations thereof; and

(d) the time by which these hospitals are likely to be set-up?

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

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Statement

List of 121 Railway Hospitals

S. No.	Name of Zone	Names of Hospital	Location	State
1	2	3	4	5
1.	CR	Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar Memorial Hospital	Byculla/Mumbai	Maharashtra
2.	CR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Pune	Maharashtra
3.	CR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Bhusawal	Maharashtra
4.	CR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Kalyan/Mumbai	Maharashtra
5.	CR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Solapur	Maharashtra
6.	CR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Nagpur	Maharashtra

1	2	3	4	5
7.	CR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Amla	Madhya Pradesh
8.	CR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Igatpuri	Maharashtra
9.	CR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Kurdwadi/Solapur	Maharashtra
10.	CR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Daund	Maharashtra
11.	CR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Manmad	Maharashtra
12.	ECOR	Railway Central Hospital	Mancheswar/Bhubaneswar	Orissa
13.	ECOR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Waltair/Visakhapatnam	Andhra Pradesh
14.	ECOR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Khurda Road	Orissa
15.	ECOR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Sambalpur	Orissa
16.	ECR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Danapur	Bihar
17.	ECR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Sonepur	Bihar
18.	ECR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Mughalsarai	Uttar Pradesh
19.	ECR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Samastipur	Bihar
20.	ECR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Dhanbad	Jharkhand
21.	ECR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Patratu/Dhanbad	Jharkhand
22.	ECR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Gaya/Mughalsarai	Bihar
23.	ECR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Garhara/Sonepur	Bihar
24.	ER	Central Hospital/B.R. Singh Hospital	Sealdah	West Bengal
25.	ER	Railway Divisional Hospital/Eastern Railway Hospital Makda Town	Malda	West Bengal
26.	ER	Railway Divisional Hospital	Asansol	West Bengal
27.	ER	Railway Divisional Hospital/Howrah Orthopaedic	Howrah	West Bengal
28.	ER	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Andal	West Bengal
29.	ER	Railway Workshop Hospital	Jamalpur	Bihar

1	2	3	4	5
30.	ER	Railway Workshop Hospital	Kanchrapara	West Bengal
31.	ER	Railway Workshop Hospital	Liluah	West Bengal
32.	ER	CLW/KG Hospital/Production Unit	Chittaranjan	West Bengal
33.	NCR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh
34.	NCR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Jhansi	Uttar Pradesh
35.	NCR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Kanpur	Uttar Pradesh
36.	NCR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Tundla	Uttar Pradesh
37.	NER	LNMRly Hosp. Gorakhpur	Gorakhpur	Uttar Pradesh
38.	NER	Railway Divisional Hospital	Izamnagar	Uttarakhand
39.	NER	Railway Divisional Hospital	Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh
40.	NER	Railway Divisional Hospital	Badshah Nagar/Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh
41.	NER	Cancer Research Institute	Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh
42.	NER	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Gonda/Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh
43.	NER	DLW Production Unit Railway Hospital	DLW/Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh
44.	NER	Cancer Research Institute	Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh
45.	NFR	Central Hospital	Maligaon/Guwahati	Assam
46.	NFR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Katihar	Bihar
47.	NFR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Allipurduar	West Bengal
48.	NFR	Lumding Railway Divisional Hospital	Lumding	Assam
49.	NFR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Dibrugarh/Tinsukia	Assam
50.	NFR	New Bongaigaon Railway Divisional Hospital	New Bongaigaon/ Rangapara	Assam
51.	NFR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	New Jalpaiguri/Katihar	West Bengal
52.	NFR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	New Tinsukia/Tinsukia	Assam

1	2	3	4	5
53.	NFR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Badarpur/Lumding	Assam
54.	NFR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Rangapara North Ranga	Assam
55.	NFR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Tindharia/Katihar	West Bengal
56.	NR	Northern Railway Central	New Delhi	Delhi
57.	NR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Main Delhi	Delhi
58.	NR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh
59.	NR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Moradabad	Uttar Pradesh
60.	NR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Firozpur	Punjab
61.	NR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Ambala	Haryana
62.	NR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Saharanpur	Uttar Pradesh
63.	NR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Firozpur/Amritsar	Punjab
64.	NR	Extra Divisional Hospital RDSO, Lucknow	RDSO/Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh
65.	NR	Work Shop Hosp Jagadhari,	Jagadhari	Haryana
66.	NR	Work Shop Hosp. DMW Patiala	DMW/Patiala	Punjab
67.	NR	Production Unit Hospital	Rail Coach Factory/ Kapurthala	Punjab
68.	NWR	Railway Central Hospital	Jaipur	Rajasthan
69.	NWR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Ajmer	Rajasthan
70.	NWR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Jodhpur	Rajasthan
71.	NWR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Bikaner	Rajasthan
72.	NWR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Rewari	Rajasthan
73.	NWR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Bandikui	Rajasthan
74.	NWR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Abu Road (Ajmer)	Rajasthan
75.	NWR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Ranapratap Nagar (Ajmer)	Rajasthan

1	2	3	4	5
76.	SCR	Central Railway Hospital	Lallaguda/Secunderabad	Andhra Pradesh
77.	SCR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Vijayawada	Andhra Pradesh
78.	SCR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Guntakal	Andhra Pradesh
79.	SCR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Purna/Nanded	Maharashtra
80.	SCR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Rayanpadu/Vijaywada	Andhra Pradesh
81.	SECR	Railway Central Hospital	Bilaspur	Chhattisgarh
82.	SECR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Raipur/Bhilai Marshaling Yard	Chhattisgarh
83.	SECR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Nainpur/Nagpur	Maharashtra
84.	SECR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Shahdol/Bilaspur	Madhya Pradesh
85.	SER	Central Hospital	Garden Reach/Calcutta	West Bengal
86.	SER	Railway Divisional Hospital	Khargpur	West Bengal
87.	SER	Railway Divisional Hospital	Adra	West Bengal
88.	SER	Railway Divisional Hospital	Chakradharpur	Jharkhand
89.	SER	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Bondamunda/Chakradharpur	Orissa
90.	SER	Tata Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Chakradharpur	Jharkhand
91.	SR	Railway Central Hospital	Perambur/Chennai	Tamil Nadu
92.	SR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Arakkonam	Tamil Nadu
93.	SR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Ponmalai/Tiruchchirappalli	Tamil Nadu
94.	SR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Madurai	Tamil Nadu
95.	SR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Palghat	Kerala
96.	SR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Thiruvananthapuram	Kerala
97.	SR	Railway Sub Divisional	Shoranur	Kerala
98.	SR	Railway Sub Divisional	Erode	Tamil Nadu

1	2	3	4	5
99.	SR	Railway Sub Divisional	Podanur	Tamil Nadu
100.	SR	Railway Sub Divisional	Villupuram/Tiruchchirappalli	Tamil Nadu
101.	SR	ICF Railway Hospital	Integrated Coach Factory (Chennai)	Tamil Nadu
102.	SWR	Central Railway Hospital	Hubli	Karnataka
103.	SWR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Bangalore	Karnataka
104.	SWR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Mysore	Karnataka
105.	SWR	Production Unit/RWF Hospital	Yelahanka (Banglore)	Karnataka
106.	WCR	Railway Central Hospital	Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh
107.	WCR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Nishatpura/Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh
108.	WCR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Kota	Rajasthan
109.	WCR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Itarasi (Bhopal)	Madhya Pradesh
110.	WCR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Bina (Bhopal)	Madhya Pradesh
111.	WCR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	Gangapur City (Kota)	Rajasthan
112.	WCR	Railway Sub Divisional Hospital	New Katni (Katni)	Madhya Pradesh
113.	WR	Central Hospital/Jagjivanram	Mumbai Central	Maharashtra
114.	WR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Pratapnagar/Vadodara	Gujarat
115.	WR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Sabarmati (Ahmedabad)	Gujarat
116.	WR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Ratlam	Madhya Pradesh
117.	WR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Rajkot	Gujarat
118.	WR	Railway Divisional Hospital	Bhavnagar Para	Gujarat
119.	WR	Railway Sub Divisional	Valsad (Mumbai Central)	Gujarat
120.	WR	Railway Sub Divisional	Gandhidham (Ahmedabad)	Gujarat
121.	WR	Main Hospital/Dahod Railway	Dahod	Gujarat

[Translation]

Security Gadgets at Railway Stations

4014. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have expressed its inclination to equip the railway stations with the latest security gadgets available as reported in the 'Dainik Jagran' dated March 22, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the updated position with regard to equipping the railway stations with the latest security gadgets in each division of the Railways particularly zone and division situated in Jharkhand during the last three years and the current year; and

(d) the expenditure incurred/proposed to be incurred by the Railways for providing security equipment in its divisions during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) Yes, Sir. As per intelligence inputs, Indian Railways is a soft target for terrorists in India and a few cases of attack from terrorists and anti social elements on rail network have been reported over Indian Railways.

(b) 185 Railway Stations including 17 metro stations of 50 divisions over Indian Railway have been identified as sensitive where security systems are proposed to be upgraded.

(c) The following steps have been taken/are being taken to provide adequate security at all the important railway stations including South East Central Railway, East Central Railway and South Eastern Railway of Jharkhand state.

1. Modern security gadgets like-Close Circuit Televisions and Cameras, Deep Search Metal Detectors, Scanner Machines, etc. are being installed.

2. Sniffer Dogs are being/have been deployed for checking of Coaches, Parcels, Baggage, station area and searching of explosives.

3. Round the clock announcements over Public Address system as well as by Mega phones by Railway Protection Force to alert the public in coaches.

4. Use of Hand Held Metal Detectors and Door Frame Metal Detectors to conduct anti-sabotage checks in trains and at stations

5. Communication system of Railway Protection Force has been improved by providing Mobile phones, walkie-talkies, Very High Frequency sets etc.

(d) Rupees 149,23,19,769/- are spent/to be spent on vetted and sanctioned proposals during 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08.

[English]

Road Connectivity to World Heritage Sites

4015. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government provides financial assistance for improvement of road connectivity to world heritage sites and other places of tourist importance;

(b) if so, the details of the tourism infrastructure projects for which financial assistance has been provided to the State Governments during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government has received requests from the State Governments for financial assistance for the purpose during the current financial year; and

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

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

(b) to (d) Project proposals from the States/UTs

are examined as per guidelines and funds are released on the basis of inter-se priority and availability of funds. The details of projects sanctioned in the last three years are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

State-wise Tourism Projects sanctioned during the last three years of Tenth Five Year Plan

(Rs. in lakhs)

S. No.	State/UT	2004-05			2005-06			2006-07		
		No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	Amount Released	No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	Amount Released	No. of Projects Sancd.	Amount Sancd.	Amount Released
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.	Andhra Pradesh	16	2827.19	2240.68	7	2615.82	1700.00	3	1540.56	1195.44
2.	Assam	8	986.03	766.22	10	2140.00	1698.45	9	2453.39	1813.21
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	9	1325.50	927.96	10	2240.16	1655.21	12	1887.80	1497.24
4.	Bihar	7	1901.43	1527.71	3	1212.23	722.49	2	1937.29	974.59
5.	Chhattisgarh	6	1117.94	897.93	7	1775.59	1436.54	16	3540.17	2491.12
6.	Goa	3	110.00	38.00	1	10.00	8.00	0	0.00	0.00
7.	Gujarat	2	138.93	111.14	5	2011.58	1169.04	7	443.65	359.51
8.	Haryana	6	693.55	513.64	7	639.71	515.77	5	1836.16	902.39
9.	Himachal Pradesh	12	2680.00	2161.00	6	1645.00	921.00	8	1871.00	1226.13
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	5	819.25	699.04	22	6656.01	5320.31	29	5233.82	3392.90
11.	Jharkhand	2	945.91	756.72	5	1227.27	697.76	3	956.35	769.99
12.	Karnataka	12	2461.76	1937.37	8	1706.52	1001.21	4	1323.89	1081.81
13.	Kerala	10	2283.63	1820.33	13	4858.88	3889.90	18	4474.02	3441.61
14.	Madhya Pradesh	11	1595.19	942.21	12	3047.39	2419.54	10	3668.47	2797.75
15.	Maharashtra	10	1620.62	925.30	9	2075.04	1662.99	13	2839.05	2271.98

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
16. Manipur		0	0.00	0.00	2	49.80	39.84	9	939.35	647.48
17. Meghalaya		2	963.30	807.91	1	5.00	4.00	9	1435.29	1147.93
18. Mizoram		6	1086.35	382.38	10	2273.41	1687.29	9	2613.38	2040.80
19. Nagaland		7	2250.69	1413.40	9	2528.97	1873.17	8	2340.32	1862.51
20. Orissa		8	1320.74	1059.38	10	2309.61	1586.44	13	2826.84	1974.66
21. Punjab		7	724.68	581.47	5	1437.67	1150.13	13	3223.37	1988.68
22. Rajasthan		13	2516.61	1375.07	7	2591.87	2086.40	8	953.84	763.06
23. Sikkim		8	660.81	531.33	14	2844.56	2213.74	13	2609.42	1647.77
24. Tamil Nadu		7	1308.92	705.83	19	4264.62	3007.68	11	1866.471	1496.87
25. Tripura		1	20.00	16.00	3	716.26	569.43	4	291.27	96.01
26. Uttaranchal		7	2199.98	1750.73	13	2738.00	2193.18	16	1907.50	1434.34
27. Uttar Pradesh		9	1044.93	831.19	18	3905.23	3126.03	7	3329.06	2663.24
28. West Bengal		10	513.04	407.13	5	989.35	792.48	10	2978.32	2195.35
29. Andaman and Nicobar Islands		0	0.00	0.00	1	6.25	5.00	0	0.00	0.00
30. Chandigarh		3	467.00	373.60	1	13.70	13.70	2	15.00	14.00
31. Dadra and Nagar Haveli		0	0.00	0.00	2	29.79	25.92	0	0.00	0.00
32. Delhi		8	628.85	511.00	2	20.00	17.00	5	2400.09	1209.54
33. Daman and Diu		0	0.00	0.00	4	262.28	208.61	0	0.00	0.00
34. Lakshadweep		0	0.00	0.00	0	0	0	1	7.00	5.60
35. Pondicherry		2	451.00	360.00	2	489.39	375.51	1	500.00	400.00
Total		217	37663.83	27371.97	253	61316.96	45793.76	278	64242.08	45783.51

Note:- This includes the projects relating to Circuits, Destinations, Large Revenue Generating Projects, Rural Tourism (Software and Hardware) Projects, IT, Event, Fair and Festivals Projects.

Criteria for Ground Handling System

4016. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE :
SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI :
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Airports Authority of India has fixed any criteria for ground handling system;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether some airlines have started barter system for ground handling;
- (d) if so, the facts thereof;
- (e) whether there is any proposal to make changes in the existing ground handling system; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the changes are likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In terms of Airports Authority of India (General Management, Entry for ground Handling Services), Regulations, 2000, the national carriers namely Air India and Indian Airlines and M/s. Cambata Aviation are providing ground handling services at the airports in addition to some airlines who are doing self handling.

(c) No, Sir. Government is not aware of any barter system followed by Airlines.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. The Government have approved a new Ground Handling Policy. As per it the following entities are eligible to undertake ground handling at:-

- (A) All metropolitan airport i.e. Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore and Hyderabad-

(i) The respective airport operator itself or its joint venture, (ii) Subsidiary companies of National Carriers i.e. Air India / Indian Airlines or their joint ventures specialised in ground handling services. Third party handling will also be permitted to these subsidiaries and (iii) Any other ground handling service provider selected through competitive bidding by the airport operator.

- (B) At all other airports, in addition to the entities mentioned above, self handling will be permitted to the airlines excluding foreign airlines.
- (C) Airlines or entities presently involved in ground handling, which are not covered under the policy, enunciated in (A) and/or (B) above will not be permitted to undertake self-handling or third party handling w.e.f. from 1.1.2009. Amendments to the relevant Rules and Regulations are under process.

Uniform Prices of Petroleum Products

4017. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

- (a) the present rates of diesel, petrol and cooking gas in each State/Union Territory;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to make the selling prices of petroleum products uniform in the country;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the steps taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) and (e) The current retail selling prices of

diesel, petrol and cooking gas in the State Capitals/Union Territories are given in the enclosed statement.

Though the basic ex-storage point prices of these petroleum products are uniform across the country, the retail selling prices vary from place to place due to the following reasons:-

- Freight from nearest refinery to the market

- State sales tax/ VAT

- Other local levies like toll tax, octroi, entry tax, delivery charges, etc.

Presently, there is no proposal for making the retail selling prices of petroleum products uniform all over the country.

Statement

Current Retail Selling Prices of Petroleum Products

State/UT	Capital	Diesel Rs./Ltr.	Petrol Rs./Ltr.	Dom. Packed LPG Rs./14.2 Kg. Cyl
1	2	3	4	5
Maharashtra	Mumbai	34.96	48.41	297.95
Delhi	Delhi	30.25	42.85	294.75
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	33.31	47.48	288.10
West Bengal	Kolkata	32.88	46.90	300.50
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	35.55	46.99	328.75
Gujarat	Gandhinagar	35.21	47.74	312.10
Goa	Panjim	33.19	44.36	307.95
Chhattisgarh	Raipur	34.13	44.82	301.80
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	33.65	46.41	294.85
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	31.38	45.68	294.70
Chandigarh	Chandigarh	30.63	44.09	303.25
Jammu and Kashmir	Srinagar	31.92	46.11	303.55
Uttaranchal	Dehradun	32.70	44.58	293.60
Rajasthan	Jaipur	33.07	46.49	297.50
Haryana	Ambala	30.34	42.81	298.90

1	2	3	4	5
Punjab	Jalandhar	30.08	46.93	296.50
Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad	33.81	48.82	302.85
Kerala	Trivandrum	33.73	46.04	302.10
Karnataka	Bangalore	35.25	50.62	306.85
Pondicherry	Pondicherry	31.76	41.91	265.20
Jharkhand	Ranchi	33.01	43.96	305.20
Bihar	Patna	32.97	46.48	302.70
Orissa	Bhubaneshwar	33.50	44.55	305.40
Assam	Guwahati	31.39	45.52	286.60

Development of Tea Tourism Circuits

4018. SHRI DR. M. JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to develop Tea Tourism circuits in the various tea growing areas to promote tourism in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the funds earmarked for the purpose during the current financial year?

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

(b) and (c) Ministry of Tourism extends Central Financial Assistance to State Governments/Union Territories under its scheme "Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits" including Tea Tourism Circuits for the projects prioritized in consultation with them.

The amount allocated for the year 2007-08 for

the scheme "Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits" is Rs. 460.00 crore for project proposals to develop tourism products including tea tourism.

[Translation]

Possession of Land in Village Guda Bishnoipan/ Salawas In Jodhpur

4019. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the areas of the land in possession of the Ministry at village Guda Bishnoipan/Salawas in district Jodhpur;

(b) whether the said land is proposed to be vacated;

(c) if so, by when; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) Around 1090 acres of land is in possession of Indian Air Force at Village Guda Bishnoipan/Salawas.

(b) to (d) The land is being used for operational and other activities of Indian Air Force. Therefore, there is no proposal to vacate it.

**Educational Institutes for Physically
Challenged Persons**

4020. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA
DESHMUKH :
DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the details of special projects/schemes implemented to educate physically challenged persons / students especially in the backward and rural areas in States during the last three years;

(b) the names of the prescribed Institutes/Centres for the deafs and the blinds in the country especially in backward areas alongwith the number of such students getting education in these Institutes/Centres, State/Union Territory-wise;

(c) the names of the Governmental and non-Governmental agencies running these Institutes;

(d) the details of the proposals received from NGOs to start projects for the welfare of the deafs and blinds in various States/Union Territories during the last three years; and

(e) the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) To educate the Physically challenged 72 projects were supported during 2004-05, 83 during 2005-06 and 87 during 2006-07 under Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS) of this Ministry.

(b) and (c) National Institute for Visually Handi-

capped (NIVH), under this Ministry, runs a school for Visually Handicapped students. The details of schools for Hearing Handicapped and Visually Handicapped being supported under DDRS are given in the enclosed statement.

(d) and (e) 3 such proposals were received from NGOs but were not recommended by the Screening Committee.

Statement

S. No.	Name of State/UT	No. of institutes/ Centers/ Projects of Hearing Handicapped	No. of Stu- dents	No. of institutes/ Centers/ Projects of Hearing Handicapped	No. of Stu- dents
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	24	2702	12	1445
2.	Bihar	7	476	5	242
3.	Chandigarh	0	0	1	40
4.	Chhattisgarh	4	263	2	75
5.	Delhi	3	1500	10	1296
6.	Goa	1	78	0	0
7.	Gujarat	0	0	16	5631
8.	Haryana	7	488	5	141
9.	Himachal Pradesh	1	87	3	60
10.	Jharkhand	2	116	0	0
11.	Karnataka	22	2632	15	1360
12.	Kerala	4	156	9	88

1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Madhya Pradesh	1	257	4	416	
14. Maharashtra	6	389	5	41	
15. Manipur	1	51	0	0	
16. Meghalaya	0	0	1	244	
17. Mizoram	1	152	1	52	
18. Orissa	6	481	4	305	
19. Pondicherry	1	89	0	0	
20. Punjab	5	991	3	582	
21. Rajasthan	4	662	5	505	
22. Tamil Nadu	11	967	21	7730	
23. Tripura	1	65	0	0	
24. Uttar Pradesh	16	1659	10	961	
25. Uttaranchal	4	308	0	0	
26. West Bengal	13	1361	7	6386	
Total	145	15910	139	27600	

Note : Names of organisations and Institutes/centres/projects being run by them for imparting education to the Hearing Handicapped and Visually Handicapped are available in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's website "www.socialjustice.nic.in"

[English]

New LPG Connections

4021. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has received any complaints that certain dealers of LPG are not accepting applications for new gas connections;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government against such dealers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) to (c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported 3 established complaints against their LPG distributorships for not registering application for release of new gas connection during the last three years. The details are as under:-

State	Year	Number of complaints
Maharashtra	2005-06	1
Kerala	2006-07	1
Uttar Pradesh	2006-07	1

Action against the erring distributors was taken in accordance with the provisions under the LPG Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG).

Merger of IA and AI

4022. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA :

SHRI MILIND DEORA :

SHRI PRABODH PANDA :

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the two State-owned carriers Indian Airlines (IA) and Air India (AI) are being merged;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a brand name best suited to the newly merged Airline has been selected;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the total strength of their aircraft after the merger; and

(f) the extent to which they will be able to challenge competitors both in global market and domestic aviation market with the number of aircraft available with them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has decided to merge the two airlines into a new company. For this purpose, a new Company, National Aviation Company of India Limited (NACIL) has been incorporated on 30.3.2007. The merger of the airlines is expected to be completed in a phased manner over the next two years. The technical and procedural formalities for merging the two airlines is likely to be completed by July, 2007.

(c) and (d) The matter is under Government's consideration.

(e) and (f) The new airline, with more than 112 aircraft, having an international and domestic footprint would set fresh benchmarks for efficiency and reliability, thus benefiting the civil aviation sector in the country, specially the travelling public. The integration of the two airlines will lead to developing seamless connectivity network of regional operations, short to medium haul trunk operations, long haul operations resulting in an improved product through wider network coverage. The merger will also provide significant synergy for procurement, sales and distribution besides affording an opportunity for leveraging common assets. Further, the merger will result in creation of a much bigger airline, as compared to the nearest domestic competitor.

[Translation]

Railway Line from Bilaspur to Mandla-Jabalpur-New Delhi

4023. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether survey for laying railway line from Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh to Mandla-Jabalpur-New Delhi was conducted many years back;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in laying the rail line; and

(c) the time by which said line is proposed to be laid?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) A survey was completed during 2003-04 exploring two alternative ways of connecting Bilaspur to Jabalpur – one, by constructing a direct line between Bilaspur and Jabalpur via Mandla avoiding Nainpur and the other, by constructing a new line from Bilaspur upto Mandla Fort only and completing the gauge conversion of Mandla Fort-Nainpur section. As per the survey report, the cost of the first option was assessed as Rs. 1284.11 crore, while the second option as Rs. 736.96 crore, with a negative rate of return (ROR) in both the cases.

In view of non-remunerative nature of the project, heavy throw-forward of ongoing projects and acute constraint of resources, it has not been considered feasible to take up construction of Bilaspur-Mandla-Jabalpur new line wholly or partly for the present.

Import of Ethanol Blended Petrol and Bio-Diesel

4024. DR. CHINTA MOHAN :

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN" :

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

(a) whether the Government proposes to import ethanol blended petrol and bio-diesel;

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

(c) whether the Government has studied the prospects of economic gains in the event of imports in this regard; and

(d) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

**Road Over/Under Bridges in
Uttar Pradesh**

4025. SHRI MITRASEN YADAV : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have undertaken any proposal for construction of Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges across the Railway Lines in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress in execution of the work for construction of these bridges?

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

(b) In all at present there are 45 works of Road over/under bridges sanctioned on cost sharing basis on different Railways falling in the State of Uttar Pradesh, 5 more works have been sanctioned during Works Programme of 2007-08.

(c) List of ROB/RUBs sanctioned and in-progress falling in Uttar Pradesh is in the Statement attached. Out of 45 works already sanctioned and in-progress 5 works were completed during the year 2006-07 in Uttar Pradesh. Remaining are at different stages of planning and execution.

Statement

Works of ROB/RUBs falling in Uttar Pradesh and their present status is as under

S.No.	Year of Sanction	Name of Work	Present Status
1	2	3	4
1.	1995-96	ROB in lieu of LC No 1 at Rampur (NH 24) [New line]	Detailed estimated for Rs. 16.05 cr has been sanctioned on 17-11-06. General Arrangement Drawing (GAD) has approved by Railway.
2.	1996-97	Hathras ROB in lieu of Lc No 95-A at Km 1296/26-31 on Ghaziabad-Kanpur section connecting Pilibhit-Agra road (SH 33)	ROB has been completed

1	2	3	4
3.	1998-99	ROB at Lucknow City in lieu of LC No 6 between Daliganj-Mohibullahpur.	Alignment has not been fixed by State Govt. Remarks on feasibility of the ROB awaited from State Govt.
4.	1998-99	ROB in lieu of LC No 129-A between Deoria Sadar-Nunkhar.	Combined GAD has been approved. Estimate of Rs.10.27 crores is being examined.
5.	1998-99	Kanpur ROB in lieu of Lc No 79-D on GT road at km 1016/5-12 on Allahabad-Kanpur section (NH 91)	Combined and revised detailed estimate has been prepared
6.	1998-99	Iradatganj ROB in lieu of Lc No 430-A on Manikpur-Allahabad section (NH 27)	Modified combined detailed estimate of has been sanctioned on 8-2-07. Tender is being finalised.
7.	1999-00	Meja Road ROB in lieu of Lc No 25-B at Km 788/11-13 on Mughalsarai-Allahabad section NH 44	Rly. portion of ROB has been completed. Approaches are in progress.
8.	1999-00	Chaupala ROB in lieu of Lc No 356-Spl and 250-A	All 129 piles 13 pile caps and 13 piers completed, 13/13 pier cap and 06/12 spans cast. Work on approaches also in progress. CRS sanction awaited for track span.
9.	1999-00	Rampur ROB in lieu of Lc No 403-A	ROB commissioned on 12.6.06.
10.	2002-03	ROB in lieu of Lc No 244 between Izzatnagar-Bareilly City	GAD was submitted by State Government but the same has been sent back for clarification Clarification awaited from State Govt.
11.	2002-03	Ghaziabad-Tundla (Aligarh) ROB in lieu of Lc No 112-C/3 at km 1329/19-21 near Aligarh. Link Road (NH-2)	Railway portion of ROB has been completed Approaches are in progress.
12.	2002-03	Bijnor-Najibabad ROB in lieu of Lc No 484-a.	Estimate for Rly. portion prepared Estimate for approaches awaited from PWD (UP). Test pile cast and initial load testing done.

1	2	3	4
13.	2002-03	Amroha ROB on Ghaziabad-Moradabad ROB in lieu of Lc No 26-A.	Work in Rly. portion commenced 20 no. piles cast. Work on approaches also in progress.
14.	2002-03	Akbarpur ROB in lieu of Lc No 83-A.	Foundation and sub structure work completed. 1/2 span of non track portion completed. Temp staging drawing of span over Rly. track submitted by contractor approved. CRS sanction received. Temporary staging erected. 1/3 beam for track portion span casted.
15.	2003-04	ROB in lieu of Lc No 8ML at km 773/11-12 between Badshahnagar-Daliganj stations.	GAD has been submitted by UPSBC/PWD. The same has been returned back to UPSBC/PWD for correction on 28-02-2006 The same is awaited.
16.	2003-04	ROB in lieu of Lc No 6 ML at km 772/2-3 between Badshahnagar-Daliganj stations in Lucknow-Maihar section.	Site verification not yet done by State Govt. Work not sanctioned by State Govt. Joint meeting of Railway's and Special Secretary/PWD was conducted on 02-02-06 and it was told by UPSBC that construction of ROB is not feasible. It was decided that State Govt. will intimate its decision to Railway in this regard, the same is awaited.
17.	2003-04	Manduadih station Yard - ROB in lieu of Lc No 4-A.	State Govt. has been asked to submit General Arrangement Drawing (GAD) and details estimate. GAD of Rly portion has been given to State Govt. Combined GAD is awaited.
18.	2003-04	Kanpur - Widening of ROB near Tat Mill crossing at Km 1017/31-35	ROB completed and traffic started.
19.	2003-04	Mehrauli-Dasna ROB in lieu of Lc No 95	Detailed estimated sanction. Test pile cast and initial load testing done. State Govt. yet to plan work for approaches.

1	2	3	4
20.	2004-05	Lucknow ROB in lieu of Lc No 1-B (Kanpur crossing) and 218-A (Hardoi crossing)	Profile sketch signed by PWD and divisional officers and under approval in HQ. Detailed estimate under finance vetting.
21.	2004-05	Delhi-Shamli-Saharanpur ROB in lieu of Lc No. 90 near Shamli.	As per report of State PWD. ROB at this LC is not feasible. Formal letter awaited.
22.	2005-06	Etawah-ROB in lieu of Lc No 27 Spl at Km 11555/27-29 on Kanpur-Tundla section.	Work of casting of PSC girders in progress. Approaches are almost completed.
23.	2005-06	Sharda Nagar ROB in lieu of Lc No 86-B.	Profile sketch approved. Detail estimate under examination. Work in approaches in progress.
24.	2006-07	Azamgarh-Sarai Rani - ROB in lieu of Lc No. 29-A.	Alignment plan has been finalized. Profile sketch has been sent to State Govt. for submitting combined GAD.
25.	2006-07	ROB in lieu of L-xing No. 48 in Fatehpur distt. On Allahabad-Kanpur section	GAD has been finalised. Detailed estimate is under preparation Detailed estimate of approaches is awaited from State Govt.
26.	2006-07	Ekma-Chainwa ROB in lieu of Lc No 69.	New work recently awarded to M/s IRCON M/s IRCON has been asked to submit GAD and detailed estimate.
27.	2006-07	ROB in lieu of L-xing No.81D in Kanpur On Allahabad-Kanpur section	Profile Sketch has been approved. Dy. Project Manager UP State Bridge Corporation Ltd. has been asked to submit GAD of ROB and Detailed estimate of approaches for preparation of combined detailed estimate.
28.	2006-07	ROB in lieu of L.C - No 532 on Vridavan - Radhakund Margh in Mathura Distt. On Mathura - Palwal section.	Detailed of Railway portion has been submitted to UPSBC for preparation of GAD. Detailed estimated of approaches is awaited from State Govt.
29.	2006-07	ROB in lieu of LC No 158 between Gorakhpur-Gorakhpur cantt stations.	Combined GAD received from UPSBC on 24-01-07.

1	2	3	4
30.	2006-07	Kanpur-Anwarganj-Rawatpur - ROB in lieu of LC No. 2.	Profile sketch has been sent to State Govt. for submitting combined GAD.
31.	2006-07	Gorakhpur - Domingarh ROB in lieu of LC No. 163	Out of turn sanction has just been received.
32.	2006-07	Gorakhpur - Domingarh ROB in lieu of LC No. 161	Out of turn sanction has just been received.
33.	2006-07	Construction of ROB in lieu of LC No 176 at KM 1026/7-8 on LKO-Rai Bareilly section at Raibareilly section.	UP/PWD asked to comply the observations made in HQ on profile sketch and estimate.
34.	2006-07	Construction of ROB in lieu of LC No 30-A at Km 72/5-6 on GZB-Saharanpur section at Meerut Cantt.	Profile sketch under approval with HQ office. DE for Rly portion prepared and estimate awaited from UP/PWD.
35.	2006-07	Construction of ROB in lieu of LC No 53-A at Km 122/1-2 on GZB-Saharanpur section at Muzzaffarpur Nagar	Profile sketch under with State Authority. Detailed Estimate for Rly portion prepared and estimate awaited from UP/PWD.
36.	2006-07	Construction of ROB in lieu of LC No 26-A at Km 67/10-11 on GZB-Saharanpur section at Meerut City.	Profile sketch under approval with HQ office. (BH). DE for Rly. portion prepared and estimate awaited from UP/PWD.
37.	2006-07	Construction of ROB in lieu of Lc No 41 spl and 74 Spl at Km 64/10-11 and 105/8-9 on Hapur-Meerut and Ghaziabad-Moradabad sections at Hapur.	Profile sketch under approval with MB division. DE for Rly portion prepared and estimate awaited from UP/PWD.
38.	2006-07	Construction of ROB in lieu of Lc No 4-C at Km 28/1-2 on Ghaziabad-Saharanpur section at Ghaziabad.	Profile sketch approved. DE for Rly portion prepared and estimate awaited from Ghaziabad Development Authority.
39.	2006-07	Construction of ROB in lieu of Lc No 120 at Km 966/17-18 on LKOK_BSS section at Faizabad Yard.	Profile sketch under approval. Detail for approach estimate awaited from UP/PWD.
40.	2006-07	ROB in lieu of ROB in lieu of Lc 98 spl at Ghazibad on Ghaziabad-Moradabad section.	Profile sketch sent to State Govt. for signature. Detailed estimate under finance vetting.

1	2	3	4
41.	2007-08	Persoundha ROB in lieu of Lc No 119/3E at Km. 692/15-17 between Chunar and Mughal Sarai. TVU -280190 in year 2002	GAD approved. Work has been sanctioned in Budget 2007-08.
42.	2007-08	ROB in lieu of Lc No 62 A at KM 973/29-31 on Allahabad - Kanpur Sec. TVU215532 in year 2000.	GAD approved. Work has been sanctioned in Budget 2007-08.
43.	2007-08	Construction of ROB in lieu of level crossing No 72 at Km 1249/1-3 in Tundla yard (At Railways cost)	Work has been sanctioned in Budget 2007-08.
44.	2007-08	ROB in lieu of level crossing No. 463 at Km 1292/20-22 on Jhansi - Agra section in Rajasthan State TVU 324643 in year 2004.	GAD approved. Work has been sanctioned in Budget 2007-08.
45.	2007-08	ROB in lieu of LC No. 413-A at Rampur on Moradabad-Lucknow sec.	New work sanctioned during 2007-08.

**Production, Consumption and Export of
Processed Food**

4026.SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) the production, consumption and export of processed and packed food during each of the last three years;

(b) the steps taken to promote and develop infrastructure to bring farmers and industry closer to improve the economic sustainability of the farming community;

(c) whether the Government proposes to provide financial assistance for promoting agriculture diversification and provide financial incentives to attract private sector to set up new food processing units for value addition to perishable and non-perishable crops like grapes and other farm products; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY) : (a) to (d) The value of domestic production from manufacturing registered sector and the unregistered sector during the years 2003-04 to 2005-06 has been as follows:-

(Rs. in crores)

Category	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Registered Sector	26983	27716	29039
Un-registered Sector	19402	19528	20125

According to a Rabo Bank study, consumption of processed food in 2003-04 has been estimated at

Rs. 4,60,000 crores, out of which share of primary processed food including packed fruits and vegetables, packed milk, etc. is estimated at Rs. 2,80,000 crores. Export of processed food products namely, agro processed food products and marine food products during 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 is as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

Category	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Agro processed food products	13,881.02	16,541.05	17,525.83
Marine processed food products	6091.95	6646.69	7245.30
Total	19,972.07	23,187.74	24,771.13

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries will be implementing a Scheme for Infrastructure Development under which it will give financial assistance for setting up of Mega Food Parks, Modernization of Abattoirs, Cold Chain Infrastructure, Value added centres and Packaging centres. The Mega Food Park scheme will provide backward and forward linkages as well as reliable and sustainable supply chain. The Cluster based demand driven approach will provide linkages from farm to market with linkages at regional level through Strategic Distribution Centre-cum-Cold Chain to be located at Airports, Ports, Railways, etc. - having Controlled Atmosphere storage and distribution centres where large quantities can be stored and supplied to distribution centres for fresh sale and to processing industries for processing.

For promotion and development of food processing industries and attract private sector investment and agricultural diversification, to set up new food processing units including towards promotion of value addition to perishable horticultural products including grapes, etc, the

Ministry of Food Processing Industries has been implementing a Plan Scheme for Technology upgradation/ Modernisation/Establishment of food processing units. Under the above scheme, Ministry of Food Processing Industries 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 lakhs in general areas or 33.33% subject to a maximum of Rs. 75 lakhs in difficult areas such as Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and North Eastern States, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and ITDP Areas. Under the Mini Mission IV of Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States including Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh assistance at still higher rates i.e. @50% upto Rs. 4 crore for promotion of new units and upto Rs. 1 crore for upgradation/modernization of units is available for processing of horticultural produce. To encourage setting up of new food processing industries, the Government has also allowed 100% exemption from Income Tax for first five years and 25% of income for next five years Industries based on fruits and vegetables. Similarly all kinds of food mixes have been brought under the zero excise duty category.

Private Airlines to Gulf Routes

4027. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the revenue earned by public sector airlines through operation of its flights to Gulf routes during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the Government proposes to allow private airlines to fly on Gulf routes; 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) The revenue

earned by Air India (including Air India Express) and Indian Airlines through operations to Gulf routes during the last three years are as under:

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Air India (including Air India Express)	Indian Airlines
2003-2004	1900.58	936
2004-2005	1979.16	975
2005-2006	1985.70	1233

(b) Scheduled private airlines are not permitted to operate international flights to/from Gulf till the end of 2007.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

New Train Services

4028.DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways propose to start new train service between Ratlam-Bhopal, Ratlam-Kota and Ratlam-Neemach-Udaipur and Indore-Ujjain-Ratlam-Neemach-Jaipur for convenience of the public; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) At present, there is no proposal to introduce trains between Ratlam-Bhopal, Ratlam-Kota, Ratlam-Nimach-Udaipur and Indore-Ujjain-Ratlam-Nimach-Jaipur. However, introduction of Mumbai-Ajmer/Udaipur Express (tri-weekly) via Vadodara-Ratlam-Nimach and Ajmer-Ratlam Express - 2 pairs (daily and extension of 2465/2466 Jodhpur-Sawai Madhopur Express upto Indore have been announced in Railway Budget 2007-2008.

Training Programme for SC/ST Officers

4029.SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any rules/guidelines have been issued by the Union Government regarding reservation for the officers of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in training in India and abroad.

(b) if so, the total number of training programmes conducted in India and abroad during the last three years alongwith the year-wise and category-wise details of candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes nominated for the training programmes in comparison to the general candidates;

(c) whether any shortcomings have been noticed in this regard; and

(d) if so, the action likely to be taken by the Government to impart training to the candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in India and abroad as per directions in this regard?

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

(b) Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. does not organize training programme abroad. The number of training programmes organized in India during the last 3 years are given below:—

Years	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4
No. of training Programmes organised	1840	1578	1265

1	2	3	4
No. of SC officers nominated	2024	1581	1608
No. of ST officers nominated	890	674	671
No. of "General Category" Officers nominated	10673	7265	7480

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Smuggling of Drugs

4030. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a team of Army intelligence arrested some female foreigners for smuggling of drugs and handed them over to the Delhi Police after their interrogation in the case of drug trafficking;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these women have links with notorious drug smugglers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken against the guilty persons in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY):

(a) to (e) On 21st March 2007, two female Ethiopian nationals were detained by the Army and later handed over to the Delhi Police by the Army.

As informed by the Army, the investigation report of Delhi Police states that two females were present at a location in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi. The Army personnel met them and asked about their passports etc., as also

about the residence of a friend of theirs, who allegedly dealt in drugs. The girls gave the address of their friend and willingly accompanied the Army personnel.

Delhi Police have registered a case against the Ethiopian nationals.

[English]

Oil Blocks Allotted to ONGC

4031. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether ONGC was allotted 47 oil blocks in the previous year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount spent by ONGC for exploration and production related activities in these blocks; and

(d) the quantity of oil estimated to be produced annually from these oil blocks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) and (b) In the year 2006-07, Government of India awarded 25 blocks to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) either on sole basis or as a partner in consortia, for exploration of oil and gas under sixth round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VI), the production sharing contracts for which were signed on 2.3.2007. Out of 25 blocks, ONGC is operator in 24 blocks, and in one block Cairn Energy India is the operator. The details of the blocks are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) The estimated expenditure towards Minimum Work Programme committed in the above said 25 blocks is estimated to be approximately US \$ 897 million, in Phase I and US \$ 735 million in Phase II.

(d) Production depends on the success of exploration efforts in the awarded blocks.

Statement**Details of 25 Blocks awarded under NELP-VI on ONGC and Consortia**

Sl.No.	Company/Consortia	Basin	Block Name
1	2	3	4
Deep Water			
1.	ONGC, CAIRN India Ltd. TATA	Kerala-Konkan	KK-DWN-2004/1
2.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL	Cauvery	CY-DWN-2004/1
3.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL	Cauvery	CY-DWN-2004/2
4.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL	Cauvery	CY-DWN-2004/3
5.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL	Cauvery	CY-DWN-2004/4
6.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL	Cauvery	CY-PR-DWN-2004/1
7.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL	Cauvery	CY-PR-DWN-2004/2
8.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL	Krishna-Godavari	KG-DWN-2004/1
9.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL, BPCL	Krishna-Godavari	KG-DWN-2004/2
10.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL	Krishna-Godavari	KG-DWN-2004/3
11.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL, Oil, BPCL	Krishna-Godavari	KG-DWN-2004/5
12.	ONGC, GSPC, HPCL, GAIL, Oil	Krishna-Godavari	KG-DWN-2004/6
Shallow Water			
13.	ONGC	Gujarat-Saurashtra	GS-OSN-2004/1
14.	ONGC, BGEP1	Krishna-Godavari	KG-OSN-2004/1
15.	Caim Energy, Caim India, ONGC, Tata	Palar	PR-OSN-2004/1**
Onland			
16.	ONGC	Purnea	PA-ONN-2004/1
17.	ONGC	Ganga	GV-ONN-2004/1

1	2	3	4
18.	ONGC	Vindhyan	VN-ONN-2004/1
19.	ONGC	Vindhyan	VN-ONN-2004/2
20.	ONGC, GSPC, HERAMEC	Cauvery	CB-ONN-2004/1
21.	ONGC, GSPC, Suntera Res. Ltd.	Cauvery	CB-ONN-2004/2
22.	ONGC, GSPC, ENSEARCH	Cauvery	CB-ONN-2004/3
23.	ONGC, GSPC, HERAMEC	Cauvery	CB-ONN-2004/4
24.	ONGC, BPCL	Cauvery	CY-ONN-2004/1
25.	ONGC, BPCL	Cauvery	CY-ONN-2004/2

** Cairn Energy India is the Operator of this block.

Buying Equity Abroad

4032.SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is formulating a strategy to enable domestic public sector oil companies to join hands to compete for buying equity abroad;

(b) whether the Government is creating a package that would comprise the entire value chain i.e. reviving exploration and other value addition so that the domestic firms are able to stand and compete with Oil conglomerates that dominate the sector overseas;

(c) whether the Government proposes to integrate the organization and strengthen them across the value chain so that they can bring/offer a complete package;

(d) if so, whether any concrete programme of action has been prepared by joint overseas bidding oil PSUs; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) In August, 1995, the Government advised the down-stream public sector undertakings to promote their own Joint Venture Company for Exploration and Production (EandP) business.

(d) and (e) In November 1995, Indian Oil Corporation Board accorded approval to start EandP activities with suitable joint venture partners and to set up a business group to look after EandP activities. In December 2004, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by IOC and OIL to synergize skills and strengths of the respective companies in jointly pursuing available overseas upstream business activities and other related petroleum activities in the hydrocarbon chain. The IOC-OIL combine has been able to successfully acquire exploration acreages in Libya, Gabon, Nigeria and Yemen. Similarly, GAIL has made investments in Myanmar, and Oman with equity partnership in consortiums that include other public sector Oil Companies.

In December, 2005, the Government also approved the formation of project specific Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) between Oil India Ltd. and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. In addition to such government efforts, Navratna Oil PSUs Boards are empowered to pursue acquisition of EandP companies abroad to strengthen their EandP Business. Hence, Public Sector Oil Companies are contiguously making efforts to strengthen their EandP activities abroad through efforts jointly with other public sector oil companies.

**New Railway Line between Idappally
to Guruvayur**

4033. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of construction of new railway line from Guruvayur to Idappally; and

(b) the time by which the work on this rail line is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) In view of unremunerative nature of the line, heavy throwforward of non-going projects and acute constraint of resources, it has not been found feasible to consider this new line.

Prices of ATF

4034. DR. RAJESH MISHRA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether various oil companies propose to cut Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) prices by 5 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the price of ATF being charged by various oil companies at present; and

(d) the details of price-cut of ATF during the last two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) and (b) ATF is a deregulated product. The public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) have informed that ATF price revisions are determined by them based on international prices of Jet Kero during previous month. Revision in prices is made on a monthly basis, either upwards or downwards depending on international price fluctuation.

(c) The basic price of ATF at present being charged by PSU OMCs at Mumbai is reported to be Rs. 24,970/ KL excluding duties and taxes.

(d) The details of price changes as reported by IOCL/HPCL during the last two years are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

*Details of price changes of ATF from 1.04.05 to
1.04.07 by IOC/HPC*

EX-STORAGE POINT PRICE OF ATF EX-MUMBAI

Date	RS/KL	Increase/ (Decrease)
1	2	3
01.04.05	21700.00	
01.05.05	23550.00	1850.00
01.06.05	21150.00	(2400.00)
01.07.05	22560.00	1410.00
01.08.05	23000.00	440.00
01.09.05	24630.00	1630.00
01.10.05	25910.00	1280.00
01.11.05	25390.00	(520.00)

1	2	3
01.12.05	22320.00	(3070.00)
01.01.06	24170.00	1850.00
01.02.06	25020.00	850.00
01.03.06	24830.00	(190.00)
01.04.06	25500.00	670.00
01.05.06	28410.00	2910.00
01.06.06	28970.00	560.00
01.07.06	29670.00	700.00
01.08.06	30480.00	810.00
01.09.06	31040.00	560.00
01.10.06	28210.00	(2830.00)
01.11.06	25710.00	(2500.00)
01.12.06	25000.00	(710.00)
01.01.07	26220.00	1220.00
01.02.07	23310.00	(2910.00)
01.03.07	23780.00	470.00
01.04.07	24970.00	1190.00
No. of Times Decrease in Price		8

**Investment on Advertisement
by OMCs**

4035.SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether oil marketing companies made huge investments on advertisements and sponsorships;

(b) if so, the details of funds invested by various OMCs on Health particularly on AIDS and Polio, Education – Sarva Siksha Abhiyan programmes during 2006-07 as compared to expenditure incurred on sports;

(c) whether the Government proposes to make it obligatory to spend a fixed amount on various programmes on national interest by each of OMC in future.

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs), viz. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and IBP Company Limited (IBP) incur expenditure on advertisements and sponsorships in line with their business requirement and in the discharge of their corporate social responsibilities.

(b) The amount invested OMCs on Health, Education and Sports as part of their corporate social responsibility during the year 2006-07 is given below:—

Name of the Company	Amount spent by OMCs during 2006-07 (Rs. in Crore)			Total
	Health	Education	Sports	
IOC	2.71	2.55	21.83	27.09
HPCL	1.77	4.12	0.39	6.28
HPCL	00.59	00.51	00.65	1.75
IBP	0	0	0	0
Total	5.07	7.18	22.87	35.12

(c) to (e) Government has not fixed any amount to be spent under corporate social responsibility. The Department of Public Enterprises has opined that public sector enterprises have flexibility in identification and implementation of social responsibilities keeping in view their financial ability to sustain such activities, the operating environment and provisions in the relevant Memorandum of Association/Statute.

Manufacturing Units for Orthopaedic Aids

4036. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up more manufacturing units for making orthopaedic aids like wheel-chairs, etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that very old model and archaic wheel chairs and other equipments are still being produced in the country;

(d) if so, the steps taken to ensure that state-of-the-art orthopaedic aids and equipment are made in the country; and

(e) the steps taken to modernize this sector in the interest for the physically challenged persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN) : (a) and (b) Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO), a Public Sector Undertakings has no proposal to set up a new manufacturing unit.

(c) to (e) Wheelchairs and other assistive devices are produced by major manufacturers in the country, as per relevant Indian Standards (IS) prescribed by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). Modernization is a continuous process which is achieved by manufacturers through

interaction with the Institutes of Technology in the related field.

Integrated Train Enquiry System

4037. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways plan to computerize the process of unreserved ticketing system;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether all the reserved ticketing system in the country have been computerized; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. All stations upto 'E' category totaling to approximately 6300 have been sanctioned for provision of Unreserved Ticketing System.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Committee on Security Arrangements in Railways

4038. SHRI B. MAHTAB : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any Committee has been constituted for security arrangements in the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Committee has submitted its report to the Railways; and

(d) if so, the recommendations thereof and the follow-up action taken by the Railways thereon?

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

(b) As per the recommendation of the Committee of Secretaries regarding formulation of a Composite Security Plan for the Indian Railways, on 17.04.2007, the Ministry of Railways had approved for constitution of a Committee comprising of officers from Intelligence Bureau, Central Industrial Security Force, National Security Guards, Delhi Police (Joint Commissioner- Crime and Railways), Chief Security Commissioners/Railway Protection Force of Northern Railway, Western Railway, Central Railway and Eastern Railway, officer at the level of Executive Director from Railway Board of Finance and Commercial Departments under the Chairmanship of Additional Director General/ RPF, Railway Board. The Committee will be having its first meeting in May, 2007.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Public Facilities at Petrol Pumps

4039. SHRI RAKESH SINGH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is essential for all petroleum companies to provide public convenience facility at fuel stations set by them;

(b) if so, whether the Government has taken cognizance of such fuel stations where rules are flouted and such facilities are not being provided; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs), viz. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and IBP Company

Limited (IBP) have reported that provision of public convenience facility at all of their fuel stations is mandatory as per the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG), 2005.

(b) and (c) OMCs ensure availability of public convenience facilities at their outlets. However, as and when any violation in this regard is observed penal action is taken as per MDG.

[English]

Preservation of Rare Manuscripts

4040. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE :

SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH :

SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD :

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has any scheme for collecting and preserving rare manuscripts in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount allocated and spent for the purpose during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) and (b) The Government has established the National Mission for Manuscripts in 2003 to locate, catalogue, conserve and disseminate India's manuscripts both in India and abroad. However, the Mission does not collect manuscripts either from institutions or private owners in India or abroad except those manuscripts that are donated strictly on a voluntary basis. The Mission has prepared a national database of one million manuscripts on the web. Rare manuscript collections across the country are also being digitized by the Mission in phases.

(c) The details of amount spent by the Mission during the last 3 years are as under:-

Year	Amount Spent (In Rs. Crore)
2004-2005	3.47
2005-2006	7.90
2006-2007	9.43

[Translation]

**Freight Corridor under Golden
Quadrilateral Project**

4041. SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways are planning to construct freight corridor projects on other routes besides East and West freight corridor routes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any survey is being conducted in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (d) Railways is planning to take up pre-feasibility studies for construction of East-West, North-South, East Coast and Southern Freight Corridors during the current year. Based on this study the corridors will be identified for detailed Preliminary Engineering-cum-Traffic Survey (PETS).

**Bullet Train Service between Ahmedabad and
Mumbai**

4042. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL :
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways propose to introduce Bullet Train service between Ahmedabad and Mumbai keeping in view of heavy rush of passengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which Bullet Train service is proposed to be introduced on this route?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) No decision has been taken to introduce bullet train between Ahmedabad and Mumbai. However, it has been decided to carry out pre-feasibility studies for one corridor each in the Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern regions of the country for construction of high speed passenger corridors.

[English]

Mysterious Fire Ball

4043. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has investigated the mysterious fire ball reported by foreign aircraft pilots in the air about 300 nautical miles south-west of Delhi as reported in the Sunday Express on March 4, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) On 03.03.2007 at 0144 hours (IST), many flights reported to Delhi Air Traffic Control (ATC) on Radio Telephony that a ball of fire was being observed somewhere in the south-west of Delhi. The same phenomenon was also reported by one flight to the Ahmedabad ATC. The height and altitude of the fire ball was not reported by any flight. However, the above flights were operating between 26000 feet and 36000 feet.

(c) After receiving reports from various flights, the Indian Air Force Military Liaison Unit (AFMLU) and Local Police were informed and alerted at Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Delhi for possible rescue operation. The Joint Analysis and Control Centre (JCAC) at Indira Gandhi International Airport was also alerted. The Airports Authority of India

(AAI) also requested the Indian Metereological Department to examine the observations from any special atmospheric point of view. The phenomenon was never reported before and even after the occurrence on 03.03.2007.

ISO Certificate to Trains

4044. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways operate International Standards Organization (ISO) certified trains in various zones;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria fixed for providing ISO certificate to trains in the country; and

(d) details thereof of ISO certified trains proposed to be operated during 2007-08, zone-wise?

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

(b) A statement is attached.

(c) ISO Certification has been obtained for a few important Mail/Express trains primarily for educational value in setting standards of quality of service and passenger amenities, so that we continue to strive to achieve prescribed standards.

(d) A statement is attached.

Statement

Zone-wise list of International Standard Organization (ISO) certified trains is as under

S.No.	Railway	Name of ISO certified trains	
1	2	3	
1.	Central Railway	2123/24	Deccan Queen Express

1	2	3	
		2137/38	Punjab Mail
		2051/52	Jan Shatabdi Express
		2109/10	Panchvati Express
2.	Northern Railway	2057/58	Chandigarh Jan Shatabdi
		2413/14	Puja Express
		2229/30	Lucknow Mail
		2003/04	Lucknow Shatabdi
		2055/56	Dehradun Jan Shatabdi
		4057/58	Kashi Vishwanath Express
3.	North Eastern Railway	2559/60	Shiv Ganga Express
4.	Southern Railway	2007/08	Shatabadi Express
5.	South Central Railway	2706/07	Inter city Express
		2717/18	Ratnachal Express
		2715/16	Sachkhand Express
		2797/98	Venkatadri Express
		2733/34	Narayanadri Express
		2747/48	Palnadu Express
6.	Western Railway	2971/72	Bhavnagar-Bandra Superfast Express
		2957/58	Ahmedabad New Delhi Swamajayanti Rajdhani Express

1	2	3
	2901/02	Gujarat Mail
	2915/16	Ashram Express
	9309/10	Indore-Gandhinagar Shanti Express
	2925/26	Paschim Express
	2907/08	Maharashtra Sampark Kranti Express
	2951	Mumbai Central-New Delhi Rajdhani Ex- press
	2953	Mumbai central- Nizamuddin August Kranti Rajdhani Ex- press
	2009/10	Mumbai central- Ahmedabad Shatabdi Express
7. West Central Railway	2155/56	Habibganj Nizamuddin Bhopal Express
	2185/86	Bhopal Rewa Revachal Express (via Bina)
	2187/88	Bhopal Rewa Revachal Express (via Itarsi)
	2059/60	Kota Nizamuddin Jan Shatabadi Express
8. North Central Railway	2417/18	Prayag Raj Express

(d) Zone-wise list of trains Proposed for ISO certification during 2007-08 trains is as under:-

S.No.	Railway		Name of trains
1.	North Eastern Railway	2533/34	Pushpak Express
		2555/56	Gorakh dham Ex- press
		5013/14	Ranikhet Express
2.	Northeast Frontier Railway	2067/68	Jan Shatabdi Express
3.	West Central Railway	1471/72/ 73/74	Jabalpur-Bhopal Express

Rates for Peak and Lean Hours

4045. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is planning to introduce differential rates for peak and lean hours as airports usage charges for airlines to decongest some airports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether introducing differential rates for peak and lean hours would solve the congestion problem at these airports;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. There is no such proposal at present.

(c) and (d) Introduction of different rates for peak and lean hours would have limited effect in easing congestion

at the metro airports. Creation of additional infrastructure at all major airports. Creation of additional infrastructure at all major airports is necessary. Government have already initiated steps for expansion and modernisation of major airports.

(e) The following steps have been taken/are being taken at Delhi and Mumbai airports where congestion at peak hours is a major problem:— Construction of new high speed exist taxiways, construction of parallel taxiways, simultaneous use of both runways, implementation of Improved Air Traffic Control (ATC) Procedures, establishment of Clearance Delivery Position, restriction of general aviation aircraft movement during peak hours, upgradation of ATC Automation System, installation of Surface Movement Radar and Advanced Surface Movement Guidance and Control System (ASMGCS) etc.

Encroachment of Railway Land in Delhi

4046. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the area of railway land that has been encroached in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time since when this land has been encroached upon; and

(c) the steps being taken to clear the encroachments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) About 40 hectares.

(b) There are about 27,000 encroachments on railway land in Delhi. These encroachments have come up over various years.

(c) Various steps have been taken for removal of encroachments, which also include action under Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971.

In the National Capital Territory of Delhi, railways have agreed to bear part cost of relocation of Pre-1998 encroachers located on Railway land in 'Safety Zone' and on land required for execution of sanctioned projects, as per the Resettlement and Rehabilitation policy of Delhi Government, which has the approval of the Ministry of Urban Development. Northern Railway have deposited over Rs. 11 crores with the Govt. of Delhi on this account, for relocating 'Juggies / Jhopries', to get encroachments removed from railway land. Regular chasing and meetings are done by railway officials with Delhi Govt. officials. All efforts are made by railway towards proper co-ordination with the Govt. of Delhi including seeking assistance of local police as eviction of encroachers can lead to Law and Order problems.

Nanded Railway Division

4047. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is persistent demand that Nanded Railway Division should be attached to Central Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Railways in this regard?

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

(b) Demand has been received from Very Important Persons (VIPs) including Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

(c) The decision to place a particular division under a particular zone is taken based on the operational / administrative requirements without any regional considerations. The proposal, when seen in the light of the above criterion has not been found feasible. The present arrangement is working satisfactorily.

**World Heritage Site Status for
Red Fort, Delhi**

4048. SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH :
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD :

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has submitted any proposal to UNESCO for awarding World Heritage Site status to Red Fort in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any decision has been taken by UNESCO in the matter;

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

(e) if not, the steps taken by the Government to expedite the matter?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. India has submitted a nomination dossier on the Red Fort to UNESCO World Heritage Centre to consider its inscription on the World Heritage List. As a follow up to this, ICOMOS, an Advisory Body to the UNESCO deputed an expert who evaluated the site in September, 2006 and has submitted his report to the Advisory Body. The World Heritage Committee will consider the proposal and take a final decision on inscribing the Red Fort in the World Heritage List in its 31st session at Christ Church (New Zealand) scheduled to be held between 23rd June to 2nd July, 2007.

[Translation]

**Permission to Deaf and Dumb Candidates for
using Sign Languages for Interview**

4049. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has given instructions to allow dumb and deaf Candidates to use their hints and sign language for their interviews;

(b) if so, whether the Government has deliberated upon its feasibility and availability of experts;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any time limit has been fixed to ensure the provision to facilitate the dumb, deaf and handicapped category candidates to give interviews for the reserved posts as per their convenience; 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) The Government has not issued any instructions in this regard but as provided in the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities special care is being taken to recognize, standardize and popularize sign language, Alternative and Augmentative Communications (AAC) and other mode as viable medium in inter personal communication.

[English]

Revision in Rates of Pension

4050. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to revise the rates of pension given to different categories of gallantry awardees;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) when were the rates of pension of gallantry awardees were last revised; and

(d) the fresh steps taken by the Government to revise the meager rates of pension of different categories of gallantry awardees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU) : (a) No, Sir.

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

[Translation]

Opening of CNG Stations

4051. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI :

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY :

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

(a) whether some State Governments are opening CNG fuel stations without permission from the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether State Governments have the right to set up their own CNG stations;

(d) if not, whether the Government is contemplating to prepare a gas distribution policy;

(e) if so, the complete details thereof;

(f) whether the Government has sought suggestions from the State Governments while preparing the policy; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Some State Governments, namely, Gujarat, Haryana, UP and Rajasthan have authorized setting up of City Gas Distribution projects or have initiated action for the same. Government of Gujarat has granted licences for laying CNG network in the cities of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. Government of Uttar Pradesh, through UPSIDC, has issued No Objection Certificates for implementation of city gas distribution projects in Lucknow, NOIDA, Moradabad and Ghaziabad. Similarly, Government of Haryana has granted No Objection Certificate for city gas distribution projects in

Faridabad and Gurgaon. Government of Rajasthan has invited Expression of Interest for gas distribution in the state.

(c) The Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order given in advisory jurisdiction on 25th March, 2004 in the Special Reference No. 1/2001 has opined that natural gas, including Liquefied Natural Gas, is a Union subject covered under Entry 53 of the Union List. Accordingly, the Union has exclusive legislative competence to enact laws on natural gas. The states have no legislative competence to make laws on the subject of natural gas.

Under Article 73 of the Constitution, the executive power of the Union extends to those matters, with respect to which Parliament has the power to make laws. In the light of the same, state Governments have no power to authorize setting up of CNG filling stations.

Further, the Government has notified, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006, on April 3, 2006, which envisages this Board's authorization to entities to lay, build, operate or expand city or local natural gas distribution networks. Accordingly, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board has to issue authorizations for city gas distribution projects.

(d) to (g) Yes, Sir. The Government of India, in consultation with all stakeholders, has notified the 'Policy for development of Natural Gas Pipelines and City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks'. The broad objectives of the policy are:—

- (1) To facilitate open access for all plays to the pipeline network on a non-discriminatory basis.
- (2) To promote competition among entries thereby avoiding any abuse of the dominant position by any entity.
- (3) To secure the consumer interest in terms of gas availability and reasonable tariff.

Providing of CNG facilities depends upon availability of gas, setting up of necessary infrastructure and economic viability.

[English]

Cold Storage for Perishable Goods

4052. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government plans to set up cold storage chains at major airports in the country to handle perishable goods, consumer durable items;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also proposed to set up some of the airports in the country as cargo hubs; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when they would be developed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. State of Art Center for Perishable Cargo have been established at the following airports: Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Thiruvananthapuram, Bangalore and Amritsar. At Kolkata, a state of the art center for perishable cargo is under construction. Walk in type cold storage facility have been established at the following airports : Guwahati, Lucknow, Coimbatore, Agartala, Ahmedabad, Pune, Cochin, Calicut and Jaipur. Cold storage facilities are proposed to be set up at Goa, Bangalore and Patna airports.

(c) and (d) It has been decided to develop a world class Multi-modal International Passenger and Cargo Hub Airport at Nagpur integrated with the existing Nagpur airport. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed in this regard between Ministry of Civil Aviation/Airports Authority of India and Government of Maharashtra / Maharashtra Airport Development Corporation Ltd.

Adventure Camps started by NDA

4053. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Defence Academy (NDA) has started Adventure Camps to enable people from all walks of life to participate in various adventure activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of people expected to benefited under the programme;

(c) whether the Scheme is extended to all parts of the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) The National Defence Academy organizes Adventure Camps only for the cadets undergoing training there.

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

Reconstitution of National Commission for Scheduled Castes

4054. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the term of National Commission for Scheduled Castes has ended;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has any proposal to reconstitute the Commission; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be reconstituted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI

SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The National Commission for Scheduled Castes was constituted on 24.2.2004 for three years.

(c) and (d) The proposal is under active consideration of the Government.

Supply of State Food in Trains

4055. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the supply of stale food in trains as appeared in the Navbharat Times dated April 19, 2007;

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

(c) the number of such cases which came to the notice of the Railways during the last one year;

(d) the action taken in each case; and

(e) the corrective measures taken by the Railways to provide good quality food to the passengers?

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

(b) There had been no complaint of serving stale food in this train. Catering services have been appreciated as per feedback received from the passenger.

(c) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) managing catering services in trains, has received a total of 1327 complaints during April 2006 to February 2007 for various deficiencies in service.

(d) Corrective action like warning, counseling, levying fines, termination of license etc. are taken against licensee operated catering units. Four major contracts have been terminated and in 828 cases fines have been imposed.

(e) Corrective measures like strengthening of quality control and inspection systems, strict maintenance of hygiene and cleanliness, Indian Standard Organisation (ISO) certification, food audit etc. have been taken.

[Translation]

Golden Quadrilateral Rail Route

4056. SHRI RAGHUVVEER SINGH KOSHAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether operational saturation of the rail routes connecting metropolitan cities is more than 100 per cent and the Railways have introduced 'Golden quadrilateral rail route' scheme for laying new rail lines;

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

(c) the details of the work likely to be undertaken on the New Delhi-Kota-Mumbai rail route under the said scheme alongwith the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) The line capacity utilization of the rail routes connecting metropolitan cities in certain sections of the routes are more than 100%. It is however to be mentioned that there is no such scheme as 'Golden Quadrilateral Rail Route', which has been introduced for laying new rail lines.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Telephone Facility for Passengers in Trains

4057. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether telephone facility for passengers has been introduced in trains;

(b) if so, the trains in which this facility is available;

(c) whether this facility is proposed to be extended to other trains also;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the revenue generated through this facility during 2006-07?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Connectivity of Konkan Railway to Hyderabad

4058. SHRI M. SHIVANNA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal to connect Konkan Railway to Hyderabad; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) No, Sir. However, Konkan Railway line is already connected to Hyderabad via Londa-Guntakal.

(b) Does not arise.

Oil Refineries

4059. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH :
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :

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

(a) the details of oil refined by the various public sector oil companies during 2005-06 and 2006-07, refinery-wise;

(b) the details of the refining capacity of each of such refinery in the country during the said period; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure

optimum utilization of refining capacity of the oil refineries in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) Refinery-wise crude oil refined by the Public Sector Oil Companies during 2005-06 and 2006-07 (April, 2006-February, 2007) is given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(b) The details of refining capacity of Public Sector Oil Companies as on 1.4.2005, 1.4.2006 and 1.4.2007 are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(c) Capacity utilization of refineries in public sector during 2005-06 and 2006-07 (April, 2006-February, 2007) were 101% and 107% respectively.

In order to improve capacity utilization of North-East Refineries, Government has been allocating 1.5 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) of Ravva crude to Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (BRPL) from the year 2003-04 onwards.

Besides above, various modernization programmes have been undertaken in some refineries to improve the capacity utilization and profitability.

Statement-I

Refinery-wise Crude Oil Throughput

Million Metric Tonnes (MMT)

Oil Refineries	2005-06	2006-07
		(April-February, 2007)
1	2	3
Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.		
Mathura	7.94	8.17

1	2	3
Koyali	11.54	11.79
Haldia	5.50	5.30
Barauni	5.55	5.00
Guwahati	0.86	0.77
Digboi	0.61	0.54
Panipat	6.51	8.37
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd.		
Mumbai	6.25	6.75
Visakh	7.57	8.38
Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.		
Mumbai	10.28	10.84
Kochi	6.94	7.10
Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd.		
Manali	9.68	8.90
Narimanam	0.68	0.54
Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. , Bongaigaon	2.36	1.91
Numaligarh Refineries Limited, Numaligarh	2.13	2.32
Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Tatipaka Refinery	0.09	0.09

1	2	3
Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd., Mangalore	12.01	11.45
Total	96.50	98.22

Statement-II**Installed Capacity**

Million Metric Tonnes (MMT)

Oil Refineries	1.4.2005	1.4.2006	1.4.2007
1	2	3	4
Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.			
Mathura	8.00	8.00	8.00
Koyali	13.70	13.70	13.70
Haldia	6.00	6.00	6.00
Barauni	6.00	6.00	6.00
Digboi	0.65	0.65	0.65
Panipat	6.00	6.00	12.00
Guwahati	1.00	1.00	1.00
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd.			
Mumbai	5.50	5.50	5.50
Visakh	7.50	7.50	7.50
Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.			
Mumbai	6.90	12.00	12.00

1	2	3	4
Kochi	7.50	7.50	7.50
Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd.			
Manali	9.50	9.50	9.50
Narimanam	1.00	1.00	1.00
Bongaigaon refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd., Bongaigaon	2.35	2.35	2.35
Numaligarh Refineries Ltd., Numaligarh	3.00	3.00	3.00
Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Tatipaka Refinery	0.078	0.078	0.078
Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd., Mangalore	9.69	9.69	9.69
Total	94.37	99.47	105.47

**Modernisation of Terminals of Airports
in Kerala**

4060. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the modernisation works of Terminals in Cochin, Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode Airports in Kerala are in progress;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the present status thereof;

(c) the total expenditure incurred so far thereon; and

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

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

(b) to (d) At Cochin airport, which is a private airport managed by Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL), the modernisation work of arrival Block of International Terminal Building has been completed whereas 70% work of its Departure Block has been completed. The modernization work is expected to be completed by March, 2008. As per the information furnished by CIAL, an expenditure of Rs. 43.60 crore (approx.) has been incurred so far.

At Kozhikode Airport, expansion and modification of International and Domestic Terminals has been undertaken to increase peak hour capacity to 500 international arriving and 500 international departing passengers and 250 domestic arriving and 250 domestic departing passengers. The project cost is Rs. 89.48 crore. The New International Terminal Building is likely to be commissioned in May, 2007 and the expected date of completion of Domestic Terminal Building is September, 2007.

At Thiruvananthapuram airport, construction of New International Terminal Building for 500 arriving and 500 departing passengers has been initiated. The project will be completed in two phases at an estimated cost of Rs. 245.58 crore, which includes New International Terminal Building, Apron and remote bay, Taxi-link, Approach road car parking and other civic amenities and associated works. The existing International Terminal Building is also being extended for 2 nos. of incontact bays alongwith apron strengthening and extension. An expenditure of Rs. 14.30 crore has been incurred and the work of Phase-I is likely to be completed by December 2008.

**Religion Based Reservation in Educational
Institutions and Jobs**

4061. SHRI M. APPADURAI : Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Ministry of Minority Affairs has recommended to the Union Government to provide religion based reservation in admissions in the Education Institutions and also in providing Government jobs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) to (c) National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities, set up in October 2004, has, as one of its terms of reference, "to recommend measures for the welfare of socially and economically backward sections among religious and linguistic minorities, including reservation in education and government employment".

[Translation]

Sale of Scraps

4062. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the estimated quantity of scraps generated in the Railways annually;

(b) the details of the income earned by the Railways from the sale of scraps during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Railways have made any assessment about loss of revenue that has taken place due to thefts of scraps;

(d) if so, the details thereof in each of the last three years; and

(e) the corrective measures being taken by the Railways to check it?

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

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) There was no loss of revenue and proper system exists to prevent loss, if any.

Statement

The estimated quantity of Scrap generated in the Railways annually;

2004-05

Rails and P. Way (metric tonnes)	Other Ferrous (metric tonnes)	Non-Ferrous (metric tonnes)	Rolling Stocks (in numbers)		
			Wagons	Coaches	Locos
274676	166742	12757	16091	1196	129

2005-06

Rails and P. Way (metric tonnes)	Other Ferrous (metric tonnes)	Non-Ferrous (metric tonnes)	Rolling Stocks (in numbers)		
			Wagons	Coaches	Locos
346422	345684	15249	14121	1023	102

2006-07

Rails and P. Way (metric tonnes)	Other Ferrous (metric tonnes)	Non-Ferrous (metric tonnes)	Rolling Stocks (In numbers)		
			Wagons	Coaches	Locos
556181	320656	16216	14073	1304	123

(b) the details of the income (in rupees) earned by the Railways from the sale of scrap during each of the last three years:

Railways/Production Units	2004-05 (In Crores of Rupees	2005-06 (In Crores of Rupees	2006-07 (In Crores of Rupees
1	2	3	4
Central	72.36	116.53	152.94
Eastern	104.7	143.38	156.77
Northern	104.1	166.39	245
North Eastern	22.89	34.53	37.29
Northeast Frontier	20.96	36.26	54.97
Southern	119.5	125.12	172.5
South Central	87.56	110.2	167.75
South Eastern	77.33	84.1	100.92
Western	55.73	63.33	122.75
North Western	32.84	75.27	99.22
North Central	113.4	103	126.75
East Central	46.67	39.94	38.70
East Coast	26.52	31.05	60.58

1	2	3	4
South East Central	37.86	54.36	64.47
South Western	13.17	25.12	31.54
West Central	60.6	87.89	125.35
Chittaranjan Locomotive Works	2.52	5.54	6.88
Diesel Loco Modernisation Works	8.94	16.23	19.81
Diesel Locomotive Works	1.88	4.45	4.53
Integral Coach Factory	9.43	19.43	18.25
Metro Railway	1.46	1.44	2.02
Rail Coach Factory	3.02	15.87	14.41
Rail Wheel Factory	8.39	4.90	8.93
Total	1032	1364.33	1832.33

[English]

Waiving of Tax Dues from Refineries

4063. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY :
SHRI UDAY SINGH :

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

(a) whether the oil refining companies have urged the Government to waive off tax dues from these companies on account of irrecoverable taxes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of such irrecoverable taxes to which the oil companies have failed to recover;

(d) whether a new strategy would be formulated to check such huge losses; and

(e) 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) No, Sir. However, representations have been received by the Government to compensate the refineries for their under-recoveries on account of irrecoverable taxes.

(c) At present oil companies are suffering under-recoveries on account of Central Sales Tax on Inter State Sales of Petroleum products to Oil Marketing Companies; Entry Tax/Octroi on receipt of crude by Refineries; and Irrecoverable Additional Tax/Surcharge on Sales Tax/VAT on sale of petroleum products by Oil marketing companies.

(d) and (e) Dr. Rangarajan Committee on pricing of petroleum products had recommended elimination of all irrecoverable taxes in view of their distortionary impact. Accordingly, it was taken up with concerned State Governments for abolition of irrecoverable taxes. Government of Kerala has since abolished Central Sales Tax on Petrol, High Speed Diesel, Liquefied Petroleum Gas and Kerosene.

[Translation]

Gauge Conversion between Dhasa and Jetalsar

4064. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether survey for gauge conversion between Dhasa and Jetalsar has been undertaken by the Railways;

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

(c) the follow-up action taken thereon; and

(d) if not, the reasons for the delay and the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (d) A survey for gauge conversion of Dhasa-Jetalsar metre gauge line is in progress and targeted for completion by 31.07.2007. Further decision on the proposal would be taken based on results of the survey.

[English]

Doubling of Railway Line between Rupsa and Baripada

4065. SHRI JUAL ORAM : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have any proposal to lay double line between Rupsa and Baripada in Orissa;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Railways to acquire additional land for this purpose; and

(c) the time schedule for completion of the said project?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Status of Muslims

4066. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO : SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL :

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Committees constituted to know the status of Muslims before the constitution of Sachar Committee;

(b) the names of the Committees whose recommendations were accepted;

(c) whether the Government has ascertained the cause of no improvement in the status of the Muslims even after the implementation of the recommendations of earlier Committees;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) and (b) A High Power Panel, known as the Gopal Singh Committee was constituted on 10th May, 1980 and it submitted its report on the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other weaker sections and minorities, including Muslims. The report alongwith a statement indicating the comments of the Government on the recommendations made by this panel was laid on the table of Lok Sabha on 27th August, 1990.

(c) to (e) A High Level Committee, known as the Sachar Committee, has brought out the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community of India. The report of the Committee has been tabled in the Lok Sabha on 30th November, 2006. It is also available in the website www.minorityaffairs.gov.in The recommendations of this Committee are under consideration of the Government.

Civil Aviation Projects

4067. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU :

SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE :

SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI :

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV :

SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK :

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI :

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

SHRI KIREN RIJUJU :

SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL :

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the details of civil aviation projects particularly upgradation of airports which were include in the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) the progress made in each of these projects till date;

(c) whether these projects are running as per their schedule;

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

(e) the expenditure incurred thereon so far; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) The airports at Dehradun, Jaipur, Khajuraho, Kullu, Lucknow, Pantnagar, Srinagar, Udaipur in Northern Region, Bhubaneshwar, Gaya in Eastern Region, Agartala, Debrugarh, Guwahati, Silchar in North Eastern Region; Ahmedabad, Akola, Aurangabad, Belgaum, Diu, Goa, Gondia, Nagpur, Raipur, Pune and Vadodara in Western Region and Agatti, Calicut, Madurai, Mangalore, Mysore, Tirupati, Trichy and Vizag in Southern Region have been taken up for upgradation in the Tenth Five Year Plan. The projects include construction of new runways, new international terminal complex, apron taxi-way, terminal buildings, technical blocks cum control tower, drainage and rain water harvesting system, recarpeting of runways etc.

(b) to (d) While most of the projects are running as per schedule, there have been delays in respect of certain projects due to non-closure of airport by state government in view of assembly elections, inclement weather conditions, hostile law and order situation etc.

(e) The total expenditure incurred as on 31.3.2007 (Rupees in crores) is Northern Region - 116.89, Eastern Region-3.9, North Eastern Region-58.33, Western Region-80.32 and Southern Region - 101.87 respectively.

(f) Most of the projects are likely to be completed by December 2007. Certain projects whose schedule date of commencing is in 2008 are expected to be completed as per schedule.

[English]

Scholarship for Children of Persons Engaged in Unclean Occupation

4068. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is implementing pre-matric scholarship scheme for children of those persons engaged in unclean occupation;

(b) if so, the details of central share allocated and released under the scheme alongwith number of beneficiaries during 2006-07;

(c) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Against the Budget allocation of Rs. 16.00 crore, an amount of Rs. 20.25 crore was released to the States/UTs during the year 2006-07. The anticipated coverage of beneficiaries during the year is 654902.

(c) and (d) The scheme provides for coverage of

all the students eligible for scholarship under the scheme. There is no limit on number of students to be covered.

Shortage of Coaches

4069. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE :
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is shortage of coaches in Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof and how it is proposed to meet it;

(c) whether there is also any proposal to enhance the capacities of the existing railway coach factories;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) No, Sir. At present, there is no shortage of coaches to run the schedule services.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. Works have been approved for augmenting capacity of RCF (Rail Coach Factory), Kapurthala and ICF (Integral Coach Factory), Chennai from 1000 coaches per year to 1400 coaches and 1500 coaches per year, respectively. Apart from augmenting the existing capacity, there is also a proposal to set up a new coach factory, to meet the projected increase in demand.

Old Railway Bridges

4070. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO :
SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA :

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN :

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of railways bridges in the country, Zone-wise,

(b) the number of railways bridges, out of them are more than 100 years old, Zone-wise;

(c) the details of accidents occurred because of these old bridges alongwith the loss of lives caused in these accidents during the last three years; and

(d) the concrete steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Railways for strengthening/rebuilding these old bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) There are approximately 1,27,000 Railway Bridges on Indian Railway system. Out of this, about 51,000 no. of Bridges are more than 100 years old. The Zone-wise break up of these Bridges is given as under:-

Railway	Total Number of Bridges (Approximate)	Number of Bridges more than 100 years old (Approximate)
1	2	3
Central	9700	4500
Eastern	4200	2800
East Central	5700	2000
East Coast	8800	800
Northern	15900	15600
North Central	5400	1800

1	2	3
North Eastern	3700	1400
Northeast Frontier	6100	1400
North Western	5400	1700
Southern	16200	3000
South Central	13000	4700
South Eastern	6800	2200
South East Central	4800	2000
South Western	6500	2800
Western	9900	2600
West Central	4900	1700
Total	127000	51000

(c) No accident has occurred because of old Railway bridges during the last three years on Indian Railway system.

(d) The life of a Railway bridges is not based on its age but on physical condition as ascertained by inspections. Railways have a well laid down system of multi-tier inspection of Bridges. Railway undertakes repair, rehabilitation/rebuilding of bridges on the basis of their physical condition as ascertained during inspections and not on the basis of age. Few bridges which may show signs of deterioration of physical condition indicating need for rehabilitation are classified as Distressed Bridges. These, however, are neither unsafe nor dilapidated bridges. Based on such identification of bridges, allotment of funds is made annually to carry out their repair, rehabilitation/rebuilding duly prioritizing the works as per requirement.

In 2001-02 to clear the backlog of replacement of such identified Bridges on Indian Railways, 2370 bridges were

sanctioned for repair/rehabilitation/rebuilding at a cost of Rs. 1530 Crore (Net) under Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF). Apart from SRSF, additional funds are also made available annually in Railway Budget to undertake repair/

rehabilitation of fresh accruals of Bridges works under Depreciation Reserve Fund (DRF). Year-wise repair, rehabilitation/rebuilding of bridges since creation of SRSF is given as below:—

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

Revamping of Catering Policy, 2005

4071. DR. M. JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether sub-standard and insufficient quantity of food is sold at exorbitant price in a number of trains running in South and South Central Railways;

(b) if so, the number of complaints received during the last one year and the current year till date;

(c) the action taken against the contractors for supplying sub-standard food;

(d) whether the Railways have any proposal to review and revamp the New Catering Policy, 2005 so as

to make available hygienic food to the passengers on board at an affordable price; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) managing catering services on trains, has received 332 complaints from South Zone and 253 complaints from South Central Zone, out of which 64 complaints pertain to over charging.

(c) Punitive action such as warning, counseling, fines or even termination of contracts are taken on complaints.

(d) and (e) At present there is no proposal to review

the Revised Catering Policy 2005 issued in December 2005.

[Translation]

Land on Rent at Jodhpur Railway Station

4072. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the area of land rented out to the private parties at Jodhpur railway station in Rajasthan;

(b) whether the Court has directed the Railways to get the land vacated; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Railways thereon?

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.

Welfare of Scheduled Castes

4073. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether some States showed laxity in spending the funds sanctioned in respect of the development schemes for scheduled castes during the last three years;

(b) if so, the names of those States;

(c) whether any guidelines have been issued by the Government to the States which have diverted the funds sanctioned for the schemes meant for development of Scheduled Castes; and

(d) 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 pace of utilization of Special Central Assistance funds by State Government of Goa, Jharkhand and Kerala has been slow.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment monitors the utilization of funds by the States/Union Territories. No instance has come to the notice of the Ministry as to the diversion of funds by the States/Union Territories.

[English]

Bio-diesel

4074. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether in view of current and projected levels of crude oil prices, bio fuel is potentially viable alternative to fossil fuel;

(b) if so, whether most of the developed countries have active programme for use of bio-diesel from various farm products;

(c) if so, whether country has not made use of 63 million hectare of waste land for oil bearing crop;

(d) if so, the steps taken or being taken to use this land for bio-diesel products;

(e) whether to promote bio-fuel the Government has made necessary arrangements in the current year budget, and

(f) if so, the extent to which these steps are likely to help in producing more bio-diesel?

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

(b) to (f) The Ministry of Rural Development is the

nodal Ministry for the proposed National Mission on Bio-diesel, being set up with a focus on large-scale cultivation of Jatropha. A Detailed Project Report (DPR) on the National Mission on Bio-diesel has been submitted by that Ministry to the Planning Commission.

This proposal inter-alia, envisages a Demonstration Project involving plantation of Jatropha in 4 lakh hectares of degraded forest and non-forest lands for manufacturing bio-diesel. The Planning Commission has given 'in principle' approval to the DPR for the demonstration phase, estimated to cost Rs. 1286 crores over a period of 5 years. The Ministry of Rural Development has released Rs. 49 Crores to the nine States, namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Tripura, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan for raising Jatropha seedlings in nurseries.

To encourage production of bio-diesel in the country, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas announced a Bio-diesel Purchase Policy, in October 2005, effective 1.1.2006. The policy has identified 20 purchase centres of the public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) all over the country. The OMCs would purchase bio-diesel meeting the standards prescribed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), from those bio-diesel manufacturers who register with them affecting satisfying the technical specifications, at a specified delivered price. Depending upon felt need and preparedness, the OMCs could also open more purchase centres.

The Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), an organization under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, has opened a Nation Bio-fuel Centre, which disseminates information related to bio-diesel.

IOC Business with Pakistan

4075. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :

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

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation proposed to open passage to Pakistan with its petrochemicals and base oils used for making lubricants;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has taken or proposes to take any steps in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reaction of the Pakistan Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) Indian Oil Corporation Limited is pursuing export of petrochemical products, particularly purified Terephthalic (PTA) to Pakistan. The proposal involves transport of PTA by road and by rail in containers across Wagha Border. The matter has been taken up by IOC with Government of India and with the High Commissioner of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

In March 2006, Government of Pakistan had permitted Pakistan State Oil (PSO) to import 10 TMT, Group II Lube Oil Base Stock (LOBS) from Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) on a one time basis.

Joining the National Carrier by IAF Officers

4076. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA :
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Pilots of Armed Forces took premature retirements/resigned during each of the last three years and current year so far;

(b) the average expenditure incurred by the Government to train Pilots;

(c) the grounds that considered as 'extreme compassionate grounds' for premature retirement of Pilots;

(d) whether the Indian Air Force (IAF) has agreed to allow its officers to join the National Carrier as reported in the Business Standard, dated April 10, 2007;

(e) if so, the facts thereof and the reasons for the proposed move;

(f) whether the proposed move is likely to lead to shortage of Air Force Pilots and also loss that the Air Force would incur on Pilots training; and

(g) if so, the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) to (g) The details regarding the number of pilots released on premature retirement/resigned during each of the last three years and in the current year so far is as under:—

Year	Proceeded on Premature retirement	Resignation
2004	128	—
2005	77	—
2006	56	—
2007 (as of April)	16	—

The average training costs vary from service to service and stream to stream ranging from Rs.0.302 crores to Rs. 10.35 crores.

Certain domestic problems relating to inheritance of property, need to look after ailing parents, family business, serious illness of wife requiring officer's presence at home, possibility of break up of conjugal life if the officer continues in service, etc. are considered as compassionate grounds, depending upon the circumstances of each case

The Indian Air Force has agreed to allow officers in the age group of 54 years and above to join the national carrier. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between IAF and Air India on 5th April, 2007. This is to facilitate a second carrier option to the retiring IAF officers and also reduce the requirement of expatriate pilots for the national carrier.

The exit of the officers being sponsored would not affect the operational status of the Air Force as these officers would have already served their useful tenure as pilots. The officers being sponsored are generally those who are superannuating within a year or so. Hence, this would neither lead to shortage of pilots in the IAF nor any loss incurred on their training.

Efficiency of Refineries

4077. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Shell India Private Ltd. has signed a contract with the Government to improve the efficiency of four major refineries at Mathura, Chennai, Vizag and Kochi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the terms and conditions of the contract signed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) to (c) Government has not signed any contract with Shell India Private Limited. However, Centre for High Technology (CHT), a registered society under Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, has signed an agreement with Shell Global Solutions International B.V. (Shell GSI) of the Netherlands for an "Integrated Business Improvement Programme" for these four refineries.

Year of Indo-China Friendship through Tourism

4078. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether 2007 has been designated as the "Year of Indo-China Friendship through Tourism";

(b) if so, whether any Action Plan has been finalized to undertake promotional activities to promote two way tourism between the two countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) and (c) An Action Plan has been finalized to undertake promotional activities for two-way tourism between India and China. Some of the activities mentioned in the Action Plan include organizing of familiarization trips of media/tour operators, exchange visits of students and faculty from Hotel Management Institutes, organizing of road shows, participation in travel and tourism fairs in each other's country.

Centrally Protected Monuments in Kerala

4079. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN : Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of Centrally protected monuments in Kerala;

(b) the amount spent on restoration and renovation of these monuments during the last three years and the current year, so far;

(c) the revenue earned by the Government from these monuments during the above said period;

(d) whether the Government has received any proposals from the "Sree Ram Cultural and Educational Trust", Triprayar regarding the new works to be undertaken at Sree Rama Temple of Triprayar, Trissur, Kerala; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) There are 26 monuments/sites in Kerala which have been declared as of national importance as per list enclosed as statement.

(b) The amount spent on conservation, preservation, and maintenance of these monuments during the last three years is as under:-

2004-05	Rs. 110.66 lakhs
2005-06	Rs. 118.50 lakhs
2006-07	Rs. 208.99 lakhs

During the current financial year 2007-08, an amount of Rs. 210.00 lakhs have been allocated for conservation, preservation and maintenance of centrally protected monuments / sites under Thrissur Circle of Archeological Survey of India.

(c) The details of revenue earned from these monuments in Kerala during the last three years is as under:

2004-05	Rs. 14.51 lakhs
2005-06	Rs. 17.66 lakhs
2006-07	Rs. 23.46 lakhs

(d) and (e) The Sree Ram Cultural and Educational Trust has requested allocation of sufficient funds for taking up various conservation and development works at the Sree Rama Temple. Some of the proposed works are already included in the works programme of 2007-08. The temple is in a good state of preservation.

Statement

Detailed List of Centrally Protected Monuments under the Jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India in Kerala

S.No.	Name of Monument/Sites	Locality	District
1	2	3	4
1.	Mattancherry Palace	Cochin	Ernakulam

1	2	3	4
2.	St. Francis Church	Cochin	Ernakulam
3.	Fort St. Angelo	Kannur	Kannur
4.	Tellicherry Fort	Tellicherry	Kannur
5.	Bekal Fort	Pallikere	Kasargod
6.	Fort (Yakkara Desam)	Palghat	Palghat
7.	Siva temple	Pattambi	Palghat
8.	Remains of old fort	Thangassery	Kallam
9.	Fort	Anjengo	Thiruvananthapuram
10.	Temples of Parasurama, Brahma, Siva and Matsya together with adjacent land	Tiruvallam	Thiruvananthapuram
11.	Rock cut cave	Vizhinjam	Thiruvananthapuram
12.	Siva temple	Eyyal (Chemmanthitta)	Thrissur
13.	29 Wooden Bracket Figures on the outer wall of the Srikoil of the Vishnu temple and other works of art in the same shrine	Katavallur	Thrissur
14.	Siva temple	Oorakam (Peruvanam)	Thrissur
15.	Mural Paintings (16th-17th century A.D.) on the walls of the Siva temple	Thiruvanchikulam	Thrissur
16.	Mural paintings on the walls of Shri Ramaswamy temple	Triprayar	Thrissur
17.	Mural paintings on the walls of Srikoil of the Pallimana temple	Vadakkancherry	Thrissur
18.	Mural paintings (16th-17th cent A.D.) on the walls of Kailasanatha temple	Thrissur	Thrissur
19.	Umbrella prehistoric site	Ariyanur	Thrissur
20.	Kudakkallu Parambu	Cheramangad	Thrissur

1	2	3	4
21.	Burial Cave	Chovvanur	Thrissur
22.	Burial Cave	Eyyal	Thrissur
23.	Burial Cave	Kandanasseri	Thrissur
24.	Burial Cave	Katakampil	Thrissur
25.	Burial Cave of Kakkad	Kunnamaulam	Thrissur
26.	Jain temple	Kitanganad	Wynad

Cess on Crude Oil

4080. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has imposed cess on crude oil section 15 of Oil Industry (Development) Act, 1974;

(b) if so, the aim and objectives thereof;

(c) the details of net cess amount accumulated so far;

(d) the extent to which the aims and objectives has so far been obtained from such cess; and

(e) the period upto which the Government proposes to continue the collection of such cess?

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

(b) The main objective of impost of the cess is to render financial and other assistance conducive for development of oil industry by way of:-

(i) prospecting for and exploration of mineral oil

within India (including the continental shelf thereof) or outside India;

(ii) the establishment of facilities for production, handling, storage and transport of crude oil;

(iii) refining and marketing of petroleum and petroleum products;

(iv) the manufacture and marketing of petrochemicals and fertilizers;

(v) scientific, technological and economic research which could be, directly or indirectly, useful to oil industry;

(vi) experimental or pilot studies in any field of oil industry;

(vii) training of personnel, whether in India or outside, engaged or to be engaged in any field of oil industry.

(c) The Government has collected net cess of Rs. 67600 crore approx. upto March 2007.

(d) Since its inception and upto 31.2.2007, the Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) has given loan assistance of Rs. 20980 crore approx. and Rs. 1105 crore

as grants, Royalty to the State Govts. and expenditure on various studies/schemes/programmes sponsored by Govt./OIDB for the development of oil industry. In addition, OIBD has invested its funds in the equity of M/s. Biecco Lawrie Ltd. to the tune of Rs. 17.58 crore. Recently a wholly owned subsidiary, Viz, Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd. has also been set up under OIBD for construction of strategic crude oil storages at 3 locations with a total capacity 5 MMTPA.

(e) There is no proposal to discontinue the collection of cess.

Insurance fund of Railways

4081. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the corpus of insurance fund of the Railways as on March 31, 2007;

(b) the amount received in the fund annually during the last three years and the amount spent from the fund, annually during the same period;

(c) whether the *ex-gratia* grant given by the Railways to the accident victims is met from the insurance fund or from the general revenues of the Railways;

(d) the details thereof; and

(e) the *ex-gratia* grant given to accident victims during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) Railways do not have an Insurance Fund.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The *ex-gratia* grant as well as compensation are met out of Railway Revenue.

(e) The *ex-gratia* grant given to the accident victims during the last three years is as under:-

2004-05	Rs. 70.80 lakh.
2005-06	Rs. 166.58 lakh.
2064-07	Rs. 162.37 lakh

Selling Price of Gas

4082. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether some norms have been prescribed for fixation of selling price of gas in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the ratio of profit fixed on production of gas producing companies;

(d) whether different gas producers sell gas at different rates to the consumers in the country; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) to (c) There are broadly two pricing regimes for gas in the country, gas priced under Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) and non-APM or free market gas. The price of APM gas is set by the Government. The gas produced from the existing fields of ONGC and OIL, given to them on nomination basis, is covered under the APM. APM gas is being supplied to the priority sectors, viz., Power and fertilizer sectors; small scale consumers with allocation upto 0.05 MMSCMD; and specific end users committed under court orders. As regards non-APM/free Market gas, it is supplied to different consumers at market determined prices.

The Government has decided that future production of gas from New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) fields, as also additional gas to be developed in future, by ONGC and OIL, as well as Joint Venture/Private Companies, would be sold at market related prices. The price is to be fixed

at arm's length price as per the provision of Production Sharing Contract (PSC) under NELP. Prior approval of the Government has to be obtained for formula or the basis on which the price is fixed.

(d) and (e) While APM gas is sold at the notified rates, gas produced from PSC fields by ONGC, Oil India Ltd. and private producers like BG/RIL/ONGC Consortium and Cairn/Videcon/ONGC Consortium are sold at prices determined in terms of provisions of PSC.

Gilgit Manuscripts of J and K

4083. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE :

SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH :

SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD :

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Gilgit manuscript of Jammu and Kashmir has been nominated for inclusion in UNESCO's World Register, 2006-07;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any other Indian manuscript has already been included in the UNESCO's World Register; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A dossier on Gilgit manuscript of Jammu and Kashmir has been submitted to UNESCO for inclusion of these manuscripts in the UNESCO's World Register, 2006-07. Gilgit Manuscripts, dating between 5th and 6th Century, AD, are the oldest manuscripts available in India. These manuscripts were discovered by shepherds from Gilgit area near Kashmir and are a collection of narratives and poems dealing mainly with Buddhism. A major part of this manuscript corpus is in the National Archives of India and the rest is in the State Archives in Jammu and Kashmir.

(c) and (d) Other Indian manuscripts in the UNESCO's World Register are the 'Tamil Medical Manuscripts' from the Institute of Asian Studies, Tamil Nadu and the 'Saiva Manuscripts' from Pondicherry.

Introduction of New Trains

4084. SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways propose to introduce more new trains and increase the capacity of the existing fast trains, such as the Kanniyakumari Express and Ananthapuri Express under Trivandrum Division; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) Introduction and augmentation of trains are ongoing and continuous exercises over Indian Railways depending upon traffic pattern, operational feasibility and availability of resources.

(b) In the Rail Budget 2007-08 it has been announced to introduce a Garib Rath train between Thiruvananthapuram and Lokmanya Tilak(T) and a daily train between Coimbatore and Nagercoil during the year 2007-08. However, it is not operationally feasible to increase the loads of 6123/6124 Chennai Egmore-Thiruvananthapuram Ananthapuri Express and 2633/2634 Chennai Egmore-Kanniyakumari Express at present, as the trains are running with maximum permissible load.

[Translation]

Incentives to Small and Regional Airlines

4085. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL :

SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has provided any

incentives to small and regional airlines to connect small cities having airports with air services;

- (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) Incentives have been provided to all domestic airlines for using small aircraft in various parts of the country. Aircraft with a maximum certified capacity of less than 80 seats being operated by domestic scheduled operators and helicopter of all types are exempted from paying landing charges. As regard small aircraft incentives on Route Navigation Facility Charges (RNFC), Terminal Navigation and Landing Charges (TNLC) and extension on watch hour are allowable as under:-

1. RNFC in respect of the aircraft with maximum All-Up-Weight up 20000 Kgs :-
 - (a) Upto 10000 Kgs are levied @20% of the applicable rates; and
 - (b) More than 10000 Kgs to 20000 Kgs are levied @40% of the applicable Rates.
2. TNLC at international airports is levied @ Rs. 100/= per 1000 Kgs upto a maximum limit of 21000 Kg AUW.
3. Service Charges for Extension of Watch Hours are levied @ 25% of applicable rates for aircraft upto 21000 Kgs of AUW.
4. An amendment to the Central Sales Tax Act, 1956 has been proposed through clause 132 of the Finance Bill 2007 to include Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) sold to aircraft with maximum take off mass of less than 40000 Kgs operated by Scheduled airlines to be included in Section 14 of said Act. This would result in maximum Sales Tax on ATF of 4%.

Activities of Department of Defence Research

4086. SHRI RAKESH SINGH : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any committee has been constituted to look into the activities of Department of Defence Research meant for upgrading the arms and ammunition, vehicles and canon produced by ordnance factories;

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

(c) whether the Governmental Defence Establishments engaged in production of Defence equipments have to face paucity of work due to slow progress of Department of Defence Research; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) and (b): Yes, Sir. A committee has been constituted by the Government to review the functioning of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). DRDO engages itself into Research and Development in the field of aeronautics, missile technology, armaments, electronic warfare, materials etc. In addition to developing systems ab-initio, the organization, sometimes also undertakes R and D work to enhance the functional parameters of the existing systems.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Incentive to Accommodation Infrastructure Scheme

4087. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether a scheme "Incentive to Accommodation Infrastructure" was introduced by the Government in the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details of the progress made under the said scheme in various States so far;

(c) the number of projects for which capital subsidy has been granted, State-wise; and

(d) the extent to which the scheme has been able to achieve its objectives in the plan period?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The details of projects sanctioned State-wise with the rooms created during the Tenth Five Year Plan are as under:-

State	Projects	Rooms
Kerala	43	1113
Gujarat	3	62
Punjab	4	89
Maharashtra	2	53
Tamil Nadu	2	38
Andhra Pradesh	5	247
Karnataka	3	180
West Bengal	2	42
Madhya Pradesh	2	94
Total	66	1918

Utilisation of Vacant Land by Railways

4088. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways do not maintain proper and accurate land records and the purpose for which the land is to be used; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) No, Sir. Railways maintain proper and accurate land records and the purpose for which the land is to be used which brings out lands surplus to immediate requirements.

(b) Does not arise.

Transportation of Coal

4089. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have signed an agreement with Reliance Energy Group's Rosa Power Supply Company Ltd. to transport coal;

(b) if so, the detail thereof; and

(c) the income likely to be generated by Railways therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) : Yes, Sir. Ministry of Railways have entered into a coal transportation agreement with M/s. Rosa Power Supply Company Ltd. of Reliance Energy Group. The salient features of the agreement include:-

- Indian Railways to transport 2.7 million tonnes per annum of coal for 25 years.
- The Company will pay to Railways 5% extra freight charges.
- Indian Railways would guarantee placement of rakes, transportation and delivery of coal.
- Railway and Company to pay penalties for non-fulfillment of obligations.

(c) The annual freight earnings as per current freight tariff would be about Rs.180 Crores for a lead of 800 Kilometres.

[Translation]

**No Objection Certificate for
Goods Trains**

4090. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether private companies have been issued 'No. Objection Certificates' for operation of good trains by the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the revenue likely to be received by the Railways as a result thereof;

(d) whether the Railways propose to fully privatize the operation of goods trains in future; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Discontinuation of Kisan Express Halts

4091. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have discontinued the halt of 4519 Kisan Express at Hansi and Adampur Stations since February 2007;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Railways have made any alternate arrangement to facilitate the thousands of passengers boarding/getting down at Hansi and Adampur Station;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Railways to restore the halt of the 4519 Kisan Express at the said stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (e) Stoppage of 4519 Delhi-Bathinda Kisan Express has been restored at Hansi and Mandi Adampur Stations from 28.2.2007.

**Increase in Income from Protected
Monuments**

4092. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI :
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY :
SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA :

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the income from Centrally protected monuments has increased;

(b) if so, the State-wise and monument-wise details of the income earned therefrom during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government is formulating any scheme to increase further the income from these monuments; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of revenue earned by entrance fee during the last three years is as under:-

2004-05	Rs. 5285.72 lakhs
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2005-06	Rs. 5466.63 lakhs
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2006-07	Rs. 6303.63 lakhs
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Details are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal at present to increase the entry fee at the monuments or to bring more monuments under ticketing.

Statement*Details of Revenue collected by way of Entrance Fee on Centrally Protected Monuments (State-wise)*

S.No.	State/Name of monument	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh				
1.	Lower fort (Raja and Rani Mahal), Chandragiri, Distt. Chittoor	494725	466830 4\$	502915 34\$
2.	Golgonda fort, Golkonda, District Hyderabad	4892790 1628\$	5299530 2014\$	6727450 2820\$
3.	Ruined Buddhist Stupa and other remains, Amaravati, District Guntur	100760 66\$	439975 478\$	138650 798\$
4.	Hill of Nagarjunakonda with aneint remains, Pullareddigudem, District Guntur	532270 76\$	976470 489\$	595505 774\$
5.	Four storeyed rock-cut Hindu temple, Undavalli, Distt. Guntur	177705 26\$	144615 177\$	283875 20\$
6.	Buddhist monuments, Guntapalle, Distt. West Godavari	104880	103595	122695 85\$
7.	Warangal fort, Warangal, Distt. Warangal	283930	333150	374270
8.	Charminar, Hyderabad, District Hyderabad	6188560 260\$	6732000 176\$	7619545 154\$
Assam				
9.	Ahom Raja's palace, Garhgaon, District Sibsagar	141655	159230	125600
10.	Karenghar of Ahom Kings, Sibsagar, Distt. Sibsagar	437710	387155	323035
11.	Group of four maidans, Charaideo, Dist Sibsagar	142575	124955	83970
12.	Bishnudol, Joysagar, Distt. Sibsagar	37170	35935	25555
13.	Ranghar Ruins, Joysagar, Distt. Sibsagar	115545	150210	117430

1	2	3	4	5
Biher				
14.	Site of Mauryan Palace, Kumrahar, Patna, Distt. Patna	169595 1064\$	215140 944\$	291205 1657\$
15.	Ancient ruins Vaishali, Distt. Vaishali	343535 20426\$	183075 15898\$	436060 30680\$
16.	Sher Shah's tomb, Sasaram, Distt. Rohtas	447245 132\$	493125 70\$	542175 54\$
17.	Excavated Site, Nalanda, Distt. Nalanda	1691030 29588\$	1411950 46036\$	1911140 62446\$
18.	Ancient Site of Vikramshila, Antichak, Distt. Bhagalpur	37185	67335	92320 22\$
Chhattisgarh				
19.	Temple of Laxman and Old sites including sculptures Sirpur, Distt. Raipur	62175	317135	200270
Gujarat				
20.	Sun Temple, Modhera, Distt. Mehsana	726573	736724	771247
21.	Rani Ki-Vav, Patan, Distt. Patan	615196	753559	821486
22.	Champaner Monuments, Champaner, Distt. Godhra	237140	296595	511152
23.	Asokan Rock Edict, Junagadh, Distt. Junagadh	305420	301850	265470
24.	Buddhist Caves, Junagadh, Distt. Junagarh	245425	270741	285547
25.	Baba Pyare, Khapra Kodia Caves, Junagadh, Distt. Junagadh	2622	3765	8906
Haryana				
26.	Sheikh Chilli's tomb, Thanesar, Distt. Kurukshetra	211860 24\$	236045	222340
27.	Suraj Kund, Lakharpur, Distt. Faridabad	176080 4\$	193755 15\$	152375 6\$

1	2	3	4	5
Himachal Pradesh				
28.	Ruined fort, Kangra, Distt. Kangra	242760 12\$	294045 10\$	321465 10\$
29.	Rock-cut Temples and Sculptures, Masrur Distt. Kangra	85725 2\$	92265 2\$	88225 2\$
Jammu and Kashmir				
30.	Group of temples, Kiramchi, Distt. Udhampur	2935	2865	3020
31.	Ancient palaces attributed to Raja Suchet Singh, Ramnagar, Distt. Udhampur	10570	11240	8585
32.	Avantiswami temple, Avantipura, Distt. Pulwama	21125 52\$	45630	33230 64\$
33.	Ancient palace Leh, Distt. Leh (Ladakh)	49250 3304\$	146650 684\$	158075 552\$
Karnataka				
34.	Group of monuments, Hampi, Distt. Bellary	8412475	8290134	10125186
35.	Daryia Daulat Bagh, Srirangapatanam, Distt. Mandya	4702334	4829828	5657415
36.	Keshava temple, Somnathpur, Distt. Mysore	1416711	1431916	1833442
37.	Palace of Tipu Sultan, Bangalore, Distt. Bangalore	1061993	1213493	952299
38.	Fortress and Temple Citrudurga fort, Chitradurga, Distt. Chitradurga	1065055	735790	1132260
39.	Bellary fort, Bellary, Distt. Bellary	24330	16450	15627
40.	Durga temple, Aihole, Distt. Bagalkot	812115 2528\$	858215 2206\$	2351455 2666\$
41.	Cave at Badami, Distt. Bijapur	1318425 4612\$	1370580 3598\$	1900615 3172\$
42.	Group of temples, Pattadakal, Distt. Bagalkot	2152220 7640\$	2227450 7525\$	2811640 8955\$

1	2	3	4	5
43.	Gol-Gumbaz, Bijapur, Distt. Bijapur	3217460 962\$	3370900 846\$	3815815 908\$
44.	Ibrahim Rauza, Bijapur, Distt. Bijapur	758166 616\$	735440 514\$	758470 720\$
45.	Temples and Sculpture Gallery, Lakkundi, Distt. Gadag	42780 30\$	41390 254\$	51345 280\$
Kerala				
46.	Bekal Fort, Pallikere, Distt. Kasargod	644595	782715	740996
Madhya Pradesh				
47.	Western Group of Temples, Khajuraho, Distt. Chhatrapur	17544212	18316812	21112081
48.	The Palace in the fort, Burhanpur, Distt. Burhanpur	208855	204035	233705
49.	Buddhist Caves, Bagh, Distt. Dhar	81005	85450	72299
50.	Group of monuments, Mandu, Distt. Dhar	794799	910383	870627
51.	Roopmati's Pavilion, Mandu, Distt. Dhar	881909	896384	951689
52.	Hoshang Shah's tomb Mandu, Distt. Dhar	278229	266751	525871
53.	Buddhist Monuments, Sanchi, Distt. Raisen	4129347	4449577	5717935
54.	Gwalior Fort, Gwalior, Distt. Gwalior	1656769	1832426	1989884
55.	Bhojshala and Kamal Maula's mosque Dhar, Distt. Dhar	38787	17984	14496
Maharashtra				
56.	Ajanta Caves, Ajanta, Distt. Aurangabad	9225767	9172624	10265832
57.	Ellora Caves, Ellora, Distt. Aurangabad	7309930	6396845	6490855
58.	Pandulena Caves, Mahoor, Distt. Nanded	282166	289728	530405
59.	Daulatabad Fort, Daulatabad, Distt. Aurangabad	2196620	1879260	1816138

1	2	3	4	5
60.	Tomb of Rabia Durani (Bibi Ka Maqbara), Aurangabad, Distt. Aurangabad	3936935	4518383	5007460
61.	Aurangabad Caves, Aurangabad, Distt. Aurangabad	353321	342579	303249
62.	Elephanta Caves, Gharapuri, Distt. Raigad	4612950 65225\$	3823720 76395\$	3667320 84955\$
63.	Buddhist Caves, Kankeri, Distt. Mumbai Suburban	436790 994\$	282160 1246\$	318815 1382\$
64.	Caves, Temples and inscriptions, Karla, Distt. Pune	734900 374\$	584685 560\$	524915 488\$
65.	Cave, Temple and Inscriptions, Junnar, Distt. Pune	1042730 4\$	929390 24\$	972590 20\$
66.	Raigad Fort, Raigad, Distt. Raigad	428790	298170	296565 46\$
67.	Shaniwarwada, Pune, Distt. Pune	1512840 258\$	1715345 228\$	1890775 346\$
68.	Hirakota old fort, Agarkot, Distt. Raigad	149820	151560	163580
69.	Old fort, Sholapur, Distt. Sholapur	11850	9050	23680
70.	Cave, Temple and Inscriptions, Bhaja, Distt. Pune	223790 198\$	214525 330\$	190320 232\$
71.	Aga Khan Palace building, Pune, Distt. Pune	661070 216\$	710315 324\$	823370 296\$
NCT Delhi				
72.	Jantar Mantar	1946735 1810\$	2582621 2474\$	2613103 2052\$
73.	Khan-i-Khana	17455	14590	23410
74.	Purana Qila	3053745 1962\$	3385841 1890\$	3927225 1934\$

1	2	3	4	5
75.	Tughluqabad Fort	170800 358\$	157546 268\$	143570 66\$
76.	Kotla Feroz Shah	153655 10\$	231250 166\$	429140 92\$
77.	Safdarjung Tomb	1388650 1680\$	1538000 1916\$	2012180 1986\$
78.	Red Fort	18393110 48726\$	19993018 50384\$	22154345 46420\$
79.	Humayun's Tomb	26133080 281085\$	22985320 328990\$	27683930 306588\$
80.	Qutb Minar	36514080 686595\$	38318355 735620\$	46135033 910080\$
81.	Sultan Garhi	1125	1128	2375
Orissa				
82.	Sun Temple, Konarak, Distt. Puri	11192440	11024840	13459750
83.	Rajarani temple, Bhubaneshwer, Distt. Puri	131955	167300	248595
84.	Ancient Remains on both Udaigiri and Khandagiri hills, Bhubaneshwar, Distt. Khurda	913701	770245	1139315
85.	Ratnagiri Monuments, Ratnagiri Distt. Jaipur	67340	78425	102135
86.	Ruins of Buddhist temples and images, Lalitagiri, Distt. Cuttack	41205	41135	52750
Rajasthan				
87.	Deeg Bhawan, Deeg, Distt. Bharatpur	219728	199620	213847
88.	Kumbhalgarh fort, Kumbhalgarh, Distt. Rajasamand	1741413	1738873	1913976
89.	Chittaurgarh fort, Chittaurgarh Distt. Chittaurgarh	2866220	2850016	3064882

1	2	3	4	5
Tamil Nadu				
90.	Group of Monuments, Mamallapuram, Distt. Kanchipuram	13065790 61610\$	12624900 68070\$	16874430 102540\$
91.	Gingee fort, (Rajgird and Krishnagiri), Gingee, Distt. Villupuram	830580 170\$	869695 76\$	970415 186\$
92.	Fort, Dindigul, Distt. Dindigul	166080	163655	183805
93.	Muvarkoil, Kodumbalur, Distt. Pudukkottai	10605 56\$	14225 14\$	9480 4\$
94.	Rock-Cut Jain temple, Sittanavassal, Distt. Pudukkottai	93305 10\$	90975 9\$	97460 4\$
95.	Natural Cavern called Eladipallanan, Sittanavassal, Distt. Pudukkottai	90080 4\$	92920 12\$	83550 8\$
96.	Fort, Tirumayam, Distt. Pudukkottai	180395 12\$	144860 18\$	223910 16\$
97.	Fort St. George, Chennai, Distt. Chennai	578185 484\$	562560 1402\$	631670 1168\$
Uttar Pradesh				
98.	Taj Group of Monuments, Agra, Distt. Agra	114746030	132586354	148171080
99.	Agra Fort, Agra, Distt. Agra	73009245	63860470	78897025
100.	Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Distt. Agra	38538330	36137405	36969405
101.	Akbar's tomb, Sikandara, Agra, Distt. Agra	5784015	5337831	5262744
102.	Mariam's tomb, Sikandara, Agra, Distt. Agra	61030	73043	47325
103.	Itimad-ul-Daula's tomb, Agra, Distt. Agra	4087194	4237972	4125771
104.	Rambagh group of monuments, Agra, Distt. Agra	61930	76770	123580
105.	Mehtab Bagh, Agra, Distt. Agra	64866	161896	365810
106.	Rani Lakshmi Bai Mahal, Jhansi, Distt. Agra	554470 242\$	594314 514\$	731952

1	2	3	4	5
107.	Rani Lakshmi Bai Mahal, Jhansi, Distt. Jhansi	38170 12\$	42885 20\$	59202
108.	Site of Sahet-Mahet, Distt. Sravastinagar	121405 27164\$	934760 43540\$	4626781
109.	Residency Buildings, Lucknow, Distt. Lucknow	64505 362\$	875761 376\$	962338
110.	Buddhist Site, Samath, Distt. Varanasi	2135375 132138\$	2131025 155360\$	1448525 179046\$
111.	Observatory of Man Singh, Varanasi, Distt. Varanasi	24900	51845	27115
112.	Lord Cornwallis Tomb, Ghazipur, Distt. Ghazipur	24690	28590	24760
113.	Old fort, Jaunpur, Distt. Jaunpur	298365 46\$	304815 26\$	386520 36\$
West Bengal				
114.	Hazarduari palace, Killa Nizamat, Distt. Murshidabad	1761210	1796840	1942245
115.	Cooch Bihar Palace, Cooch Behar, Distt. Cooch Behar,	887695	1091080	1232540
116.	Bishnupur Temples, Bishnupur, Distt. Bankuar	335175	390740	419514
Total : (A) Indian Currency –		466253453	476814555	541885122
(B) US Dollar –		1384857\$	1552192\$	17,56,868\$
\$in Indian Currency (US \$ = Rs. 45/-)		62318565	69848640	79059060
Grand Total (In Indian Currency)		52,85,72,018	54,66,63,195	63,03,63,182

[English]

of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

Printed Railway Tickets

(a) whether the Railways are aware that in many of the small railway stations printed railway tickets from one destination to another short distances are not readily

4093. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY : Will the Minister

available and the passengers are forced to purchase tickets by the railway authorities beyond their destinations by paying higher fares;

(b) If so, whether the Railways have taken any steps to ensure adequate availability of printed tickets to all destinations; and

(c) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) There are no reports of issue of tickets for longer destinations due to non-availability of printed card tickets.

(b) Regular indenting of tickets and availability of adequate stock is monitored by Zonal Railways.

(c) Does not arise.

Incentives of Tourism Industry

4094. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether new ten-year no-tax regime has been proposed for tourism industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to encourage investments from non-tourism sector through a package of incentives;

(d) if so the details thereof; and

(e) the other steps proposed to be taken to promote tourism projects in the country particularly in hilly/rural areas and pilgrim centers?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (d) The Ministry of Finance in their budget proposal 2007-08 has proposed income tax holiday for hotels for a period of five years. The incentive is available for hotels in the 2, 3 and 4-star category which would complete construction between

1-4-2007 upto 31-3-2010. The incentive is only available in NCT Delhi, districts of Gurgaon, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Gautam Budh Nagar. There is subsidy assistance available for 1 to 3 star category hotels and subsidy to Large Revenue Generating projects under the schemes of the Ministry of Tourism.

(e) The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion) have announced packages for the hill States of Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal by way of concessions under Excise Duty, Income Tax Exemption and Investment Subsidy etc. for certain identified thrust industries, including Eco-Tourism industries set up in these States. The Ministry of Tourism under its various schemes provide financial assistance for the development of rural tourism and pilgrim centres. Under the North East Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy (NEIIPP), 2007, hotels (not below 2 star category), adventure and leisure sports including ropeways are eligible for all incentives.

Employment to Ex-servicemen

4095. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to absorb ex-servicemen in different jobs in the corporate and other sectors;

(b) if so, whether any action plan has been prepared in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU) : (a) to (c) Ministry of Defence has decided to observe the Year 2007 as the Year of Placement of Ex-servicemen'. A target for the placement of about 30,000 ex-servicemen during the year in Central Government/State Governments/Private Sector has been made. To achieve this objective, Director General, Resettlement has launched a special drive which

also envisages organization of seminars and close interaction with the industries and business houses for seeking their assistance in orienting and providing employment to ex-servicemen in the increasing opportunities in the private sector.

Profit Earned by IGL

4096. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the profit earned by Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) during each of the last three years as on date; and

(b) the expansion plan of IGL for the next three years particularly 2007-08, City-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) AS per Audited Accounts of the last three financial years, Profit After Tax (PAT) of IGL has been as under:-

Financial Year Ended	Rupees (in Crores)
March 31, 2004	82.19
March 31, 2005	92.68
March 31, 2006	106.14

(b) IGL has drawn up expansion plans to consolidate/augment both its CNG and PNG infrastructure. The development plan by IGL are as follows:-

NCT of Delhi:

Opening of additional new CNG Stations planned

Financial Year	Number of CNG Stations
1	2
2007-08	10

1	2
2008-09	10
2009-10	10

Planned increase in additional Compression Capacity

Financial Year	Compression Capacity (Lacs kg/day)
2007-08	2.60
2008-09	2.60
2009-10	2.60

Addition of new PNG Customers planned

Financial Year	Number of PNG Customers
2007-08	60,000
2008-09	80,000
2009-10	1,00,000

IGL has focussed to cover the entire Delhi with PNG network in a phased manner.

Greater Noida :

- (i) IGL has planned to open 2 number of CNG filling stations and to start construction work for 3 CNG stations.
- (ii) IGL has planned to provide 1500 number of domestic connections.

Ghaziabad :

It is planned to open 2 number of CNG filling stations in the year 2007-08.

Sonipat and Panipat:

IGL has received NOC from Haryana Government for setting up city gas distribution network in the cities of Sonipat and Panipat. IGL is in the process of carrying out feasibility studies and based on the feasibility studies the expansion plans shall be worked out.

**Establishment of Multi-Model Railway
Corridors**

4097. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to establish multi-model Railway corridors in 65 districts of the country as reported in 'Dainik Tribune' dated February 15, 2007;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal and districts selected in each State;

(c) whether these corridors are being established with the co-operation of China and Japan;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the benefits likely to accrue to the Railways by way of providing employment and revenue generation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) Indian Railways propose to construct Dedicated Freight Corridors on the Western Corridor from Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), Mumbai to Tughlakabad and Dadri and Eastern Corridor from Ludhiana to Sonnagar to be extended in future to Kolkata to serve a proposed Deep Sea Port in Kolkata area.

The Western Corridor passes through Thane and Raigarh districts in Maharashtra; Valsad, Navsari, Surat, Bharuch, Vadodara, Kheda, Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Mahesana and Banas Kantha districts in Gujarat; Sirohi,

Pali, Ajmer, Nagaur, Jaipur, Alwar and Sikar districts of Rajasthan; Mahendragarh (Namaul), Rewari, Gurgaon and Faridabad districts of Haryana; South Delhi district of Delhi and Gautam Budhnagar district of Uttar Pradesh.

The Eastern Corridor from Sonnagar to Ludhiana passes through the Aurangabad, Rohtas (Sasaram), Kaimur (Bhabua) districts of Bihar, Chandauli, Varanasi, Mirzapur, Allahabad, Kausambi, Fatehpur, Kanpur (Urban), Kanpur (Rural), Auraiya, Etawah, Ferozabad, Agra, Hathras, Aligarh, Bulandshahar, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budhnagar, Meerut, Muzaffar Nagar, Saharanpur districts of Uttar Pradesh; Yamuna Nagar, Ambala districts of Haryana and Patiala, Fatehnagar Sahib, Ludhiana districts of Punjab.

(c) and (d) A feasibility study is being done by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

(e) The two corridors will enable Railways to carry additional traffic on the busy trunk routes, generating additional revenues. Employment generation will be during the construction of projects and afterwards for maintenance of track and other infrastructure and assets.

Expansion and Renovation of Railway Stations

4098. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH :

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the railway stations in the country particularly in Orissa, Gujarat and Karnataka where expansion and renovation works have been started during 2005-06 and 2006-07;

(b) the expenditure incurred thereon, station-wise, and

(c) the names of railway stations on which such work is proposed to be undertaken during 2007-08 in these States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) There are more than 8000 railway stations on Indian Railways. Upgradation/renovation/modernisation of railway stations is a continuous process and the same is undertaken every year in accordance with the laid down norms based on traffic growth and inter-se priorities. A large number of new works is sanctioned every year for various stations and these along with the 'works in progress' under Plan Head 'Passenger Amenities' are exhibited in the works Machinery and Rolling Stock Programme, Part II presented every year in the Parliament alongwith Budget documents. In addition, improvements at stations are also carried out as a part of 'Doublings', 'Traffic Facility works', 'Gauge Conversions', 'Computerisation' etc. under relevant Plan Heads. However, the name of stations of Orissa, Gujarat and Karnataka States where the work relating to expansion and renovation were started during 2005-06 and 2006-07 are follows:-

Gujarat — Ahmedabad, Anand, Ankaleshwar, Bharuch, Bhilad, Dharangadhra, Gandhi dham, Jamnagar, Hapa, Mahesana, Palanpur, Nadiad, Godhra, Okha, Rajkot, Bhakti nagar, Surendranagar, Vadodara, Varedia Virangam, Wankamer, Navesari, Valsad, Vapi, Bilimora, Amalsad, Bhavnagar, Porbander, Bhuj, Botad, Dahod, Vakor, Dhola, Joravanager, Dwarka, Junagarh, Veravalnagar, Kosamba, Kim, Patej, Miyagam, Karjan, Vasad, Mehemdabad, Moneynagar Navgadh, Samakhiali, Songadh, Surat and Udhna.

Karnataka — Mangalore, Kanakuadi, Hubli, Bangalore Cantt., Yesbantpur, Tumkur, Mandya, Belgaon, Bellary, Hospet, Mysore, Danangere Haver, Bangalore city, Bidar, Bunder, Bhalki, Udgir, Raichur, Scram, Yadgir, Halbnharga, Kamalanagar, Chitapur, Mari, Chethal, Nalwar, Chiksugar, Kurgunta, Nawandgi, Malkhedroad, Nandalur, Gutbarga, Shahbad, Wadi, Gangapur, Murtur and Sevalgi.

Orissa — Bamra, Balasore, Rourkela, Jharsugauda, Panposh, Rajganpur, Rayagada, Singapur Road, Damanjodi, Tikri, Koraput, Sambalpur, Titlaragh,

Balangir, Kantabanji, Kesinga, Berhampur, Puri, Khurda Road, Bhaubaneswar, Cuttack, Balugaon, Chatrapur, Delang, Maltipatpur, Mancheswar, Dhenkanal, Talcher, Angul, Bhadrak, Jajpurkeonjhar Road, Sakhigopal and Birpurusotampur.

(b) The Railway Budget is prepared Railway zone-wise and not station-wise. Hence, the approximate expenditure zone-wise under Plan head "Passenger Amenities" during 2005-06 and 2006-07 (upto March, 2007) is as under:-

(In Rs. Crore)

Railway	Expenditure 2005-06 (Approx.)	Expenditure upto March, 2007 (Approx.)
1	2	3
Central	17.78	33.96
Eastern	14.13	37.16
Northern	28.16	43.08
North Eastern	10.44	15.81
Northeast Frontier	19.85	32.22
Southern	25.82	43.14
South Central	34.12	39.28
South Eastern	10.23	9.81
Western	17.75	28.00
East Central	24.98	20.91
East Coast	5.28	10.42
North Central	4.57	8.03
North Western	9.10	20.92
South East Central	12.62	16.84

1	2	3
South Western	8.26	18.83
West Central	12.02	14.75
Metro	1.12	0.99
TOTAL	256.23	394.15

(c) Name of Railway Stations on which expansion and renovation works are to be undertaken during 2007-08 have not yet been planned.

Withdrawal of EMU/DMU Trains

4099. SHRI JUAL ORAM : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the EMU and DMU trains running between Rupsa and Baripada in Orissa have been withdrawn;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Railways have any proposal to run those trains again keeping in view the problems of the commuters; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Trains on Rupsa-Baripada section (52 Kms) are running on "one train only" system. As announced in Rail Budget 2006-2007, 2891/2892 Bhubaneswar-Baripada Express (tri-weekly) has been introduced from 31.03.2007. Considering safety aspects on Rupsa-Baripada section, 1RB and 4RB Rupsa-Baripada DEMU have been withdrawn on the days of running of 2891/2892 Bhubaneswar-Baripada Express (Tri-weekly) (i.e 1RB on Monday, Thursday and Saturday and 4RB on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday) upto 30.06.2007.

Service of Train Superintendents

4100. SHRI M. SHIVANNA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the services of Train Superintendents in some trains particularly in Karnataka Express, Yeshwantpur-Nizamuddin Trains have been withdrawn causing inconvenience to the passengers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the reaction of the Railways for restoration of the services of Train Superintendents in the said trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The post of Train Superintendent has been withdrawn from Mail/Express trains having Rajdhani type features including Karnataka Express, as the scheme did not prove beneficial and could not achieve the desired results as envisaged in the scheme as single point interface with the passengers. There is no proposal to restore the post of Train Superintendent in Karnataka Express or any other nominated Mail/Express trains as monitoring of on-board deficiencies and attending to passenger complaints/grievances by train manning staff, is already working satisfactorily.

Restructuring of Petroleum Sector

4101. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has taken any steps for restructuring in the petroleum sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made so far as a result thereof?

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

Synergy in Energy (ACSE) under the Chairmanship of Dr. V. Krishnamurthy submitted its report in July, 2005 with recommendations on policy and structural changes and also suggesting certain management solutions for improved performance of the oil companies in the public sector.

In line with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Synergy in Energy, Kochi Refineries Limited (KRL) has been merged with its holding company Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL). The merger of IBP Company with Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) is in the final stage. Steps have been initiated for the merger of Bongaigoan Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (BRPL) with IOC.

Government has approved the building of 5 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) strategic crude oil reserves at three locations at (i) Mangalore (1.5 MMT), (ii) Vizag (1.0 MMT), and (iii) Mangalore or nearby location (2.5 MMT). In-principal decision has also been taken to construct 15 MMT of strategic storage in phases.

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) Act, 2006 was notified in the Gazette of India on 3.04.2006.

Data of SCs/STs Employed by Corporate Industry

4102. DR. M. JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has asked the Organizations/Associations of Indian Corporate Industry to publish the data relating to SC/ST recruits employed by them in their Annual Reports by the end of March, 2007; and

(b) if so, the response of the Organisations/Associations of Indian Corporate Industry thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN) : (a) and (b) As a part of the dialogue on Affirmative Action for Scheduled Casts (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) with the apex industry and trade associations, it was suggested to explore whether data on SC/STs recruited from 1.1.2007 could be incorporated in the Annual Report of 2006-07. Some Associations of Industry and Trade have informed that efforts would be made to include data of SCs and STs recruited from 01.01.2007 in the annual reports of the corporates.

Anti Fog Equipment at Delhi Domestic Airport

4103. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether only Indira Gandhi International Airport is equipped with CAT-II and CAT-III facilities;

(b) whether the domestic airport of Delhi is not equipped with these facilities;

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

(d) the remedial measures taken / proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) Runway 28 of Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) is equipped with ILS CAT IIIB which serves both for domestic and international flights.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Tourism Schemes

4104. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the detail of the ongoing tourism schemes fully and partially funded by the Government, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government is working on a scheme for upgradation development of tourist places and for equipping them with new public amenities; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The ongoing schemes of the Ministry of Tourism including schemes for upgradation and development of tourist places are as follows:-

1. Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits including Rural Tourism
2. Assistance to Large Revenue Generating Projects
3. Computerization and IT
4. Events/Fair/Festivals

[English]

Trial Run of DMU with Compressed Natural Gas

4105. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have conducted trial run of DMU with Compressed Natural Gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the operating costs of CNG based DMU is lower in financial terms;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Railways to use CNG in their commercial operations?

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

(b) One Diesel Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) has been converted into dual fuel engine with Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) at Diesel Shed, Shakurbasti and the trial runs with CNG are being conducted on Delhi - Rohtak, Delhi - Rewari and Delhi - Shamli Sections.

(c) Yes, Sir. In financial terms, the operating cost of CNG based DEMU is lower than that of the diesel based DEMU.

(d) The operating cost of CNG based DEMU is expected to be 25% lower than that of diesel based DEMU.

(e) Once the initial technology proving runs with single end is over, one full rake of DEMU will be converted to CNG for extended trials. Commercial operations are contemplated once trials are fully successful.

A project for conversion of 100 DEMUs into CNG based dual fuel mode DEMUs has been undertaken for proliferation of CNG based DEMUs.

Computerised Railway Reservation Counter at all Airports in India

4106. SHRI M. APPADURAI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways plan to open a computerised railway ticket reservation counter in all Airports in India for the convenience of Air travellers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said scheme is likely to be implemented?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Railway Package Tour for Shirdi

4107. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) propose to formulate a railway package tour for world famous Shirdi Dham located in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said package tour has been finalized;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the said package tour is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is already providing a package tour for Sai Baba Shirdi Dham from Secunderabad/Hyderabad. This tour covers other places of tourist interest of Maharashtra like Ajanta, Ellora Temples, Aurangabad city and Daulatabad Fort.

[English]

**Delhi High Court Committee on
Railway Catering Service**

4108. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Delhi High Court appointed monitoring committee which conducted surprise checks on

five private kitchens supplying food to passengers travelling on Rajdhani, Shatabdi trains as reported in The Times of India dated April 18, 2007;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the said committee has submitted its report;

(d) if so, the measures suggested by the said committee to revamp the present method of serving food in these trains; and

(e) the steps taken by the Railways to implement the suggestion made by the said monitoring committee?

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

(b) As per the order of the hon'ble High court of Delhi, the members of the committee have conducted physical inspection of some base kitchens of service providers.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The committee has pointed out certain deficiencies and has made some suggestions. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is examining the suggestions for improvement.

(e) IRCTC has initiated intensive quality inspection, maintenance of hygiene, International Standards Organisation (ISO) certification, food audit etc. Action on the suggestions made by the committee will be initiated after detailed examination and subject to practical feasibility.

Dedicated Freight Corridors

4109. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE :
SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways propose to associate IIM-Calcutta with the work of preparing business plan for setting up dedicated freight corridors;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (c) Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Kolkata has been engaged to prepare Market Analysis Study for the Dedicated Freight Corridor Project. The study Report is to be completed by IIM Kolkata in a timeframe of 6 months.

Railway Line from Edappally to Vallarpadam

4110. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a railway line has been sanctioned from Edappally to Vallarpadam near Kochi; and

(b) If so, the details thereof and the time by which the work on this line is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) Yes, Sir. Department of Shipping, Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways, Government of India has sanctioned the work of construction of a new line from Vallarpadam to Idappally costing Rs. 245 crore as a deposit work to be executed by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL), a PSU under the Ministry of Railways.

(b) The construction of Railway works has commenced from 21.02.2007.

Allocation of Funds to NMDFC

4111. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the total allocation made to the National

Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) during 2005-2006 and 2006-2007;

(b) whether the funds allocated during the above period were fully utilized;

(c) if, so the details thereof;

(d) whether the amount sanctioned was sufficient to meet the growing demand for upliftment of minorities in the country;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether NMDFC is facing financial crunch to meet its obligation to minorities; and

(g) if so, the steps taken or being taken by the Government to allocate more funds to NMDFC for upliftment to minorities in the country?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) and (b) The budget provision for equity contribution to NMDFC during 2005-06 and 2006-07 was Rs. 25.00 and Rs. 18.29 crores respectively, which were released to NMDFC.

(c) The disbursement and coverage by NMDFC during the two years were as follows:-

Year	Amount (in Rs. Crores)	Beneficiaries (Nos)
2005-06	Rs. 108.12	34301
2006-07	Rs. 112.75	47783

(d) to (g) The allocation for equity contribution to NMDFC has been raised to Rs. 70 Crores during 2007-2008.

New System in Trains to Prevent Accidents

4112. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways have prepared a new system in trains to prevent accidents as happened in Samjhauta Express;

(b) if so, the details of new system alongwith expenditure to be incurred thereon;

(c) the trains in which such new system is to be installed initially; and

(d) the time by which such new system is to be introduced in trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, following steps have been taken/are being taken to provide adequate security at all the important railway stations.

1. Modern security gadgets like-Close Circuit Televisions and Cameras, Deep Search Metal Detectors, Scanner Machines, etc. are being installed.
2. Number of trained Sniffer Dogs are being/have been deployed for checking of Coaches, Parcels, Baggage, station area and searching of explosives.
3. Announcements over Public Address system as well as by Mega Phones by Railway Protection Force to alert the public in coaches.
4. Use of Door Frame Metal Detectors and Hand Held Metal Detectors to check the passenger's belongings in trains and at stations.
5. Access control has been introduced in coordination with Government Railway Police.
6. Presence of Railway Protection Force/Government Railway Police staff at sensitive stations have been augmented.

7. Communication system of Railway Protection Force has been improved by providing Mobile phones, walkie-talkies, Very High Frequency sets etc.

8. Escorting of all the important trains including Rajdhani/Shatabdi is being done by the Railway Protection Force personnel round the clock.

9. To mitigate the impact of a fire incident to some extent, Indian Railways are continuously improving material used in coaches to make them more and more fire retardant and less toxic in the event of burning to reduce chances of damage caused by the fire.

10. Rupees 121,63,11,640/- to be spent on vetted and sanctioned proposals during 2007-08.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Quick Service Food Kiosks at Railway Stations

4113. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is introducing quick service food kiosks at different railway stations in the country;

(b) if so, the details alongwith the railway stations where these are likely to be opened; and

(c) the terms and conditions on which these will be allotted to the contractors?

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

(b) The stations earmarked so far for operation of Quick Service Food Kiosks by Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) are, Delhi Main (Old Delhi), Chandigarh, Pune, Vijayawada and Bangalore.

(c) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has empanelled a group of reputed and branded firms for operation of Quick Service Food Kiosks based on certain eligibility criteria. Financial bids are invited from those firms so empanelled with IRCTC and the highest bidder is awarded the contract.

Second Airport near Delhi

4114. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government to set up second domestic airport near Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Confrontation between Civilians and Army

4115. SHRI RAKESH SINGH : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there have been incidents of confrontation between Civilians and Army due to lack of co-ordination as has been said in a report of National Defence Academy and the main reason attributed for it has been the shortcomings in the training of army personnel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to make reforms in training programme for better coordination between the Army and Civilians; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A. K. ANTONY) :

(a) The Government is not aware of any such report of National Defence Academy.

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

(c) and (d) Improvements in training of service personnel is an on going process. Training in Civil-Military relations is already a part of the military training syllabi.

Illegal Petrol/Diesel Outlets

4116. SHRI JIVABHAI PATEL :

SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV :

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

(a) whether the Union Government is aware that some petrol and diesel outlets are operating illegally in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it has come to the notice of the Union Government that some of the State Governments have issued licences to petty dealers and utility pumps for retailing petrol/diesel in the rural areas;

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

(e) the action taken/being taken by the Union Government against the illegal petrol/ diesel retail outlets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. Government have received reports of the existence of petty dealers or barrel storage points for retailing diesel/petrol in rural areas. Some State Governments such as Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal have issued licences for petty

dealers or barrel storage points for retailing diesel/petrol in rural areas. As these are not in consonance with the provisions of Motor Spirit and High Speed Diesel Control Order, 2005, the State Governments have been asked to take necessary steps to identify and close such unauthorized pumps. With a view to meet the demand of agricultural sector in rural areas, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have been asked to set up low cost retail outlets in rural areas on commercial considerations. OMCs are setting up low cost retail outlets in rural areas like, Kisan Seva Kendra by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., Hamara Pump by Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. and Rural Outlet by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.

[English]

Pantry Car Facility in Trains

4117. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA :
SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria laid down for providing pantry car facilities in trains;

(b) the name of trains in which pantry car facility has been provided during 2006-07;

(c) whether many long distance trains still do not have pantry car facility; and

(d) if so, the steps taken/to be taken to provide modern pantry car in each and every long distance train alongwith name of trains selected for provision of such facility during 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (d) Attachment of pantry cars to trains is based on various consideration such as priority of trains, journey time, commercial justification, availability of pantry cars, etc. A statement indicating details

of trains to which pantry cars have been attached during 2006-07 (upto 28.02.2007), is enclosed.

Statement

S.No.	Train No.	Train Name
1.	2453-54	Ranchi Rajdhani Exp.
2.	2345-46	Saraighat Exp.
3.	8509-10	Visakhapatnam Nizamabad Exp.
4.	2161-62	Lashkar Exp.
5.	2173-74	Udyognagar Exp.
6.	2153-54	Lokmanya Tilak Terminal-Habibganj Exp.
7.	6531-32	Garib Nawaz Exp.
8.	6733-34	Madurai Manmad Exp.
9.	1097-98	Pooma Exp.
10.	2829-30	Chennai-Bhubaneswar Exp.
11.	2897-98	Pondicherry-Bhubaneswar Exp.
12.	8563-64	Prashanti Exp.
13.	8473-74	Puri - Jodhpur Exp.
14.	2845-46	Bhubaneswar - Yesvantpur Exp.

Railway Network

4118. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a great imbalance in the country regarding railway network while on the one hand there are thousands kilometre long rail lines in certain States and on the other hand the length of rail line is negligible or almost negligible;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways propose to lay rail lines in the States where there is a acute shortage of railway network; and

(d) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) to (d) The national average of route kms. per 1000 square kms. of the area is 19.26 as on 31.03.2006. There are States which are below national average in respect of track route km. A number of new line projects are in progress in various States. However, there is no specific policy to bring all States at par with the national average so far as route length, per 1000 square km. of the area is concerned.

Decline in Domestic Production of Petroleum Products

4119. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE :
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL :

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

(a) whether there is decline in domestic production of petroleum products in the country but increase in the profit earned;

(b) if so, the details of the decline and profit earned during each of the last three years;

(c) the details of probable fall in the production of petroleum products from the existing oil fields and wells during the next five years; and

(d) the manner in which the Government proposes to meet the challenge in fall of production in domestic field and increase in income?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : (a) There is no decline in the domestic production of petroleum products in the country. However, there is a decline in the profit earned in some of the oil companies.

(b) The details are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(c) The details are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(d) Several steps have been taken/are in hand to accelerate hydrocarbon exploration and production activities in the country, which includes the following:-

- (i) Carving out more and more areas for exploration for offer under various rounds of NELP.
- (ii) Quicker development of discovered reserves for enabling 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 from ageing fields.
- (vi) Acquisition of exploration acreages and producing properties overseas to bring in equity oil.
- (vii) Substitution of oil through use of non-conventional source of energy such as bio-diesel, ethanol, etc.

Statement-I

Details of the production of crude oil, gas and petroleum products in the country during the last three years is as follows:-

Year	Total crude oil production (MMT)	Total gas production (MMSCM)	Total production of petroleum products (MMT)
1	2	3	4
2003-04	33.369	87.3	117.641

1	2	3	4
2004-05	33.980	87.0	122.749
2005-06	32.187	88.2	124.080

The details of the net profit earned after tax by various oil companies during each of the last three years are as follows:-

(Rs. in crores)

Name of the company	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Indian Oil Corporation Limited	7,004.82	4,891.38	4,915.12
Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited*	16,946.00	9,658.00	2,916.00
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited	1,903.94	1,177.33	405.63
Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited	8,664.40	12,983.00	14,430.80
Oil India Limited	949.70	1,061.68	1,689.93

Note : The audited statement for 2006-07 is yet to be received.

*After adjusting prior revised tax

Statement-II

Probable production plans for the XI Five Year Plan period i.e. 2007-2012 with respect to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Oil India Limited (OIL) and Pvt./Joint ventures are as under:

Crude oil Production (MMT) :

Year	ONGC	OIL	Pvt/JVs	Total
1	2	3	4	5
2007-08	27.16	3.75	10.57	41.48

1	2	3	4	5
2008-09	28.00	4.05	10.78	42.83
2009-10	29.00	4.73	9.76	43.49
2010-11	28.53	5.44	8.75	42.72
2011-12	27.37	5.90	7.85	41.11

MMT : million metric tonne.

Gas Production (BCM) :

Year	ONGC	OIL	Pvt/JVs	Total
2007-08	22.10	3.13	8.55	33.78
2008-09	22.53	3.21	22.55	48.29
2009-10	22.77	3.25	22.11	48.13
2010-11	22.99	3.28	21.47	47.73
2011-12	22.00	3.56	21.07	46.63

BCM : billion cubic metre.

Maintenance of National Rail Museum, Delhi

4120. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railways are providing any assistance for the upkeep and maintenance of national Rail Museum, Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also proposed to upgrade the museum;

(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) Yes, Sir.

(b) National Rail Museum is managed by officers and staff of Indian Railways. The Ministry of Railways provides budget for all the activities of National Rail Museum including maintenance of National Rail Museum premises, preservation of artifacts, heritage related activities etc.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Upgradation of the museum is an on-going process. Presently, initiative has been taken to cover all the life size exhibits with canopies to protect them from weathering. Remodeling of indoor gallery is being done to improve the display of artifacts inside the gallery.

(e) Does not arise.

Road Projects by BRO

4121. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of roads constructed alongwith the on-going projects being implemented by Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in the country during the last three years;

(b) the amount sanctioned/spent on the projects alongwith the present status thereof, project-wise; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) :

(a) to (c) Border Roads Organisation (BRO) have constructed 1710 Kms, 1581 Kms and 1910 Kms of road in 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 respectively. Presently, BRO is engaged in the construction/improvement of 525 roads of operational importance and agency works sponsored by other Ministries/departments as per details given below:-

S. No.	Name of Project	Name of State covered	No. of roads under Construction/ improvement
1.	Himank	Jammu and Kashmir	42
2.	Beacon	Jammu and Kashmir	58
3.	Samprak	Jammu and Kashmir	94
4.	Deepak	Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand	29
5.	Chetak	Rajasthan and Punjab	72
6.	Hirak	Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Andaman Nicobar	05
7.	Dantak	Meghalaya and Sikkim	55
8.	Vartak	Arunachal Pradesh and Assam	60
9.	Udayak	Arunachal Pradesh	28
10.	Sewak	Manipur and Nagaland	30
11.	Setuak	Tripura	16
12.	Pushpak	Mizoram	32

Works on the sanctioned road projects are progressed as per priority accorded to it by Army or sponsoring agencies and availability of budget each year. The above projects is as under:-

Year	Amount Sanctioned (Rs. in Crs)	Amount Spent (Rs. in Crs)
2004-2005	1812.26	1550.23
2005-2006	1901.74	1629.42
2006-2007	2250.66	2139.34

All the sanctioned road projects are planned for completion between 2007-2015.

[Translation]

**Plan for Preservation of Historical
Monuments**

4122. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR :
SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI :

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has prepared any action plan for the preservation of important archaeological monuments, ancient artefacts lying neglected;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has identified these neglected archaeological monuments; and

(d) if so, the names of the neglected archaeological monuments of the Maharashtra State to be included by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (d) The Archaeological Survey of India has an Annual Conservation Plan for taking up conservation, preservation, maintenance and environmental development of the Monuments of national importance. During the year 2007-08, an amount of Rs. 115.32 crores has been earmarked for this purpose.

There are 3667 notified monuments of national importance which includes 286 monuments in the state of maharashtra. They are in a good state of preservation.

[English]

**Setting-up of Cyber Cafes and Telecom
Centres at Railway Stations**

4123. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Rail Tel has been authorized to set up cyber cafes and telecom centres at various railway stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of such cyber cafes and telecom centres set so far during Phase-I and Phase-II, zone-wise;

(d) whether the Railway provide such cafes on franchisee basis; and

(e) if so, criteria fixed for allotment of such franchisee by the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) and (b) The RailTel has been authorized to set up cyber cafes alone at selected stations. 82 stations have so far been identified for setting up of such cafes with a view providing high speed internet browsing, e-mail, audio-video chatting, internet telephony etc.

(c) The list of the cyber cafes so far set up during phase-I and phase-II is enclosed as statement.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The allotment criteria has been laid down vide this Ministry's commercial circular no. 03/TGIV/10/Cyber Cafe Policy/23 dated 24.2.2004.

Statement

List of Cyber Cafes set up in Phase-I and Phase-II

S.No.	Name of the Stations	Zonal Railways
1	2	3
Phase-I		
1.	Asansol	Eastern Railway
2.	Gorakhpur	North Eastern Railway

1	2	3
3.	Chandigarh	Northern Railway
4.	Delhi	
5.	Jhansi	North Central Railway
6.	Hyderabad	South Central Railway
7.	Guntur	
8.	Bangalore	South Western Railway
9.	Pune	Central Railway
10.	Nagpur	
Phase-II		
1.	Howrah	Eastern Railway
2.	Sealdah	
3.	Jaipur	North Western Railway
4.	Jodhpur	
5.	Secunderabad	South Central Railway
6.	Vijayawada	
7.	Coimbatore	Southern Railway
8.	Ernakulam	
9.	Ahmedabad	Western Railway

Tourist Courts

4124. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the number of foreign tourists attacked/killed during the last two years and the current year, State-wise;

(b) whether such incidents have adversely affected the flow of tourists;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any guidelines have been issued to the State Governments;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether it is proposed to set up tourist courts to dispose of tourist - related issues at the earliest; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) Safety and security is State subject and data in this regard is not compiled by the Ministry of Tourism.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. In the year 2006 the country received 4429915(P) Foreign Tourists as compared to 3918610 in 2005 i.e., an increase of 13%.

(d) and (e) To ensure the safety and security of foreign tourists the Ministry of Tourism has advised the State Governments to deploy Tourist Police at important tourist destination. The States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, Kerala, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi etc., have deployed Tourist Police force in one form or another.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) Does not arise.

Construction of Railway Guest Houses

4125. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of accommodations available in Rail Yatri Niwas and railway guest houses in various parts of the country particularly in Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether the Railways are aware that the existing railway accommodations are not sufficient to meet the increasing growth of passenger traffic;

(c) if so, whether the Railways have any proposal to construct more railway guest houses in various stations particularly in Tamil Nadu; and

(d) if so, the details and locations thereof alongwith the targeted time for its completion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) On Indian Railways, two Rail Yatri Niwas at New Delhi and Howrah stations and two BNR Hotels at Puri and Ranchi are functioning under Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporations (IRCTC) and these have 145 rooms and 31 dormitories and no Rail Yatri Niwas or Railway Hotels are located in Tamil Nadu State. In addition, retiring rooms are available at about 490 stations out of which these are available at 48 stations in Tamil Nadu State.

(b) to (d) In order to meet the requirement of the passengers this Ministry has decided to setup 100 Budget Hotels over Indian Railways at various locations, including Tamil Nadu, near to railway stations through public private partnership following open tender and competitive bidding system. The locations at Madurai, Rameshwaram, Kanniyakumari, Ooty, Chennai Central, Chennai Egmore, Coimbatore and Kodai Kanal Road in Tamil Nadu territory have been identified. Tenders for Budget Hotels locations at Madurai, Rameshwaram, Kanniyakumari and Ooty, have been finalized and awarded to successful bidders. No target time have been fixed for completion of these Budget Hotels. Provision of retiring rooms at railway stations is an on going process.

[Translation]

Revival of Instrumentation Limited

4126. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL : Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Board for Reconstruction for Public

Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) has recommended a proposal for revival of Instrumentation Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The revival proposal recommended by Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) envisages inter-alia cash assistance and non-cash assistance in form of waivers and conversion of loan into equity.

(c) The proposal is under active consideration of the Government.

[English]

Farm Tourism

4127. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are great prospects of farm tourism in many States including Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the effective and specific steps taken by the Government to encourage farm tourism in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) to (c) Ministry of Tourism has been working towards development and promotion of identified rural sites having potential in culture/handicraft/handlooms/farm products such as spices etc. The ongoing schemes for tourism infrastructure development and capacity building also help promote Farm tourism.

**Task Force on Civic Needs of Minority
Community**

4128. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has set up a high level inter-Ministerial task force to look into the civic needs of the minority communities in towns and cities where they live in large number;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time fixed for task force to submit its report to the Government;

(d) whether the Government has identified the cities and towns where the civic needs of the minorities are to be addressed;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the areas likely to be covered by the task force in the name of civic amenities;

(g) whether task force has been asked to review the existing scheme, flow of funds to these towns;

(h) if so, the details thereof; and

(i) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to get the report of the task force for early implementation?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) to (i) Yes, Sir. The terms of reference of the inter-Ministerial Task Force on implications of the geographical distribution of minorities in India constituted on 2.3.2007 area as under:-

(i) To identify towns/cities having a substantial concentration of minority population requiring special attention;

(ii) To formulate the approach for multi-sectoral

plan for provision of basic civic amenities such as housing, schools and educational facilities, health facilities and employment opportunities for urban localities having a substantial concentration of minority population, within such towns/cities;

(iii) To identify existing schemes/programmes from which funds could be channelized to such localities for implementation of multi-sectoral plans; and

(iv) To suggest special schemes for funding the resource gap of projects included in the multi-sectoral plan and also for funding specific projects which are not covered under any of the existing scheme/programmes.

The Task Force is expected to submit its report within a period of three months.

[Translation]

**Construction of Under-Bridge at Major
Railway Crossings**

4129. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a wastage of time, petrol and diesel at various places due to level crossings remain closed for long period;

(b) if so, whether the Railways propose to make a special provision for construction of under-bridge at major railway crossings to stop the said wastage and for the convenience of lakhs of commuters; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) : (a) No Such calculation has been made till now. However, due to closure of level

crossing (LC) to enable passing of trains, wastage of time, petrol and diesel at such LCs is inevitable unless the vehicle engine is switched off by the driver.

(b) Railways have a policy to replace busy level crossings with road over bridge/under bridges (ROB/RUBs) on cost sharing basis if traffic density at LC exceeds one lakh TVUs (TVU - A unit obtained by multiplying the number of trains with the number of road vehicles passing over the level crossing in 24 hours) otherwise on deposit term basis. Proposals in both cases have to be sponsored by State Government concerned. In addition, recently powers to the General Managers of Indian Railways have been delegated to sanction works of "Limited height subways" in lieu of existing unmanned/manned level crossings costing below Rs. 50 lakh, fulfilling requisite criteria.

(c) Number of such works, firm proposals for which are sponsored by concerned State Governments, are gradually being sanctioned on all Indian Railways. During Works Programme of 2007-08, 93 works of ROBs have been sanctioned, during 2006-07 this number was 122 works. Till now, more than 400 unmanned/manned LCs have been identified for replacement by 'Limited height subways'.

[English]

Renovation of Historical Monuments

4130. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY :
SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR :

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to renovate Charminar at Hyderabad as reported in the 'Times of India' dated April 3, 2007;

(b) if so, the total amount earmarked for the renovation of this monument;

(c) whether some other historical monuments in the country would also be renovated by ASI during 2007-08; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India has taken up the restoration of stuccowork, consolidation of the structure and filling up the cracks as well as removal of graffiti marks on the Charminar.

(b) An amount of Rs. 19.50 lakhs has been earmarked for this purpose in the current year;

(c) and (d) Conservation of centrally protected monuments is a continuous process subject to the availability of resources. During 2007-08, an amount of Rs. 115.32 crores has been earmarked for conservation, environment development and preservation of centrally protected monuments.

Ports Linked to Goods Train

4131. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has been contemplating a plan under which all ports could be linked to goods trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the estimates regarding financial resources of the proposed plan are being made and by when this plan is proposed to be commenced?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I would like to announce here that there would be no luncheon recess today. Papers to be laid.

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE
(SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, for the year 2005-2006, alongwith Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, for the year 2005-2006.

- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6251/2007]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Leh-Ladakh, for the year 2005-2006.

- (ii) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Leh-Ladakh, for the year 2005-2006, together with Audit Report thereon.

- (iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Leh-Ladakh, for the year 2005-2006.

- (4) Statement ((Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6252/2007]

- (5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata, for the year 2005-2006, along-with Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata, for the year 2005-2006.

- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6253/2007]

- (7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the North East Zone Cultural Centre, Dimapur, for the year, 1995-1996 to 1999-2000, alongwith Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the North East Zone Cultural Centre, Dimapur, for the year 1995-1996 to 1999-2000.

- (8) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6254/2007]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF
CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : Sir, I beg to lay
on the Table—

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Indian Airlines Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Indian Airlines Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6255/2007]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped, Secunderabad, for the year 2005-2006, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped, Secunderabad, for the year 2005-2006.
- (2) Statement ((Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6256/2007]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Ali Yavar Jung

National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped, Mumbai, for the year 2005-2006, alongwith Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped, Mumbai, for the year 2005-2006.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6257/2007]

(2) A copy of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6258/2007]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : Sir, 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 Scooters India Limited and the Department of Heavy Industry, Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises for the year 2005-2006.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6259/2007]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Tyre Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Heavy Industry, Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6260/2007]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL) : Sir, 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 GAIL (India) Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6261/2007]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Oil India Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6262/2007]

- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6263/2007]

12.01 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

Eighty First and Eighty Second Reports

[English]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA (Surat) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Commerce:

- (1) 81st Report on Demands for Grants (2007-08) of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (Ministry of Commerce and Industry); and
- (2) 82nd Report on Demands for Grants (2007-08) of the Department of Commerce (Ministry of Commerce and Industry).

12.01½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

Twenty Second and Twenty Third Reports

[English]

DR. CHINTA MOHAN (Tirupati) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare:—

- (1) Twenty second Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2007-2008) of the Department of Health and Family Welfare; and
- (2) Twenty third Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2007-2008) of the Department of AYUSH.

12.02 hrs.

OBSERVATION BY THE SPEAKER

Business transacted during the last week

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, for your information, I want to briefly recapitulate the main items of business transacted by the House during the last week.

Out of the 60 Starred Questions admitted only 8 could be answered orally. Replies to the remaining Starred Questions alongwith the replies to 670 Unstarred Questions were laid on the Table.

During the period, as many as 30 matters of urgent public importance were raised. Also, 21 matters were raised under Rule 377.

As the Demands for Grants on Account (Railways) 2007-2008 were discussed at length in the first part of the Session, the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways were voted by the House without discussion and the related Appropriation Bill was passed on 26 April, 2007.

The House discussed the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministries of Labour and Employment, Science and Technology and Home Affairs, for about 4 hours and 20 minutes, 4 hours and 38 minutes and 6 hours and 34 minutes respectively and the Demands relating to these Ministries were voted in full.

The Outstanding Demands for Grants (General) 2007-2008 of the remaining Ministries were submitted to the vote of the House and voted in full on 28 April, 2007 and the related Appropriation Bill was passed.

The Departmentally Related Standing Committees presented 41 Reports during the last week.

The House lost 42 minutes of time due to interruptions and forced adjournments. It, however, sat late for

1 hour and 25 minutes to transact the essential items of business.

I wish to convey my very sincere thanks to the hon. Members for their cooperation in the conduct of the proceedings.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, because of the importance of the passing of the Finance Bill, I would allow importance matters to be raised till 12.30 p.m. only and I hope I receive the cooperation from all the hon. Members.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : Mr. Speaker Sir, Setu Samudram Canal Project has caused a threat of destruction of Ram Setu. This project have fine alignments. Four alignments are...(Interruptions)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a *sub judice* matter. ...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issue I am raising is not sub-judice... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I do not know. I have to find out.

SHRI T.R. BAALU : There is a case in the High Court of Allahabad.

MR. SPEAKER : Let me find out the position. Please cooperate.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur) : mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a sub-judice issue. How can he raise this issue in the House. He can not raise this in the House however he is deputy leader of BJP...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. It is having no effect on me

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : He wanted to raise a matter. So, naturally coming from the main Opposition Party, I have allowed him. There is also one matter, which I have also committed, to be raised by Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav. The question is, Mr. Malhotra, is it *sub judice*?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : The issue I am raising is not sub-judice...(Interruptions). First you listen to me.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Let us wait what he says. If it is, in fact, *sub judice*, I will delete every word of it.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have to accept the statement of the hon. Member.

(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Sir, with full responsibility I say that it is fully *sub judice* matter...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let us know what is the matter. I do not know. He only mentioned this project.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let us know what is the matter.

(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Then you allow us also to speak on this subject...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you. Let us hear each other peacefully.

Let us know first what he wants to raise. I will give him an opportunity to show whether it is *sub judice* or not. Let us conduct ourselves responsibly.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Malhotra, with all humility, I say that if it is *sub judice*, it has to be deleted.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : There are five alignments of this project, out of them four alignments go up to the end of the bay. Those alignments are being talked about to be changed. Mr. Speaker, Sir, Ram Setu...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I am sorry, then is *sub judice*.

(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Sir, it is purely sub-judice matter...(Interruptions) If you make it a precedent then it is a different matter...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No, I will not allow such precedents.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Gujarat issue was sub-judice, Chandigarh issue was, numbers of issues

[Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra]

are raised here daily. No one issue is sub-judice...

(Interruptions)

[English]

It is not sub-judice.

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Do not record anything.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am sorry, I will have to see whether it is sub judice or not. Please send me the material, I shall look into it and then I will decide.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will not allow.

[Translation]

Please sit down.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Nothing is sub-judice. This issue is not sub-judice. Mr. Belu on Monday...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Do not record anything.

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, do not show the papers.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am very sorry. You send me the papers. Let me go through the papers. I will decide if it is sub judice or not.

(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER : I call Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI (Udaipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Mid-day Meal should be provided to children upto 8th Standard...(Interruptions)

12.09 hrs.

(At this Stage, Shri P.S. Gadhavi and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table).

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : The House stands adjourned to meet again at 12.30 p.m.

12.10 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till thirty minutes past Twelve of the Clock

12.30 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at thirty minutes past Twelve of the Clock.

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

(Translation)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was surprised very much when I raised the issue. Hon. Minister in the House in such a...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : We have to take up other matter.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : It is something which is very unfortunate...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have assured you that I will look into it myself. Please give notice tomorrow also. These are important issues; they should not be discussed in this manner.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, Ram Setu should not be destroyed. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Matter under Rule 377 be laid on the Table of the House.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : We are coming to Finance Bill.

Shri C.K. Chandrappan — not present.

Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu — not present.

(Interruptions)

12.31 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Chandrakant Khaire and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table).

MR. SPEAKER : I have told you, I will see to it tomorrow.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am requesting you. Let us discuss the issue, raise the issue, in a proper manner. We are having the most important measure, the Finance Bill; I will seek everybody's cooperation. Please cooperate. You can give notice tomorrow; I shall look into it. But, we have already decided that at 12.30 p.m. we shall take up the Finance Bill.

Shri K.S. Rao.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Listen to hon. Minister please.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : Since you have said that you will look into the matter, we stand by you. You look into it.

MR. SPEAKER : I have said that give me a few hours time, I will do it. I have assured you.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Malhotra, please be fair to me at least. I have allowed you to raise it. Serious reservations seem to be there. There are objections. So many Members are standing up together. How can one hear each other? I cannot hear anything. Contentious issues are being raised. I am saying please give me papers; I will look into it. If there are allowable, I will allow you tomorrow. I have requested you to give notice again for tomorrow. I am requesting you Mr. Khaire — I have not rejected your matter — please give it tomorrow. Mr. Malhotra, you can come and see me. I am not trying to prevent you from raising it.

(Interruptions)

12.33 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Chandrakant Khaire and some other hon. Members went back to their seats.)

(Translation)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, today is finance bill.

[Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra]

[English]

We want to cooperate to pass the Finance Bill.

[Translation]

The issue of Ram Setu is so important. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You have raised it; the Government is here.

12.33½

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

(I) Need to promote indigenous sports in the Country

[English]

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul) : The country was shocked when our cricket team was knocked out by Bangladesh in the recent World Cup Tournament. It is distressing to note that cricket matches are swallowing lakhs and lakhs of working hours and man days of the general public;

Moreover, tonnes of money flows into the game by way of advertisement, sponsorship, betting and gambling. Unfortunately large sections of our people associate cricket matches with patriotism. There is a strong opinion, merit and professionalism are not given expected importance in India.

The most unfortunate part is that cricket is given more importance at the cost of other games and sports. Games like Football, Hockey, Basket Ball, Volley Ball and various sports which require skill of every participant are given a raw deal.

*Treated as laid on the Table.

India has got large pool of efficient sturdy youths who are not given much focus to their skill.

The Government should take steps to tap these talents and ensure all the games and sports are given equal importance.

It is high time that severe restrictions must be imposed on cricket matches abroad. Younger stalwarts must be given proper encouragement.

If a small island like Sri Lanka can do, India, a big nation can definitely do better.

(II) Need to take steps to review the progress of Pradhanmantri Rojgar Yojana in Madhya Pradesh

[Translation]

SHRI MANIK SINGH (Sidhi) : Sir, Pradhanmantri Rojgar Yojana is being implemented to provide self-employment to unemployed youth in the entire country. This scheme is hundred per cent financed by Central Government, but this scheme has not been successful in achieving its target at many places. Therefore, the implementation of this scheme needs to be reviewed from time to time specially in Madhya Pradesh.

So, it is requested that the Union Government should take steps for the review of Pradhanmantri Rojgar Yojana and remove the shortcomings in its implementation in Madhya Pradesh

(III) Need to take steps for providing toilet facility for girl students in primary and upper primary schools in the country

SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA (Salumber) : Sir, as per the latest report of the Ministry of Human Resource Development there is no separate toilet facility for girl students in 6.20 lac primary and high schools of the country even after 59 years of the Independence. The fact came out of the survey conducted by Ministry, UNICEF and National University of Education Planning and Administration (NUPA).

According to survey only 37.42 per cent schools have separate toilet facilities for girl students which is a matter of concern. More surprising fact is that there are 19 States where less than 25 per cent schools have this facility. In Meghalaya, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa 7 to 12.4 per cent schools have this facility.

I would like to draw the attention of Prime Minister/hon. Minister of Human Resource Development towards the issue of public importance and request to expedite construction of separate toilets for girl students.

(iv) Need to take steps for improving the quality of BSNL mobile services in Kota, Bundi, Baran and other parts of Rajasthan

SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL (Kota) : Sir, in my constituency Kota, Bundi, Baran and other parts of Rajasthan State the quality of mobile cellular telephone service of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has deteriorated sharply. Connectivity is rather poor and one has to try several times to get the member and at times it takes hours together to get connected and when one gets the number, voice cannot be heard clearly and it disconnects automatically. If a person is inside a room, he is not able to talk properly. Other private companies are taking the advantage of this situation and advertising that their services will not have this shortcoming.

Through you, I request the Government to improve the much deteriorated quality of BSNL mobile services.

(v) Need to re-open Army Recruiting Office in Ajmer, Rajasthan and revive Ajmer Regiment and Merwara Battalion for providing employment opportunities to the local youths

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Sir, Ajmer Merwara was a Union Territory before 1956. At the time of merger of this Union Territory with Rajasthan State in the year 1956, this assurance was given that the special power and facilities bestowed on Ajmer would remain intact. Ajmer Merwara (Rajasthan) has been a marshal

area. Most of the people of villages of this region are proud to be a part of different divisions of Indian army. In several families two or more than two members are in the Indian Army. Especially Rawat, Kathat, Mehrat, Ghorat, Rajput, Kayamkhani, Jat, Gurjar etc. have been warrior communities. The youths of these communities have been recruited in the army in large numbers since the time of British regime. There was a recruitment office in Ajmer since old times, where regular recruitment was carried out comfortably. But I have to say with regret that during 1997-98 the old and well equipped recruitment head office situated at Ajmer Cantt. was transferred to Jaipur and prior to this the Ajmer regiment and Merwara battalion were disbanded after independence. Consequently, lesser number of people of Ajmer Merwara have been recruited in the army and since then unemployment increased and it spread poverty.

Therefore, I request the hon'ble Minister of Defence to restart the army recruitment office in Ajmer to restore the dignity of Ajmer. The Ajmer regiment and Merwara battalion should be set up again to give opportunity to the local patriotic youths to serve in the army.

(vi) Need to reconsider the proposal to shift the 'Guards Lobby' from Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh in Ratlam Division of Western Railways

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur) : Sir, Neemuch is an important railway junction in Ratlam Division of Western Railways. Recently the work of gauge conversion between Neemuch and Ratlam has been completed and the operation of goods trains has started and very soon passenger trains will also be operated on this line. But, Neemuch, being a center place of railways, has lobbies of guards, drivers and other staff members and guards, drivers and conductors go to their duties from here only. But it has come to my knowledge that guards lobby is being shifted to some other place. This will create problems for the guards and their family members with regard to the education of their children and other liabilities.

[Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey]

Therefore, I request to the Minister of Railways that the people are not happy to know about the shifting of guards lobby from the above mentioned Neemuch which is a big and an important railway junction in Rattam Division of Western Railways. Hence, it would be proper in all respects not to shift the guards lobby.

(vii) Need to give sanction for construction of railway line from Bilaspur to Mandla in Chhattisgarh

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur) : Sir, it is submitted that the work of railway line from district Bilaspur to Mandla in Chhattisgarh state has been going on for years. The survey work has been completed and sent to the planning Commission. After formation of Chhattisgarh new railway line is essential for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of the area. The capital Raipur of Chhattisgarh will be connected to Bilaspur and Mandla directly by the railway line. Once the said railway line is completed after getting the approval, lakhs of people will get employment and this will help people in establishing industries and dolomite minerals and abundant coal reserves of Beladila falling in Bilaspur Railway Zone could be exploited. Chhattisgarh possesses a diamond mine. Apart from this the state has mines of mica and other minerals, in which people will get employment and thus railways will earn profit.

Therefore, I request the Government to approve that railway line from Bilaspur to Mandla.

(viii) Need to expedite the completion of Railway Over Bridges in Palakkad Parliamentary Constituency, Kerala

[English]

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat) : Almost five years ago, in my Parliamentary Constituency, Palakkad,

construction of 3 Railway Over Bridges was started. The approach roads and other related construction works were completed in one year itself. But the 3 Railway Over Bridges LC Nos. 49, 50, 159 near Palakkad Town, Kadukkam Kunnam and Government Victoria College have not been constructed for the last 5 years. This is creating difficulties for the passengers and residents of the nearby area.

So, I urge upon the Railway Ministry to give necessary instructions to the concerned officers for the early completion of construction of railway portion of these 3 Railway Over Bridges.

(ix) Need to construct new dams in the Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh to check the receding water-table in the region

[English]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA (Hamirpur, U.P.) : Sir, the water level in all the districts of Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh—Hamirpur, Mahoba, Banda, Jhansi, Lalitpur and Jalaun, is continuously receding at a very fast pace which is affecting the hand pumps, wells and tube-wells. Potable water is not available due to receding of water-table. The entire Bundelkhand is in the midst of crisis. It is very essential to take immediate measures to check the receding water table. Even rivers, dams, check dams and ponds do not have water as the region has been in the grip of drought for the last five years.

The farmers of Bundelkhand are facing lots of problems due to continuous drought. Though the matter has been raised in the House repeatedly but the Government has not extended any help.

Therefore, through this House I urge the Union Government to take immediate steps to check the receding water – table by constructing new dams and make water available for drinking and irrigation in Bundelkhand.

(x) Need to expedite Sethu Samudram Project*[English]*

SHRI M. APPADURAI (Tenkasi) : Sethu Samudram Project that remained a dream for long in the minds of the people in the South is being translated into action under the aegis of United Progressive Alliance Government. It has been stated that the project would be completed in a time-bound manner. I would like to emphasize upon the Government that there should not be any delay in the execution this project to be accomplished. The delay, if any, would also drain our exchequer. It has been observed that adequate number of engineers and workmen has not been engaged in this project. Hence, I urge the Union Government to go ahead with this project on a war footing filling up all vacant posts in the work force.

(xi) Need to construct a service road for public use adjacent to the Railway Road Over Bridge near Kovilpatti Railway Station in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu

SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPAPARAI (Sivakasi) : In my Sivakasi Constituency Kovilpatti is a fast growing town. Near and Kovilpatti Railway Station there is a flyover for road transport. There is a long pending demand for a service road adjacent to the railway road over bridge. The said land belongs to the railways. So, I urge the Railway Minister to kindly consider the above matter and allot the required land for the service road at the earliest.

(xii) Need to set up a Bamboo Centre of Excellence in Idukki district of Kerala

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki) : Government of Kerala had submitted a proposal for setting up of a Bamboo Centre of Excellence in Kerala with an objective for creating employment opportunities through technology transfer, up-gradation of traditional bamboo technology, design inputs with respect to disaster resistant bamboo construction, pre-fabricated/pre-cast construction and for

creating a feeder for availability of the required raw material for construction of housing through production of various types of low cost, eco-friendly, innovative and energy efficient building components. These activities are to be carried out through the involvement of Self-Help Groups and local artisans by training them.

I request the Government to set up the Centre in Idukki district of Kerala, which is traditionally known for its Bamboo wealth.

(xiii) Need to open branches to State Bank of India at Tamenglong and Ukhrul districts in Manipur

SHRI MANI CHARENAMAI (Outer Manipur) : There has been consistent demand for opening of State Bank of India Branches in Tamenglong and Ukhrul district Headquarters of Manipur. The demands were turned down on ground like non-availability of water and poor communication, security problems. Such problems are common everywhere in Manipur but all other districts have more than one SBI Branches besides having Branches of United Bank of India, Co-operative Banks and Rural Banks. Tamenglong and Ukhrul district Headquarters are the oldest districts Headquarters of the State. The districts have Central Government establishments like Assam Rifles Brigade Headquarters, FCI godown, Border Road Organization Headquarters, Navodaya Vidyalaya Schools, Kendriya Vidyalaya Schools, Telephone Exchanges besides offices of State Government departments. As far as security is concerned, the two hill districts are by and large the most peaceful districts in the state.

All Rural development programmes are facing tremendous problems due to non availability of support from the Banks. All credit linkage programmes are lying idle. Hundreds of Self Help Groups are not been able to avail credit facilities from any bank in the said two Districts. Study loans, housing loans, car loans, individual loans to entrepreneurs etc. are still a far dream for the people of these Districts.

[Shri Mani Charename]

I, therefore, urge the Hon'ble Finance Minister to take necessary actions to open SBI Branches at Tamenglong and Ukhrul District Headquarters and re-open the SBI Tamei Branch at Tamei Town of Tamenglong District at an early date in the interest of the rural people of the Districts.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you tomorrow. I am thankful to you. At 12.30 p.m. we have to take up the Finance Bill.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please cooperate; this is an important measure.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, when will the Matter under Rule 377 be raised.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : They have already been laid on the Table. You were not willing to listen then.

I called you, Shri Chandrapan, but you were not present.

Shri K.S. Rao.

12.34 hrs.

FINANCE BILL, 2007

SHRI K.S. RAO (Elturu) : Sir, I am happy to see that the hon. Finance Minister without increasing the tax rates is trying to reduce the fiscal deficit. He has already promised that by 2009 he wants to reduce it to almost zero. I wish that he will keep up his time schedule, which

is very essential. It is because particularly the revenue deficit does not indicate well being of the economy of any country. So, I wish that he keeps it up. The country will prosper in a big way by reducing the revenue deficit to zero.

In this context, I would just like to bring to the notice of the hon. Finance Minister that while I am happy when he said that the average tax that is charged from the corporate sector today in the country is 19.2 per cent, I just did not understand why the Capital Gains Tax must be 20 per cent alone.

Sir, after a span of two years if a company or an individual were to sell property at a higher price, then only 20 per cent tax is levied in the shape of capital gains tax while the profits earned by any corporate individual every year is almost 35 per cent. I do not find any rationality in reducing the capital gains tax in the short span of time. I would like the hon. Finance Minister to look into this matter.

There was a demand from all of us and the countrymen – as a Member of the Standing Committee on Finance I have been asking time and again – to simplify the tax laws. While the hon. Finance Minister is making an effort all the time and promising that there would be simplification of tax laws and all that, still simplification has to be done substantially so that there would not be an opportunity for an officer to interpret or to use his discretion and then play havoc in the field. So, if the laws are very clear and without any ambiguity, then unscrupulous officers cannot do anything in that direction.

Sir, in this aspect I would also like to mention that some of the companies like Infosys or Reliance which are making huge profits, I do not understand why they are being given thousands of acres of land in the name of SEZ while the Government or the State Governments say that they do not have land to provide house sites to the poor people who could not have even one cent of land for constructing their houses. So, I would request the Government to call a meeting of the Chief Ministers of

various States asking them to concentrate more on providing houses to the poor people than giving hundreds and thousands of acres of land to the profit-making companies. Surprisingly we see that the primary share value of a company like Infosys is Rs.10 and the market value is around Rs. 3,000 or Rs. 4,000, and it is almost 400 times. When they are making so much of money, what is the rationality in giving all these incentives and also land to them at a very cheap rate? I do not understand this. I would request the Government to look into this matter and provide these incentives only in those areas where investment is not coming. I can understand if Infosys starts it in a place which is underdeveloped but in places like Hyderabad and Delhi, there is no need for that.

Similarly, the hon. Finance Minister must think about the old-age people. The statistics reveal that people above 65 years in the country is only 6.6 per cent. Out of them, even if we take 60 per cent as the people above the poverty line and marginally above the poverty line, that means there will be about 40 per cent of the people who are below the poverty line. Out of 6.6 per cent population, 2.4 per cent of the population is below the poverty line and above 65 years. Sir, when you and I are being given pension for our lifetime if we become Members of Parliament even once, then what is the crime that these poor people have done in claiming pension? When we go to the villages, we find that they live in such a horrible state of affairs, and their children are not in a position to take care of them. They live in a thatched house where rain falls directly into their house, sun falls directly into their house, and they do not have even Rs. 500 to undergo cataract operation. Such is their horrible state of affairs and they are living like orphans. I feel that – without their asking – it is the duty of the Governments to provide pension to all those people below poverty line and above 60 years. It does not cost much. If the hon. Finance Minister wants, he may charge one per cent surcharge on the income tax in order to provide this pension as a matter of responsibility of the Government.

Similarly, the performance of Self Help Groups of Women in the country is exemplary. We could see glow and pride in their faces and they are making some money out of the loan that they have lent to their members.

Sir, till yesterday, if a lady in a family wanted to get Rs. 100, she had to depend on her husband or his son for getting the same. But today, we are providing loans to those ladies in the shape of Self Help Groups. Now, they take Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 10,000 from these Self Help Groups (SHGs) in the form of loan and purchase buffalo and are making at least, Rs. 1000 every month. That has, in a way, empowered our women. We are providing employment to all those ladies. I wish, the hon. Finance Minister to think of providing some interest subsidy to them. The Government of Andhra Pradesh is already providing these loans at three per cent to the Self Help Groups by providing six per cent subsidy in the rate interest. So, the same thing must be applied in the entire country. Then, the hon. Minister must also share the responsibility of subsidy of interest.

Sir, the mechanism for fixing the price of an agricultural produce of a farmer is quite different from that of an industrial produce. The price of industrial produce is fixed in a different manner. I would like to quote one example. If Modi Rubber were to sell a tyre, the way its price is fixed is by way of their investment. Out of their investment, 75 per cent is coming from banks; and the interest charged by the banks is taken into consideration for arriving at the price to be sold.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. K.S. Rao, you are aware that this is the Finance Bill and not the general discussion on the Budget. Please be within the domain of the Finance Bill.

SHRI K.S. RAO : Sir, I would limit myself to the Finance Bill only.

So, the price of an industrial produce is fixed by taking into consideration the interest on the investment, the profit

[Shri K.S. Rao]

for the promoters' share, the salary for the promoters and the privileges for the promoters, whereas the price of an agricultural produce is not fixed following the same mechanism. Let us take that a farmer were to have an acre of land, which is costing a minimum of Rs. 2 lakh. Even if six per cent were to be taken per year, he has to get Rs. 12,000 per year. But that is not taken into account at all. And, the increased prices of inputs, be it fertilizers, be it pesticides; or even the wages to the labourers, are increasing everyday. But on the same proportion, the price of an agricultural produce is not being fixed. With the result, the farmers are put to continuous loss, and that is the main reason for many of the farmers to commit suicide.

So, Sir, I want the hon. Finance Minister to provide interest subsidy to the farmers because the farmers cannot pay at the same rate of interest, which the traders or the manufacturers are paying. Therefore, the lending must be at the rate of three per cent only. This has even been suggested by the Agricultural Commission under the leadership of Swaminathan-ji.

Similarly, about the Crop Insurance Scheme, we have been promising since quite a long time that we would provide crop insurance to the farmers on the basis of the villages if not individual, which we are not providing even till today. So, I want the hon. Finance Minister to provide some money to share the burden of the premium to be paid by the farmers so that the farmers, who have suffered the loss not by virtue of their fault but by the nature – the calamity either by the cyclone, floods or droughts – is compensated. When a trader or an industrialist is being compensated for the loss occurred in his business, why should not a farmer be compensated for the loss occurred to him?

Sir, all these things should be taken note of by the hon. Finance Minister. He should not be hesitant to provide this money in his Budget.

I am on my last point. It is regarding service tax. The insurance premium that is being paid by the sheep owners is Rs. 16 per sheep, and it is also being subjected to service tax. While we always say that we are coming to the rescue of the poor people, the service tax should not be levied on such things.

Similarly, the private institutions, which are imparting primary and secondary education are also being subjected to the service tax, which they cannot afford. We know that the Government is not in a position to provide enough investment in the education sector, and therefore, we are encouraging private institutions to come into the education sector. My request is that at least, those private institutions, schools and colleges, which are not making tons of money or which are providing education as a matter of service should be exempted from the service tax.

With these few words, I support the Finance Bill and I wish the hon. Finance Minister to think sympathetically in these aspects.

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Minister will start his reply at 3.30 p.m. We have to complete it well in time so that other consequential steps may be taken for the Finance Bill to be approved. Please co-operate.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA (Trichur) : Sir, the Finance Minister has introduced his Budget, and now we are discussing the Finance Bill.

Sir, the Budget as well as the Taxation Policy are actually the instruments by which the Government is implementing its policies. Actually, they should implement the promises made to the country by way of implementation of the Budget policies. Now, Mr. Chidambaram has introduced his Budget and introduced his taxation proposals also.

One of the serious objections I would like to raise is that the Taxation Policy enunciated in this Budget is such that it leaves the richest sector of the country untouched.

It dealt with the richest sector of the country in the most softest fashion. They are very kind to them. I am speaking about the corporate sector. The corporate sector today is virtually so powerful, and they are so powerful that they are almost running an economy which is equally big as the economy Mr. Chidambaram is running.

Recently, the economic magazines, including *Forbes*, were coming out with details of Indian billionaires and millionaires. One of the success stories of Indian economy, they say, is that India today has 83,000 millionaires, and we have also very good number of billionaires. These billionaires and millionaires are running the economy in such a fashion that they can do things which the Government cannot even imagine. Some people are very proud of this performance of the Indian corporate sector.

My criticism or our Party's criticism about the Budget is that the Budget spared this sector, the super rich, of the Indian economy in the most unjustifiable manner whereas all the burdens have been put on the common people. That is the only way to run the country. When you are not taxing the rich, then that is the only way the country has to run. So, the burden will have to be borne by the poor people.

The other day, Mr. A.K. Antony, one of your Cabinet colleagues made a speech in his own place, Cherthala. He was speaking in Gandhian Rural Institute. Mr. Antony has said that the weakness of Indian economy is that the wealth is concentrated in the hands of a very few people, and the poverty is so big that the rural masses in our country are really very poverty-stricken. Mr. Chidambaram has not touched those super rich people. That is the most important criticism I would like to make about this Budget.

Now, Sir, you made a speech, and *The Hindu* published it in the form of an article.

MR. SPEAKER : I hope it was not on the Budget.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA : It was about the Indian economy. It was not about the Budget. But you pointed out there certain important things.

MR. SPEAKER : Why cannot you spare the Chair?

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA : You said : "70 per cent of the people living in the villages are abysmally poor, and 80 per cent of the poor are living in the villages." Therefore, you have also pointed this out. It is not only you, but our Prime Minister is also pointing this out that if the much trumpeted success of the GDP growth has to be sustained, then the agrarian sector should be...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I did not use those words.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA : No, Sir. I am saying that the Prime Minister used these words. The Prime Minister said that : "If this economic growth has to be sustained, then at least four per cent growth in the agrarian sector should be achieved." Is the Finance Minister's taxation policy having the approach with which the agrarian sector would be further strengthened or the poor agriculturists would be taken out of their miseries? I will say no because the Finance Minister always thinks that if more credit availability is assured, then the life of the farmers will be better. I do not think that it is really so. It is only one of the inputs in the agrarian sector, that is, the availability of cheaper credit. At the same time, there are other inputs also like fertilizer, seeds, water, electricity and many other inputs. I do not think that your policy is helping the poor farmers to come out of the crisis today.

It is no less a person than Dr. Swaminathan who said that : "The Indian agrarian economy is in crisis. Unless any economic policy of the Government has an edge to tackle the agrarian crisis that India is facing today, then that economy would not serve the interest of the common people in our country." My case is that the taxation policy, as enunciated in this Budget, is helping the super-rich to become more rich and it is not helping the poor people to come out of the crisis in which they are today.

[Shri C.K. Chandrappan]

Some of the vulgar expressions of the super-rich corporates is that they are spreading not only in this country, but they are going abroad and becoming multinational corporates after buying companies abroad. Shri K.K. Birla wrote about the Budget, economy, taxation policy, etc., and he is so happy that we are going to overtake Japan very soon and become the third big economy. Thereafter, we will become second only to China. He says that :

"Since India has taken this new economic policy, in the last four years, the GDP growth has been 8 per cent; industrial production has risen at 10 per cent per year; and services at 9 per cent. The share market has been buoyant adding to the country's wealth, and that of shareholders. Market capitalization, Rs. 6 lakh crore in 2002, grew to Rs. 34.26 lakh crore by December 2006. The fiscal deficit in 2005-2006 was 4.1 per cent of GDP, and is expected to reduce to 3.8 per cent for 2006-2007.

In 15 years, July 1991 to 2006, the economy has made fabulous progress. The acquisition by the Tatas of Corus – a deal of more than \$ 12 billion – and by the Aditya Birla Group of Novelis have further brightened the country's image. Industrialists such as the Tatas, the Aditya Birla Group, the two Ambani brothers, the Ruia and the Mittals are swiftly expanding their businesses. The middle-class is playing an important role in the economy's enrichment..."

By 2020, it is expected that India will overtake Japan to become the third economic power in the world. By 2050, it will become the second largest economy after China.

MR. SPEAKER : It is nice to see Mr. Chandrappan quoting Mr. Birla!

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN : That is an understanding

of how India should grow. That is an understanding how India should flourish. But then, Sir, what is missing is what you have been pointing out. In that picture they are only telling about the Mittals, the Tatas, the Ambanis and all that. The lives of about 700 crore of Indian rural masses who are subjected to abysmal poverty, hunger and unemployment remain.

I would like to ask the Finance Minister to tell this House, in absolute terms or even in percentage of his taxation, what is percentage of the tax revenue or what is the amount of tax revenue that he has collected from these super rich people, the corporate sector. If that amount is revealed, then we will see how softly he is dealing with this sector of economy. Our case is that this would not help to achieve the policies and programmes enunciated by the UPA. UPA spoke about the *aam admi*. They promised policies and a governance to give a life that is better than before to the *aam admi*. If this policy is pursued, as Birla is saying we will create a situation in this country where the rich will become richer; the monopoly houses of India will become multinational corporations; they will go abroad and buy things and some people will find heavens in their actions. But they do not look at the plight of the common people who are subjected to poverty, misery and unemployment. So, if the taxation policy of this Government as a whole is taken up, it is pro rich and it is anti poor, and it is also against the interests of the States.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (Dhenkanal) : What is the Left doing?

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN : You do not worry about that.

MR. SPEAKER : You need not get yourself diverted. Your time will be gone.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN : What we are saying is that one of the big income revenue the Government of India is today having is from various kinds of cess imposed on the people. Cess is not divisible. The States will not

get any benefit. So, the States are deprived of the benefit that they should get out of the proper taxation whereas by cess the Centre is collecting money – the education cess or any other thing – and that is spent. For the interest of the common people no big amount is spent or the Districts are so enhanced that the Employment Guarantee Scheme which was a flagship programme of the UPA Government, is moving at a snail's pace I should say.

The Minister will say, "Where is the money for that? Probably that is the question Mani Shankar Aiyar also raised in his recent article. He said, when in the Cabinet the question of money being spent for the well being of common people, especially the rural masses, comes the Ministers will say, "Where is the money? We are a poor country. We cannot find so much money for spending there." As a result of that the flagship programme of this Government, the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, is moving at a snail's pace and the implementation is so tardy. So, what is suggest is that this approach should be changed.

13.00 hrs.

Corporate sector should be taxed. I am not saying that they should be taxed disproportionately. According to the mass of wealth that they have, they should be taxed proportionately so that social justice is there in the taxation. There should be a sense of equity.

With these words, I express my strong criticism about the tax proposals and that is all.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Suresh Prabhu – you have to seek the permission of the Chair to speak from there.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU (Rajapur) : Yes, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : You have to seek the permission. You have not yet sought. That is not your seat.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : I am seeking your permission to speak from here.

MR. SPEAKER : All right.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Today, we are discussing the Finance Bill. We have already deliberated on the Budget proposals before we broke for taking stock of the Budget in detail. I am going to confine myself to the Finance Bill.

The tax GDP ratio is increased. In fact, we have now one trillion dollars economy. ...*(Interruptions)*

13.02 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

There is tremendous scope to have more tax collection because obviously when the economy is growing, of course, percentage-wise the tax GDP ratio is also growing but in absolute terms there is a huge possibility of rising resources, which I think should be done now. A step in the right direction has been initiated by the Finance Minister – he has to tap expenditure and that is the right way to do. I really wish he continue to do that. It is a very welcome thing. My concern is that common man is how getting burdened with additional taxes because normally when we have direct tax, income-tax is charged on the individual and the individual pays it from his own pocket. Therefore, the burden lies on him. If we are having excise duty, customs duty and service taxes, common man is paying taxes at multiple levels. In fact, though the collection is not taking place from the individual, it is collected from the service providers or the manufacturers but the common man is burdened of it. So, I would request that a Commission of study be undertaken to find out on a given tax proposal, how much of that burden is really going on to the common many. Let us take service tax, excise duty and all put together, we should try to determine as to what extent he can really carry. It is actually the carrying capacity of a common man to carry tax burden on his shoulders coming from multiple sources. That is

[Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu]

because when the inflation is rising and because of rising inflation, it is hitting into the income of the common man. To top it all, now he is burdened with multiple tax structure.

I can understand about direct taxes because income-tax is paid from his own pocket. This is something which I think has to be done. I would request the Finance Minister to commission a study – let us find out and let us decide that this is what he can carry. I am talking about the point of equity.

Let us come to a very interesting issue of income-tax. There are multiple issues. One is on individual. Individual unfortunately has not really got any benefit. I cannot say that because he got the benefit of about Rs. 40 per month. But barring that, in this year, income-tax structure has not provided any benefit to the individual. So, I think, individual should have got a better deal from this Budget. I would request the Finance Minister to actually try to find out as to whether exemption limit can be increased; there is no more standard deduction available; as to whether anything can be done regarding the marginal tax that is being charged to the individual. This is something which I hope the Finance Minister needs to address. I think, he will be able to address it.

Household savings as a percentage of total savings is actually declining. That means, corporate savings rate is increasing – the share of percentage of total savings. Therefore, I think, we really need to have special incentives to provide for more household savings to take place. This Budget in fact has not really addressed that issue. I hope that even with the type of exemptions that we are trying to take away – I agree with that general direction of that – individuals must be well protected from the type of savings opportunities that are available to him. Therefore, I think, we need to look into that.

The individual is suffering because of refunds. When

one pays income tax, one normally ends up paying more than what is required because there is a tax deducted at source and there is also tax deducted from the salary, etc. Normally, refund is supposed to be refunded within six months, as per the Income Tax Rules. Now, there is a provision that refund will be directly credited to the bank account. I would request the hon. Minister to have a MIS which should come to the Finance Ministry which can actually reveal how many such refunds have not been credited within the stipulated period of six months so that this would really obviate a great difficulty that the individuals are facing.

There is a long-term capital gains tax which an individual pays. There is a provision under section 53 and 54 of the Income Tax Act which says that if one sells a house and reinvests that money, he can either put that money in buying another house or he has the option to invest in certain specified securities. Now, section 54 (f) (c) is being amended which says that one can only invest in the National Highways Authority of India or in the Rural Electrification Corporation Limited. These are the only two avenues in which one can make investment, and that too, with a ceiling of up to Rs. 50 lakh. I would request the Finance Minister to remove the ceiling of Rs. 50 lakh for capital gains tax, when an individual is selling his house and trying to make an investment into something like this. One has already got more capital gain obviously; and in any case, he is making investment into stipulated securities. So, this ceiling of Rs. 50 lakh should be removed.

The other issue is related to cooperatives. The last Budget withdrew the exemption provided to cooperatives for a long period of time under section 80 (P) of the Income Tax Act. That means, the cooperative banks particularly, now will be subjected to tax; and by taxing them, we are really vitiating a possibility of cooperatives playing a substantial role in promoting socio-economic priorities that the Government has set. So, the exemptions which were hitherto granted for so long a period of time under Section 80 (P) should be continued. That is something

which has been the demand of the entire cooperative banking system throughout the country. Even in this Budget, the cooperatives seems to be not really getting any favour from the Government because even under Section 3(1)(8), pertaining to housing investment that we talking about, income can be exempted if it is done by the banks which are commercial banks and if it is done by the cooperative banks, they will not get the exemptions. This is another thing to show how the cooperatives are not really getting the benefits. So, the individuals and the cooperative sector need a better treatment in this Finance Bill.

The third issue is regarding trusts. There are a large number of charitable trusts which are operating in India under Section 12 (a), that is under clause 8 of this Bill. For a long time, there was a provision that within one year of incorporation of a trust, the income of most of the trusts can be exempted totally. It is not taxable at all because they are doing charitable work. But to claim that exemption, a trust was required to file an exemption certificate with the Chief Commissioner of Income Tax. If one fails to do that within a period of one year, there is a possibility for condonation of delay by the CIT. But by clause 8 of this Bill, the Finance Minister is trying to withdraw the exemption by saying that CIT will no longer have the discretion. There are hundreds and thousands of trusts operating in India; most of the trusts are operated by one person or two persons or a few persons; they are all members obviously because one cannot register a trust without that. But its operation is really motivated by one or two 'motivated-individuals'. Therefore, if those individuals are not well-versed with the provisions of the law, obviously, they cannot get exemptions. But the decision, whether that was a bona fide reason or not, vests with the CIT. That was available earlier. But by this clause 8, he is removing that discretion which was available to the CIT; and in the process, many trusts will be facing great hardships.

I am not saying that he has to condone the delay across the board; I am only saying that he can condone

it, as he was doing earlier – only if the CIT is satisfied that there is a bona fide reason. That really needs to be done.

Income tax or for that matter, taxation is a very strong instrument to promote certain good ideas and to discourage some bad ideas. Today, we are all concerned about environmental degradation. The Finance Bill should have attempted to promote green technologies in India. They should have done it by doing two things – one is to tax more, the technologies which pollute and two is to encourage those technologies which promote better environment.

By not doing that they are actually trying to say that in India green technologies are not welcomed and, therefore, I would strongly request the Finance Minister to look into these aspects and try to introduce certain schemes which will really help us.

The other issue relates to renewable energy. In fact only the other day when we were discussing the Demands for Grants for the Ministry of Science and Technology, everybody across all sides of the House was saying that we need more and more renewable energy. There is one interesting thing which I think the Finance Minister can do it very happily. You are offering accelerated depreciation to the new renewable power plants which are set up. You are giving them high depreciation the moment they start operation. By doing that we witness that there is a huge misuse. You must shift the benefit from just putting up a power plant to the actual generation of electricity. By doing that you will be able to stop the abuse of this provision and also actual energy can be generated which can be provided to the grid and that could really be helpful. I would request the Minister to also look into this.

For long time, we were awaiting the new tax code that was to be introduced. In fact, the Finance Minister had said that it would probably be introduced in the Budget Session.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : A long time includes six years also.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : I know it but since you had said this we hope that it would be introduced in this Session. Why I am saying this, also means...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I had said, 'in the calendar 2007'.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please be brief. There is not much time left because at 1530 hours we will have the reply by the Minister. A number of speakers are left and at 1530 hours we will have the reply. Within that time limit you may adjust yourself. You may speak for two more minutes.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Under Finance Bill we have Service Tax, Income Tax, Customs and Excise. So, please give me some time. I am only making points. I am not even elaborating them.

Infrastructure is of great talk all the time. We talk about infrastructure saying that we need so much money. The *Economic Survey* talks about 320 billion dollars that are required in the next five years time. If we require that much money, the Government obviously does not have money because fiscal deficit is still running and the Government is obliged under the FRBM to reduce the fiscal deficit. So, we need more and more private investment coming into this. If you want investment in private, public or whatever form, somebody has to finance that infrastructure. That can come from the financial institutions. Now, unfortunately, there is no more IDBI, IFCI or there is no developmental financial institution left which was doing that. So, we will have to have a special dispensation to deal with infrastructure financing taking into consideration the peculiarity of the financing of infrastructure where you need to finance infrastructure which will start paying back only after ten years. So, banks, by definition, cannot lend money beyond five years unless they have got their own resources whose maturity goes beyond ten years.

Therefore, the infrastructure financing is a major concern. I do not see any significant improvement in this Budget on that.

In fact, Sir, last time we amended Section 10 (23)(g) on the ground 'that there is the utilization of that therefore, I am dropping it'. So, my request would be please restore it. Deepak Parikh Committee also looked into this. In fact, I have got a Report made by Depak Parikh Committee on some of these issues. We really need to look into that because this is a very important thing. You can approve some of the institutions which you think you are comfortable with but I see a great problem because infrastructure is to be created and there is no mechanism to finance infrastructure and for doing that we need a proper regime, a proper dispensation in place. One of the ways we can do this is through this.

For that, I am also recommending that external commercial borrowings which the infrastructure financing companies are prevented from accessing, we really need to do that because there are cheaper sources of funds. In fact, in any case the restriction for raising money in the ECB is that the maturity should be more than five years. So, in any case they will be good candidates for infrastructure financing and, therefore, we really need to look into that.

Even, in Section 81 (a) (iv) we are saying that we are actually amending it. I think these are two more provisions in the Income Tax Act. One of them is Section 223(g). We really need to look into that more closely.

The other important issue is related to venture capital. If you want new technologies to come up, you want new ideas to be incubated then we need venture capitalists to come in.

It is because only the venture capital has the ability to actually finance risk capital. This particular Budget has amended Sections 1023(8)(B) and 115(u) by saying that venture capital funds and venture lending institutions will

be allowed to do only in specific areas. Rather than that, we should say that they can do any activity barring the negative list. So, why do you put it like this? If you do want to encourage them to come into all areas, it is understandable. But restricting it like this may not help because we never know from where the ideas will come. How can you put a provision like this in the Income Tax Act saying that venture capital can only finance a particular kind of activity and they would qualify for this benefit? By definition venture capital means the new ideas which have not even been thought about and the ideas which have not even been commercially useful. Those ideas should be encouraged. This particular Section needs to be looked into in a different way.

As regards research and development, there was a Sun set clause, namely, 81(i)(B). I think we need to look into that particular clause also because we are saying that we need more and more private institutions, private industry and that the private educational institutions should also do scientific research and development. If you want that to happen, then you must make sure that such activities also should be properly supported.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Sir, I am making the last point.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am sorry. The time is over. I have given you much time than allowed.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : All right. I am sitting.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Suresh Prabhu is a very competent and able Member. He does not require your assistance. He is a very experienced person.

SHRIMATI V. RADHIKA SELVI (Tiruchendur) : Sir, I thank you very much for giving me a chance to

participate in the discussion on the Finance Bill, 2007. I also thank our beloved leader, Dr. Kalaingar and our Tamil Thelapathi Rural Development Minister, hon. M.K. Stalin.

I rise to support the Finance Bill, 2007, on behalf of DMK party. Even after 60 years of Independence, 28 per cent of the population is like below poverty line. The farmers and workers are badly affected. They are suffering from poverty, hunger and unemployment. Many farmers are forced to commit suicide due to the skyrocketing price rise. To overcome this problem, our beloved leader, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Dr. Kalaingar has taken steps to provide rice for Rs. 2 per kilogram through PDS for the BPL people.

Moreover, he has waived the farmer's cooperative loans worth Rs. 7000 crore so that they can continue their farming happily. Our Government should take steps to cancel small farmers's cooperative bank loans.

In my Tiruchendur Constituency, a Central Government hospital is in Mukkudal. This hospital does not have proper doctors or para-medical staff to attend to the needs of the bidi workers. This hospital is a part time hospital. The Government should take steps to appoint doctors and para-medical staff, and also the hospital should work full time.

The middle class people's dream is to build a house for them. They are not able to build houses because of soaring prices of cement and steel. The Government should take steps to reduce the prices of cement and steel so that the middle class people's dreams can come true. The Indian Government has allocated Rs. 35,000 under IAY Scheme. The Government should re-consider it and enhance it to Rs. 60,000. The Government can also increase this Scheme to more numbers so that more poor dalits and other OBCs could be benefited.

Sanitation schemes are not implemented properly in rural areas because of low allocation.

[Shrimati V. Radhika Selvi]

Sir, we give less importance to the sports sector. Sports is an important segment of activity in our country, it brings recognition to the country. Previously our country was considered leaders in the game of hockey, but now assuming such a status has become a day dream. We have been attaching importance only to the game of cricket. This attitude should change and we must give importance to all games and encourage our youth to play all games. We must also allocate more funds for the overall development of games and sports in the country.

Half of our children population is suffering from malnutrition and many women are suffering from maternity related diseases. Government should allocate more funds to overcome this problem. In my constituency many *bidi* workers are women. They enter this profession at the age of 12 years and they remain in this profession all through their lives. Many of them suffer from respiratory diseases. Government should take care of these poor *bidi* workers and also arrange for some alternative job for these people.

Sir, our overall GDP growth rate is 9 per cent, but our agriculture GDP is not growing at more than two per cent. Agricultural production has come down drastically in the last few years. The situation is alarming. The Government should make efforts to put an end to this crisis immediately.

Our country is endowed with plenty of water resources. But we need to link the rivers so that water which flows into the sea without being put to proper use could be stopped. This involves a lot of expenditure. The Government should spend the money for this purpose as it would help a large number of people. Our Chief Minister Kalaignar spoke about this during the meeting of the Planning Commission. Water has a universal character and so there should be a give and take policy. The neighbouring State should be kind enough to share water on the instructions of the Central Water Commission and the hon. Supreme Court.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI (Udaipur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, during this discussion on the Finance Bill, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards a few important points. Hon. Member Shri C.K. Chandrappan has just stated in his speech that the Government is taking care of the millionaires and billionaires and not the commonman. What about the promise of the Government? Today the Government is talking about a few big houses only.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to state point wise about the situations arising in our country. The first thing is that India is an agriculture based country. We always talk about agriculture but never do anything for the farmers in our budget. Today, the prices of cars, motor-cycles and all other things which are being used by the urban people have come to 3 to 3½ lakh whereas the price of tractor has been doubled which is used by the farmer. Earlier a tractor was available at a price of Rs. 1½ to 2 lakh. Now it has increased to Rs. 4½ to 5 lakh. Infact, it is very unfortunate. This is an agriculture based country and we are not thinking about the farmers. The Government should have given them relief in the budget. Apart from it, every year the Government determines the support price of foodgrains. The Government fixes some price for wheat, rice, maize, mustard that if no one buys then the Government could purchase them but the support price doesn't reach the farmer. He works hard under the sun or in the rain and ploughs his fields for which he should get remunerative prices but unfortunately he doesn't get it. But there are the industries which manufacture soap or powder. They are free to decide their profit, they can sell their products at whatever profitable price they want.

Here the farmer's condition is that they are not even getting the input price. Nobody talks about increasing their support price. It is said that if there is shortage of wheat then we will import it and we are ready to pay any price

to the foreign companies for wheat. If it comes to giving support price to the farmer it is fixed at Rs. 850 per quintal, but when it comes to buying it from outside then we are even ready to pay Rs. 1100 per quintal. What kind of a policy is this? Our farmers toil hard to plough their fields and produce foodgrains but the Govt. has not given any thought to those farmers. The Government talks about the common man, but I cannot explain how the women are unhappy in the country. The Govt. has disturbed their domestic budget. Their monthly income has certainly decreased because of the increased taxes on one hand and on the other hand price rise also has reached such a high that they have to buy pulse from the market, at Rs. 60 per kilo while earlier it was available at Rs. 40 per kg. Red chillies were earlier available at Rs. 50 - 55 per kg., it's now at Rs. 100 per kg. I can give some more similar examples. During NDA's government wheat was available at Rs. 8½ per kg., today the same wheat is available at Rs. 13-14 per kg. They only talk about the interests of the commonman but their acts clearly state that their action is quite at variance with their words.

We have already talked a number of times about price rise, but even then there are no indications that they are going to do anything about price control. If we cannot control price rise in their country the way prices are increasing here, women are taking water only before going to sleep, they are committing suicide. Such conditions are emerging that people are finding it hard to live. Hence through you, I would like to request that the Govt. should take concrete steps by giving some concessions or finding ways for controlling price rise.

Sir, we talk of provision for tax audit. According to the provision of tax audit that existed in 1984 if someone earned above Rs. 40 lakh then his tax was audited. The Government have not increased the ceiling of tax audit since 1984 and till 2007. The ceiling of Rs. 40 lakh is still continuing today. It should be at least increased upto Rs. three crore, only then there can be any relaxation. If some

one is doing any business, then thought should be on promoting his business. The limit for the service tax providers is Rs. eight lakh, they have not increased this limit. Today there are many such industries and parks, which give service to our society. Given their service to us, then expenses have increased so much that Rs. eight lakh then covers nothing. If we increase this limit from Rs. eight lakh to Rs. fifty lakh then only we will actually give them some relief, otherwise the Government have forced a burden on our public in the name of service tax, because they have also increased the service tax, from 10 per cent to 12 per cent. Exemption under both these conditions, is only Rs. eight lakh. If we view it from these three viewpoints, then it's not correct. Similarly the education cess, earlier it was two per cent education cess, now higher education cess has been added under education cess, which is increased by one per cent. This means that such complications have been created that earlier we used to give two per cent education cess, but now it has been complicated by increasing it in the name of one per cent of two per cent for higher education. In place of simplifying it has been further complicated. I would like to state that they have created complications in the income tax return form. Earlier this form was of one page, now it is of four pages and in those four pages they have desired such information which are already with this department, but they have made it quite complicated.

Similarly, I would like to refer to the present slab of income tax. According to it the Government have increased the exemption limit from Rs. one lakh to Rs. 1.10, that is an increase of Rs. 10 thousand only. For ladies they have increased it from Rs. 1.35 lakh to 1.45 lakh and for senior citizens from Rs. 1.85 lakh to 1.95 lakh which is very less. Through you I would like to request the hon. Minister that it won't serve any purpose until the income tax limit is increased. If a woman is doing her business and for her an increase of Rs. 10 thousand is like a drop in the ocean. This won't help in anyway. If you actually want to give relief to women, senior citizens and the commonman in income tax then my suggestion is to increase the exemption limit

[Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari]

from Rs. 1.10 lakh to Rs.1.50 lakh for the commonman, for women increase it from Rs. 1.45 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh and for senior citizens increase it from Rs. 1.95 lakh to 2.50 lakh.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, since there is no time, I would like to state one last thing in brief about co-operative banks, because I have established one co-operative bank in my constituency. So I am aware about its practical problems that when women come into the co-operative sector and people are brought into it, then there are many difficulties. It is one such movement, which the Government needs to encourage even further so that more and more activities could be promoted, but tax has been imposed on co-operative banks, this is not fair. This is a self-contradictory step due to which this sector will not be able to develop. This way the Government are de-moralizing the women to join the co-operative sector. I, therefore, request that the tax imposed on the co-operative banks should be removed.

I have a few other points also. Standard deduction of Rs. 30 thousand on income tax has been removed, it should be restored. There are many other such points, but time is less. So I will conclude by including this important point that the hon. Finance Minister should definitely take some concrete steps to control price rise.

[English]

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod) : Sir, I would like to support the Finance Bill presented by our hon. Finance Minister. We discussed the General Budget in detail.

I share the views expressed by Shri C.K. Chandrappan with regard to tax structure adopted by the Government. The most important issue now-a-days is the price rise, which affects the common man the most. We can say that our growth rate is 9.2 per cent and that there are a large

number of millionaires in our country. But it is not possible for the common man to get essential commodities at the cheaper rates. I would request the Government to take some immediate steps as there is no time to lose for the UPA Government. No one will wait, especially when there is an undue delay in implementing the Common Minimum Programme. I would like to say that petroleum and diesel prices have to be reduced again. Otherwise, there will be no relief for the common man.

With regard to Public Distribution System, in Kerala we have sufficient and enough experience to give commodities at cheaper price through the Fair Price Shops. It is sad to say that even we are unable to do that because there is no sufficient allotment of foodgrains from the Central Government. So, that has to be taken into account.

The NDA Government had taken a number of important commodities from the Essential Commodities Act. That has become really ineffective. So, I would request the Government to make this Act effective in order to take action against the hoarders and black marketeers. It is true that the Government needs resources and revenues for this purpose. The Government should not hesitate to tax the rich. What we see is that the ordinary people are made to bear more and more burden of tax in every Budget. I do not know why the Government is hesitating to take such a strong step, particularly when we say that there are a large number of millionaires in our country.

I would like to speak with regard to some tax measures that have been included in the Budget, especially the ones which adversely affect Kerala. Take, for example, the case of palm oil. The reduction of import duty on palm oil would affect our State. We had raised this issue in this House.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : You said just now that the prices are going up. The customs duties are reduced. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : Of course, it is true that every State has special features and all that ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Please make up your mind. The customs duties are reduced in order to bring down prices...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : As far as Kerala State is concerned, the State produces more coconut and more coconut oil. As a result, we have to suffer. That is the main issue. When the hon. Minister of Finance says that with regard to the import duty on oil, what about the proposal which you have made to reduce the import duty on rubber from 25 per cent to five per cent? ...*(Interruptions)* It has come in the newspapers. It is also mentioned about the reduction of import duty on pepper, tea and coffee. These are all stated by the hon. Ministers. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : You know the provisions in the Finance Bill. What is the use of saying all these things? We are discussing Finance Bill. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : Of course, the Finance Bill is connected with the issues that the people face. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Is there any provision in the Finance Bill? You point that out. How can I answer something appearing in the newspapers? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : It is true that the Bill may be passed. But, at the same time, the Government can take the route of Executive Order and after the Parliament Session, they can give some other issues. That is what I am saying. I am not joking. This has come in the newspapers and your Cabinet Ministers have come up with the suggestions. That is why I would like to say all these things.

With regard to some of the measures which the hon.

Minister has taken regarding plantation sector, I really welcome because that is beneficial to Kerala. At the same time, some of the other measures which the Government has taken are very dangerous to some industries in Kerala. For example, take the case of bidi sector. The hon. Minister of Finance in the House has said that he follows the Minister of Health and Family Welfare. Of course we can follow the health care as far as the Ministry of Health is concerned. What about the Ministry of Labour? I would like to know whether the Ministry of Labour is in consultation or they are ageing with this.

As you may be aware, not only in Kerala but all over India, there are about 50 lakh workers engaged in the bidi sector. It means that there are about two crore of people depending upon the bidi sector.

Sir, in your Budget Speech it was stated that you have increased tax from Rs. 7 to Rs. 11 and Rs. 17 to Rs. 24 for hand-made bidis and machine-made bidis. I would humbly request the Government that they should not really take tax this time because a large number of people are engaged in the bidi sector and 90 per cent of them are women workers. They are getting low wages and still now their employment opportunities are reducing. It is this time that this tax system is introduced. Nor only that, as far as this tax structure is concerned, it is concerned only about the the cooperative sector and the Government firms, because there is a provision that below the production of 20 lakh bidis, they are not able to give tax. So the private persons can avoid tax. So I would request the Government to take this issue because it is the issue of the poor and common people in Kerala.

Titanium Corporation is the Government-owned public undertaking in Kerala. It is really running in profit. But nowadays, the State Governments has submitted the representation to increase the duty from 12.5 per cent to 15 per cent. It is said to say that the Government has taken a decision to reduce it from 12 per cent to 10 per cent. That will also affect the public undertaking. So the hon. Minister of Finance would be kind enough to consider this

[Shri P. Karunakaran]

issue because the Government of Kerala has already taken up that issue with the Government.

Sir, this House has passed a resolution and also taken a decision to give 27 per cent reservation to the Other Backward Classes (OBC). I think it is the privilege of the House and it is the landmark in the history of the House that we have given 27 per cent reservation to the OBC section. So the Judiciary has to come to congratulate our Minister as well as to this House because we have taken this issue after 60 years.

It is sad to say that the Court has taken the decision not to implement it. It is rejected and it is denied. I am really sorry to say this. I am not criticizing the Court. But this House has the right. So, I would request the Government to come out with an appropriate action plan to give the benefits to the poor people. Otherwise, these benefits will not be given to them.

I am concluding with one point. The Sachar Commission has also submitted the report. In regard to my own question, the Government has given the reply saying: "We are considering the suggestions and not taken the decision." In the report itself, it has been stated that the Muslim minorities, in the case of employment and education, are very poor; their status in many States is really below that of the Scheduled Caste and the Scheduled Tribe people. So, I would request the Government to take steps in this regard in the case of their education and employment. The suggestions of the Sachar Commission have to be implemented without any delay.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to give some suggestions to the hon. Finance Minister.

At the outset, I would like to say that everybody is

happy. We are all happy that the GDP growth in the year 2006-07 was 9.2 per cent. In the last three years of the UPA Government, the average growth rate is 8.6 per cent. For the entire Tenth Plan Period, they have achieved a growth rate of nearly 8 per cent. Our target is 8 per cent. So, growth is taking place. Income is increasing. Even now, everyone is convinced that the 21st Century would belong to Asia, particularly to India and China.

Growth without equity is fruitless. Growth without creating employment is also fruitless. But still there is a huge chunk of population of 250-300 million people who have been categorized as poor according to our own statistics. In this scenario, we have to take care of these 250-300 million people. They have no access to health, education, basic minimum facilities like housing, sanitation and other issues. So, we have to concentrate on these people. The total workforce in this country in the unorganized sector is 37 crore. Out of this, 99 per cent constitutes the working force of agriculture and industrial sector. The UPA Government is also committed to do something for this unorganized sector people. It wants to make legislation. It has to give statutory benefits to this unorganized sector. It has not happened as yet.

Regarding tax collection also, in the recent statement given by the Finance Minister, it has been stated that in this year, they have collected Rs. 4,70,077 crore which is around Rs. 5000 crore more than the RE for the fiscal year. On the one hand, we are increasing our revenue. The GDP growth is also increasing. On the other hand, what has happened in this country? We have so many Centrally-sponsored Schemes. But there is no good delivery mechanism. Even under the SCP, we are providing crores of rupees to the State Governments. They are not implementing those schemes in letter and spirit. They are diverting the funds to the MLAs' Constituency Development Scheme. We are sitting here. We are formulating the schemes. We are sending the money. Ultimately, the stakeholders are not getting the benefit. What has Shri Ashok Lahiri, the Chief Economic Advisor of the Finance Ministry said? The Ninth Plan Document for

1997-2000 said that the amount of money we spend for poverty alleviation – around Rs. 40,000 crore – for the last five years, would have given around Rs. 8,000 per month per poor family which would be sufficient to buy 3 kilograms of foodgrains everyday. But this has not happened.

What happened to this money which we have sent to the States? In this year's Budget also, the Finance Minister has talked about monitoring, management and strengthening of the Targeted Public Distribution System. Even for *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, we are imposing 2 per cent cess and for higher education we have put an additional cess of 1 per cent more. So, we are collecting 3 per cent cess from the people as education cess.

I would like to say what happened in Andhra Pradesh. Recently, in the name of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* and District Primary Education Programme, some officials have misappropriated nearly Rs. 70 crore, as per inquiry reports. It came in the Press that some politicians are also involved in this. The Government of India has put a restriction that if a State wants to get the second installment of the money released, the concerned State Government has to send the Utilisation Certificate. I would like to give the example of my State Andhra Pradesh here. I do not know about other States. What have they done? They have drawn the money, they have put in their own accounts, they have sent the Utilisation Certificate and they have drawn the second installment. Now, the CB-CID is investigating into this matter and all those people who are involved in this misappropriation are in jail now. These are things which happen in the States. So, where is the delivery mechanism? The Central Government is allocating money for various schemes and sending the money to the States, but whether that money is properly utilized or not, that is the question. If the funds are not properly spent, how can poverty be eradicated in this country? Even after 60 years of Independence, we are talking about 300 million people not having access to basic facilities. This is shameful.

Sir, in Andhra Pradesh, about 5,000 farmers and weavers have committed suicide in the last three years. We have appointed so many Commissions. A National Commission on Agriculture under the Chairmanship of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan was appointed and that Commission had already submitted 5 reports. I would like to ask a question to the hon. Finance Minister. Everybody is talking about the plight of farmers in this country. If the Government is really interested about the farm sector, why has the Government of India not implemented the recommendations of Dr. Swaminathan Commission? Dr. Swaminathan had recommended that credit should be given to farmers at 4 per cent interest. During the last year, the hon. Finance Minister had reduced the interest by 2 per cent for crop loans. That is not at all sufficient. For buying agricultural implements like tractor, drip irrigation equipment etc., different banks are providing credit at the rate of 10 to 14 per cent. This is not at all correct. The Government has to immediately implement the recommendations of Dr. Swaminathan Commission. Otherwise, the tragedy of farmers' committee suicide will continue.

The Finance Minister has given a debt relief package to 31 districts in 5 States. I would like to give an example here of what happened in Andhra Pradesh. In the year 2004, the then Government had announced that the interest and overdues would be rescheduled and they had announced a moratorium for 2 years. Under that, it was stated that wherever loans are overdue on 30th June, only those loans would be rescheduled. But by that time, there were no overdues. This moratorium of 2 years was announced by the previous Government. The hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh is also pursuing this matter with the Government of India. So, in view of the above, I would request that necessary instructions should be issued for inclusion of overdue interest of Rs. 1,662 crore, Rs. 1,294 crore in the cooperative sector and Rs. 368 crore in other commercial banks and regional rural banks, which was postponed in the year 2004 in Andhra Pradesh under the present relief package of waiver of overdue interest

[Shri Kinjarapu Yerrannaaidu]

for the benefit of farmers. This is pending with the Government of India.

Then, the National Crop Insurance Scheme is also very important. Every year we are talking about this scheme. Even the Standing Committee on Agriculture has recommended that panchayats should be taken as a unit for providing crop insurance to farmers. Then only the farmer will get the benefit. We have to rethink, review and redesign the present scheme. Otherwise, the whole scheme will not give any benefit to farmers in this country. It is seen from the information furnished that in the Kharif season of 2004, 1,26,87,046 farmers were covered under this scheme of whom 12,24,455 farmers benefited.

Same is the case even in the case of 2005 kharif also. They fixed the area as a unit and out of that area if the yields are less then only they will get the benefit under this scheme. So, my request to the hon. Finance Minister is to put panchayats as a unit. Then, if there is any crop failure, as per the guidelines of the Government of India, the farmer will get the benefit. They are paying premiums, but the returns are nil. They are not getting any benefit from the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme from the agricultural insurance companies of India.

As far as inflation is concerned, on 24th February 2007, it was 6.1 per cent as against 4.2 per cent last year. This is an alarming situation. In the current year, there is an increase in the prices of wheat, pulses, edible oil, food, vegetables and everything. Anyhow, we have failed to control the inflation. That is why the prices are going out of hand.

I may suggest two-three measures to control inflation. Strengthening of the Public Distribution System is the most important measure because we have to distribute so many other commodities to the poorer sections of the society through the PDS. Then, withdrawal of other essential

commodities from future trading is also an important measure to control inflation.

I am now giving one suggestion with regard to setting up of Stabilisation Fund to address changes in the international oil field. We have to create a Stabilisation Fund and as and when there is an intervention, any shortage or a gap between demand and supply, then we have to release it in the market. So, the Government of India should create a Stabilisation Fund.

SHRI K.S. RAO : Price Stabilisation Fund!

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Yes, Price Stabilisation Fund. Then only we can control the prices and other things.

These are all my suggestions that I have given. At the time of discussion on Budget also I have given some suggestions in the interest of the poor people in this country, like equity with employment so that there is a proper growth. Otherwise, there is no meaning of growth. Even the growth is only for the 20 per cent people and 80 per cent of the people in this country are not getting the benefits out of this growth. You will have to rethink and reorient your policies, after 60 years of Independence, then only the country will be happy, the poor will be happy. By this growth, everybody should feel happy, otherwise, there is no meaning of this growth. The income and the growth should be disseminated to the poorest of the poor in the country and then only the country will be happy.

SHRI TAPIR GAO (Arunachal East) : Hon. Chairman Sir, I am happy to participate in this discussion on the Finance Bill.

The House and the countrymen have really got appreciation for the IQ of hon. Finance Minister, Shri Chidambaram and I always praise his IQ that he can really lead the country with economic reforms. It was the expectation of the people of this country once. But today, after three years, the countrymen are facing

troubles in their daily lives, so the IQ of our hon. Finance Minister is question marked by the common masses of this country.

Sir, the UPA Government has given stress on three major elements of this country, that is, Agriculture, Education and Health. I really appreciate Shri P. Chidambaram, the hon. Finance Minister, for the stand that he has taken in spite of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, the hon. Chairperson of UPA, requesting and writing letters to minimize the prices of essential commodities in the country. But he has taken a stand and the outcome of this stand makes the people hungry, make the people cry and this is the situation in this Finance Bill.

As far as taxation on agricultural products and upliftment of agriculture is concerned, what policies have been established by this Government? Even if we demand on the floor of this House, the hon. Finance Minister is not going to re-fix the taxations in the interest of the common people of this country, to help the farmers of this country.

Therefore, I would like to stress upon the way where all these accumulated taxes should meet expenditures. The expenditures are going up in such a way. Last time also, I made a request to the hon. Finance Minister and this UPA Government that this country, the great India, cannot be run with a yardstick of policy for the development of this country. The geographical factors of the country are very much important. Our Hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance is here. I hope, he really understands the geographical pictures of this country.

Let us take the example of cement. The price of cement in Delhi is very low. In Guwahati, a bag of cement costs Rs. 200 to Rs 220. When it reaches Nagaland, when it goes up to Arunachal Pradesh, its costs reaches to Rs. 350. Without cement and steel, how can he make development in this country? Therefore, it is my humble submission to the Finance Minister in nutshell that to develop the entire country we have to classify the

geographical factors of this country, while placing Budgets, and even in taxation also. The coastal areas people cannot be compared with the Himalayan region people. The expenditure is very high in the Himalayan region. Now the UPA Government, specially the Finance Minister is putting one yardstick that governs the desert people, the coastal people, the Himalayan people and the main plateau of this country. Therefore, the importance of this country should be looked through the geographical factors of this country.

Most of the hon. Members have spoken mainly on agriculture. We are shedding crocodile tears in this august House. The farmers are committing suicides. They are dying out of hunger. Until and unless this country makes a separate agricultural budget, we are not going to solve the agricultural problem of this country. Like Railway Budget, this country needs a separate agricultural budget really to help and uplift the farmers of this country. Therefore, it is against my humble submission to the Finance Minister to make a special budget for agriculture in the near future for this country.

Now I come to education. A lot of importance has been given to education by the UPA Government. We cannot compare the Delhi educational system with that of Himachal Pradesh. We cannot compare the infrastructure of schools in Delhi with that of schools in North Eastern Region. There are many primary schools where there are two class rooms and where five classes are taking place. This is the importance given by the UPA Government to education. Therefore, I would request the Finance Minister to look into this field. You have launched *Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan* etc. Without education the society and the country cannot develop. If the UPA Government is giving lot of importance to education, then it needs to look very seriously that where there are two class rooms and where there are five classes there, how the children are getting education in the Himalayan region? Therefore, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to see that in such places we have to take care of the educational system. So, you have given importance to *Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan*.

[Shri Tapir Gao]

As far as health is concerned, you will be surprised to know that there are many health units without doctors in the interior places. There are many health units where there are no medicines. There are lot of health units all over the country in the interior places which are without any facility. If the UPA Government is giving importance to agriculture, education and health, the same mechanism should be spread to the interior places so that the common masses can also get the benefit of medical facility of the Government of India.

A very important point is about mid-day meals.

14.00 hrs.

I am really happy that the Finance Minister has given a lot of importance to education. Let us take the North Eastern Region and in particular my State, Arunachal Pradesh. Children are enquiring from us as to what the Mid-day Meal Scheme is. For years together, children have been given any kind of food as prescribed by the Government of India in the interior States like Arunachal Pradesh. So, if you are putting a lot of taxes for the development of this country and for the development of the citizens, you have to look into the Mid-day Meal Scheme especially, and there should be a mechanism so that it reaches the interior places in the country. Otherwise, children would enquire from us as to what the Mid-day Meal Scheme is.

We have got the North East Council. In the Tenth Plan, a sum of Rs. 3,500 crore had been earmarked for the North East Council, and at the end of the Tenth Plan, a sum of Rs. 889 crore had been lapsed. Now, we are in the Eleventh Plan. Last time also I made a request to the Finance Minister to kindly carry forward the lapsed amount of Rs. 889 crore in the Eleventh Plan. And how the Government is looking towards the North Eastern Region is a question mark now. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI TAPIR GAO : Sir, I now come to the Look East Policy. A huge collection of taxes is being made for the development of this country. Where is the Look East Policy? Where is the border trade policy? Where from you are going to have border trades from the North Eastern Region towards the South East Asian countries? Therefore, when a huge collection of taxes from the common people has been made for the development of this country, why can you not see that the Look East Policy is implemented in the North Eastern Region for connecting the South East Asian countries? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI TAPIR GAO : Sir, if you permit me, I will make one more point.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude with one more point.

SHRI TAPIR GAO : Sir, tourism has been given a lot of importance in the North Eastern Region. Will the hon. Finance Minister and also the Tourism Minister look into the obstacle that the North Eastern Region is facing now? The obstacle for the development of tourism for the foreign tourists in the North Eastern Region is in getting the restricted area permit (RAP). If any foreign tourist has to visit the North East, then he has to obtain the restricted area permit from the Home Ministry. It takes about 15 days to one month. This is the problem which a foreign tourist faces and the Government has to look into it and remove this obstacle. Only then, the North East will be developed.

Now, I come to my last point, that is about the Minimum Support Price. The agricultural farmers in the North Eastern Region have not been given the Minimum Support Price not even to a single specified crop. Therefore, I would like to conclude by making a request that the North Eastern Region of this country should also be developed by implementing the Look East Policy so that we can join the mainstream.

With these words, I really look forward the hon. Finance Minister to look towards the North East.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Shri Adhir Chowdhury. Please cooperate with the Chair and try to conclude your speech within the time allotted to you.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (Berhampore, West Bengal) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Finance Bill presented by our dexterous Finance Minister, Shri Chidambaramji in order to give effect to the financial proposal for the next financial year including the provision for a supplementary financial proposal as and when it will be required including the exigencies.

Sir, it is in consonance with the declaration under the Provisional Collection of Taxes Act, 1931. In Economics, we have to pierce the veil of monetary flows to understand the flow of resources. The Government has announced a plethora of public programmes. The Government requires funds to defray the expenditure, and funds are to be stemmed from the taxation of the nation's households.

According to Justice Holm, taxes are what we pay for civilized economy. Taxation is such a key vehicle by which we can transfer our real resources from private goods to collective goods. Therefore, a Government cannot be run without imposing taxation.

But one of the most important salient features of this Government's policy is that the Finance Minister has struck a balance between the announcements under the NCMP and exercising the austerity to fulfill the commitment under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act. So, it is a very ticklish job, and our Finance Minister has been performing this strenuous job in a very, very competent manner.

Sir, there is no gainsaying in it that our economy has been growing in a phenomenal way. Already savings rate has been registered at 32.4 per cent of our GDP while investment has been registered at 33.8 per cent of our

GDP where incremental capital output ratio has been registered at four per cent. Naturally, it implies the potential strength of our economy. But still inflation acts as the trigger in the woodpile. Inflation has been playing a dirty game in our economy.

Therefore, the Finance Minister has intended to curb the inflation by way of various measures. As an anti-inflationary measure, the Finance Bill has proposed the reduction of peak rate for non-agricultural products from 12.5 per cent to 10 per cent to make it comparable with East Asian Ratio. Again, duties of some essential consumer goods including food item and intermediaries have been reduced. In addition to it, the Government has also reduced the duties on imported items, which are needed for current consumption. As a measure to curb the inflation, the Government has banned the Futures Trading on staple wheat and rice in all the Commodity Exchanges.

Sir, it is very encouraging to note that this is the first time that the share of Direct Taxes is tipped to be five per cent while in major developing countries it hovers around six per cent to seven per cent of the GDP. In India, while Personal Income Tax is registered 1.9 per cent of the GDP, the Corporate Tax registered 3.2 per cent of the GDP. Direct Tax comprised 19.1 per cent of the Central Tax in 1990-91. Now, it is 47.6 per cent.

Service Tax has been grown in a phenomenal manner to the tune of 54 per cent. For industry, it is 27 per cent. However, agriculture is still registering a break margin of 2.3 per cent.

Sir, another salient feature of the Finance Bill is that the Government is laying special emphasis on the revenue productivity of our tax system so that we can keep up the sustained increase in revenue. The Government is trying hard to minimize distortions and creating nationwide market. The revenue productivity in Service Tax has been done due to extension in the coverage of service under the tax. However, still Railway fares and freights are excluded from the Service Tax.

[Shri Adhir Chowdhury]

There has been a spectacular improvement in the revenue productivity of Direct Taxes since 2001-02, which is glaring.

Revenue from direct tax has increased at an annual average rate of 26.6 per cent due to good performance of personal income tax and corporate tax. The personal income tax has registered a growth of 20.6 per cent now, while the corporate tax has registered 31.4 per cent. During 2001-02, the share of direct taxes was less than 35 per cent of the total tax revenue but in 2006-07, it has steadily increased to the tune of 50 per cent. Already important initiative has been undertaken in reforming the tax administration. Competent tax administration is a vital ingredient for tax revenue productivity. Here, the Government has entrusted the Tax Information Network to the National Security Depository. It is a very, very significant step. That has been reflected in the increasing revenue productivity.

However, in so far as excise duty is concerned, here I think the information system has not been developed as desired. I do not know what the reason behind this. The Ministers are here. They will be well-equipped to answer this.

Sir, this year direct tax has been estimated to the tune of Rs. 2,67,175 crore as against Rs. 2,29,007 crore estimated to be collected in 2006-2007. The individual tax payers are voluntarily complying with our tax structure because the taxes are moderate. Now, all the tax payers are happy to pay their taxes. Therefore, the tax network has been widening year after year under this Government. It is widely believed that our tax system has been organized under two principles. On the one hand, it is based on benefit principle and on the other hand it is their ability to pay principle. Therefore, the core issue is that income earned from higher income groups is to be diverted in order to increase the income and the consumption level of the poorer sections.

I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to Section 40A(3) of Income Tax Law. Section 40A(3) provides for disallowance of 20 per cent of expenditure including purchases, if the payment for the same in excess of Rs. 20,000 is made with other than by means of crossed cheque or crossed drafts. The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Act, 2006 had modified the requirement with effect from 13th July, 2006, stipulation that crossed cheque or account payee cheque or account payee draft should substitute crossed draft. The Finance Bill, 2007 would now hike the disallowance to 100 per cent. Here lies the problem because it may further be noted that the provision under Section 40A(3) is single way traffic with no sanctions on the sellers to accept cash exceeding Rs. 20,000. Here, it appears a serious mismatch because both the sellers and the purchasers should be treated equally because it is the basic principal of any taxation and that should be followed.

I would like to give two or three suggestions. Please allow me.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Time is over. Please conclude.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : We are aware that NREGA programme is a very popular programme in our country. Under the NREGA, this year allocation has been made to the tune of Rs.12,000 crore. Last year it was around Rs.11,300 crore, denoting an increase of 6.2 per cent. However, the scheme has been expanded from 200 districts to 330 districts, that means, there has been an increase of 65 per cent.

Sir, here the Government should give special importance to the NREGS programme so that on the excuse of demand-driven fund, the NREGS programme should not be diluted.

Sir, we know that in India, in a number of States and in a number of districts, industrialisation has taken place, but still we are a country where 200 districts have been recognised as backward districts and where 25 regions have been recognised as backward regions. So, while

industrialisation is going to mature in some pockets of our country, the vast areas of our country have remained industrially untouchables.

In so far as sick industries are concerned, I would suggest to the Government that those who are eager to set up new industries and those who are eager to revive sick industries, they should be given proper incentives. This is still a country where more than 60 per cent people are eking out their livelihood from agriculture sector in terms of jute, in terms of milk and in terms of tea. The Government should take special care so that lakhs of people who are earning their livelihood from this sector should be given proper treatment.

So far as Special Economic Zone is concerned, Sir, you are also aware that there is a severe brouhaha, there is a severe hue and cry arising out from the setting up of SEZs. Already Nandigram in West Bengal has become a focal point where the State Government had resorted to coercive policy to acquire land from the farmers. Special Economic zone is an economic programme. So, all the section of our society should be taken into confidence before setting up any SEZ. By doing that, we can avoid the bloodshed, the mayhem and the violence. Still Nandigram has been seething under violence and rapes have been continuing and murders have been continuing.

In so far as silk is concerned. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : Sir, it is in regard to SEZ. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : My dear friend, you please conclude. We have to finish the Finance Bill today.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : Sir, I would suggest to

the hon. Minister that if any individual, any NRI or an industrial institution is eager to rehabilitate the physically challenged people and the visually challenged people, they should be given a rebate on their income tax.

Sir, the economic programme of the UPA Government, the caravan of our economic programme has been marching ahead, come what may in the way of our progress.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN (Deograh) : Through you, I would like to put forth two-three suggestions before the hon. Finance Minister. It would be better if while replying he takes these suggestions into account. In his budget speech, hon'ble Minister has imposed duties on the country's mineral resources particularly on iron ore and kromite. A duty of Rs. 3000 per tonne has been imposed on the export of kromite and Rs. 200 on iron ore. We consider it a welcome step. Approx. 60% of the mineral resources of our country, especially iron, kromite and bauxite etc., are exported to other countries. From there value addition is done and thereafter the minerals are reutilized in our country. The Government has taken a right step to check it, though it is a belated one. I would like to put forth two suggestions in this regard. We have of late got information that under the pressure of the mining lobby, the Government is going to quantify some minerals and proposing a gradation of iron ore. My submission is that the Government should not do it. It is good if nothing of that sort is being done. But it would be inappropriate if the Government proposes to do that. The Government has accomplished a good task, please do not create any confusion in this regard. It should not be diluted because of the pressure of the vested interests of a particular lobby.

Secondly, I would like to state that the funds collected through these duties are the assets of the States and the Central Government has no role in it. The States not only bear the environmental burden but also bear the issues

[Shri Dharmendra Pradhan]

related with problems of land acquisition and law and order. Can the Central Government bear that burden? The State, I come from is going to take the maximum benefit after assessing 90% duty on Kromite and iron ore. Particularly, three-four poor States of our country like Orissa, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka can avail of its benefit. The producing State should be given benefit of funds collected through duties. Through you, I would like to place this specific suggestion before the Central Government that 90% of the funds collected through duties should be given to the producing States.

Further, I would like to suggest that statutory royalty on mining items should be enhanced. We all believe in the federal system. However, it is inappropriate to suppress for the long financial expectations of the States on account of the federal system. It will create imbalance if the people of the producing States remain poor. If our democracy is mature, then there should be balanced distribution for balanced development. The Government have not revised the royalty particularly on coal for the past sometime. Today, in the course of the discussion on this Finance Bill, I would like to know whether the Government will revise the royalty on coal and whether it can be done in a stipulated time frame. If this revision is done, it will definitely provide benefits to the producing State. While placing these 2-3 suggestions, through you, I draw the attention of the Government towards it.

[English]

SHRI KIRIP CHALIHA (Guwahati) : Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Finance Bill. Sir, I would also like to raise only six or seven specific points relating to the North-East and not so much all India-specific.

I must start with price rise. Price rise, unfortunately, has been a matter of concern for all of us in the

House because there has been an all India rise in the Price Index. The Finance Ministry is expected to be the nodal Ministry tackling price rise. Unfortunately, certain events took place on which even the Finance Ministry may not have any control. For example, price rise in the North-East has taken place also partly because the six per cent rebate, that was given by the Railway Ministry for the food-grains that came into the North-East and the products that came out of the North-East, has been withdrawn. As a result of the withdrawal of this rebate on railway freight, there has been a huge price rise, about 30 per cent price rise in the North-East. That is one aspect which the Finance Minister has to co-ordinate with the Railway Ministry.

Similarly, various other speakers have also talked about the relief that has to be given to the North-East and also North Bengal on the tea industry. Tea industry in Bengal and North-East, especially Assam and Tripura, employs a huge tea labour population who are totally dependent upon tea industry for their livelihood. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, the tea industry is gradually at a decline and there have been a number of sick tea gardens. Many tea industries have virtually got closed, leading to acute unemployment.

Now, they need a special package. It is true that the Commerce Ministry is trying to give a number of reliefs but I still feel that full-scale relief will not be given unless we go in for a special package for the revival of the tea industry in the North-East.

We must also concentrate on agriculture in the North-East. A package has been announced for Uttarakhand in which a lot of subsidy is given to the agriculturists for changing of their crop pattern, for going in for alternate croppings in a year. This scheme is becoming highly beneficial to the farmers of Uttarakhand. I would like to request the hon. Finance Minister to take it up with the Agriculture Minister and sanction something substantial so that that kind of a scheme can be implemented in the North-East also.

I would like to supplement some of the things which have been raised by my friends from the North-East, who talked about looking into the financial arrangements, not only from an all-India point of view but also from a North-East-specific or South-specific or regional-specific point of view because there are problems which may acquire a particular kind of proportion in Delhi, in the Metros, in Mumbai, in Chennai or in Kolkata, which may have different dimension in the North-East. I would just point out one small point.

Housing in North-East - we have about 10 per cent *pucca* houses, about 15 per cent tin houses. Without the growth of the housing sector in those places, to talk about development and bringing them at par with the rest of the country becomes a pipedream. Unfortunately housing sector in Metros have shown certain trends due to which the Centre has to go in for a certain amount of reduction of benefits. This reduction has been given and this is also a welcome thing. I think, it is a right kind of thing to see that housing prices, with high increases that is taking place in the housing sector in the Metros, get reduced. But that affects the North-East very adversely. That is why, we feel that while we are increasing the interest rates on housing sector, in Metros or in the rest of the country to see that housing sector grows properly, subsidy might again become necessary, specially in the North-East.

Related to this, I would just point out how one or two tax exemptions or measures tend to become counter-productive in the North-East. I give a specific example of cement. Excise duty for cement has been increased up to Rs. 600. For the cement that comes from the rest of the country, Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan to the North-East, since excise duty has been increased to Rs. 600, the prices of cement has increased in the North-East. Prices of cement of the factories, which are in the heart of the country, have increased. Now, the Finance Minister has increased the Central Excise for those cement factories where the MRP is Rs. 190 or Rs. 195 or something like that. In the North-East, for example in Assam itself, we have factories which are producing and selling cement below

Rs. 190 because of increase of excise duty to Rs. 600. They have increased the cement prices, and today, cement prices of all those cements which are produced locally in the North-East has become about Rs. 225 at par with the cement production factories who are charging Rs. 225 from the rest of the country. The cost of transportation is added as a result cement prices have increased. Those industries which are based in Assam - because of the North-East Industrial Policy benefits, get an exemption of the excise duty; they get reimbursement of this excise duty as a result what is happening? This excess profit which the cement factory owners are earning; they get reimbursement. They are earning huge profits in the form of tax benefits but for a common man the cement price remains Rs. 225 or Rs. 230. If the intended benefits of tax exemptions and tax benefits goes only to the industrialists and not to the common people, then, it becomes a matter of serious concern.

I would like the Finance Ministry to see that some kind of balance is maintained so that the tax or the excise benefits go to the common man and not to the industrialists. Unfortunately, the industrialists are getting these benefits and inflation is on the rise. I think the Finance Minister has to give a very serious consideration on this aspect.

I would suggest that there should perhaps be certain concessions or transport subsidy for the cement coming to North-east from other factories and for the cement that is produced within North-east the prices should not be increased beyond Rs. 190 or Rs. 195. Some limit should be fixed. Poor people are not getting any relief. There is an illustrious case of similar benefits being accrued to an unscrupulous business house.

I come to the specific case of 'Pan Masala'. Huge concessions are being given to the Pan Masala products, with or without tobacco, as per the old 1997 Industrial Policy for North-east. You will be shocked to know that pan masala with tobacco is a carcinogenic product and encourages cancer. North-east is a cancer prone area. The

[Shri Kirip Chaliha]

Government at that time initially gave concession and excluded pan masala with tobacco from the concession. Suddenly, overnight the then Government opposed its own stand, which was also placed to the High Court. I smell a scam in the decision of the last Ministry. I will just quote the stand of the Government at that time. The Government itself said:

That a thorough review was undertaken sometime in the last quarter of 2000 in relation to the operation of exemption with respect to products like cigarette and other tobacco related products and it was decided that the unintended benefit flowing to this kind of manufactureres was thoroughly disproportionate to the benefits which the State would get from this fiscal revenue foregone by the Centre. It was, therefore, decided in public interest to discontinue forthwith this exemption which has completely distorted the entire working of this industry. The said notification has been issued in public interest and specifically withdraws benefits granted to tobacco and tobacco products.

It would be relevant to state that several factors have been taken into account to advance public interest particularly since tobacco products apart from being injurious to public health it was found that the units set up did not generate necessary employment as anticipated."

Sir, the industries did not generate employment. It led to health hazards and that is why the Government took a stand that these benefits should be withdrawn. Most mischievously, the BJP Government once again allowed these benefits to be given to these unscrupulous industries. Sir, there is a definite scam in this and as a result these industries got tax benefits to the tune of thousands of crores. You will be shocked to know that these industries of pan masala, with or without tobacco, got subsidy and tax benefits on the plea that they are given

the tax benefits again so that they can utilize their demurrage money for the development of North-east States by having new industries. New industries that were supposed to have been developed by them again became pan masala industries. You will be shocked to know that these industries did no generate employment for more than 100 people. In reality they did only packaging. In some cases it has come to light that they simply wrote 'Made in Assam' so that they could get the benefit and as a result there has been a huge tax fraud of Rs. 2000 crore. This money, which is Government's money, which has been given to the Escrow account, should be withdrawn.

I am sure the Finance Minister knows the details of this case. He has taken a very right step by withdrawing the benefits to the *pan masala* with or without tobacco. We know that the money has gone out of Assam and North East to banks in Zurich. So, steps have to be taken to recover that money. This money can be utilized for the benefit of the people.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. If you do not cooperate, how can we finish the business.

SHRI KIRIP CHALIHA : Sir, Mr. Chidambaram is one of the ablest Finance Ministers. He has been managing the economy very well. The statistics show that we are doing extremely well. But when the pioneer of economic reforms and the person whom I consider to be the father of economic liberalization with humane face says that there is a growth of crony capitalism, we have to rise to the occasion and think what is happening. I am of the very firm opinion that some of the capitalists and big business houses are getting top position in the world but they do not do anything for the common people. The big business houses which fight for petty crores among their families, among brothers, among fathers and sons, nobody would believe that they will do something for the poor and teeming millions who are living below the poverty line in this country. I hope the Finance Minister will address

these issues and take heart in what the Prime Minister is saying.

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry) : Sir, I rise to support the Finance Bill, 2007 moved by the hon. Finance Minister to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government for the financial year, 2007-08.

When we discuss the Finance Bill, we should know that the Finance Bill consists of various amendments relating to taxation proposals of the Government. One can elaborate and elucidate the various issues relating to the Budget but a Finance Bill confines only to the taxation issues and proposals of the Government of India. Now in this respect, I see in this Finance Bill, 132 amendments made to the various taxation laws including the Income Tax laws, Wealth Tax, Custom Duties, Excise, Service Tax and miscellaneous taxes. Now there are more merits in these amendments than the shortcomings and therefore I would commend this Finance Bill as one which tries to ensure economic growth in this country with equity.

As we know, this Finance Bill is a continuation of the various financial proposals that the UPA Government has introduced in the last three years. Now consequent to these financial proposals, we have been able to create a healthy tax system in the country and we should all appreciate the hon. Finance Minister for bringing about a number of tax reforms consistent with the requirement of economic reforms in this country. For example, he has reduced the rates of various taxes both on direct as well as indirect side and he has also thereby ensured tax compliance in the country. People used to say that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Now as a result of comprehensive measures that the Finance Minister has brought, today there is a zooming up of revenues in the country. Now grow tax revenue, for example, in the country has grown by 19.9 per cent, 20 per cent and 27.8 per cent in the first three years. The tax to GDP ratio has increased from 9.2 in 2003-04 to 11.4 in 2006-07. Six years ago, in 2001-02 tax revenue net of States was only Rs. 1,33,532

crore but in 2007-08, the estimated tax receipts are Rs. 44,03,877 crore.

Never in the history of the Finance Ministry of India we could see such a buoyancy in the revenue. This buoyancy in revenue is a result of various innovative measures that this Government has taken.

The UPA Government, when it assumed office three years ago, promised two to three importance reforms on the tax side. The UPA Government had promised that tax rates will be stable and conducive to growth, compliance and investment. Therefore, the UPA Government identified four objectives of taxation as well as financial measures of the Government. When we look at the historical past of the last three years we are able to see that the UPA Government has fulfilled its promise to the nation. For example, tax rates in the country, when we take a 20 years study, you could see frequent changes in the tax rates, like in the first year it would be, say, 25 per cent, the next year it could be 40 to 45 per cent and the year next it could even decrease. There were a lot of fluctuations in the previous years. But now, in the last three years, the rates have been kept at a stable rate and wherever the rates have been high, they were brought down and therefore, stability in the tax system has been ensured.

The second objective of the tax reform has been that a tax must induce a system of growth in the country. You would agree that in the last three years, the UPA Government has been able to move up the growth rate from 7.5 per cent to 9.2 per cent and especially the manufacturing sector, which has been clamouring for consistency, which has been clamouring for stable rates as well as moderate rates, has responded positively to the tax system in the country. Therefore, the manufacturing sector has grown at an unprecedented rate of 13.3 per cent in the last few years and the service sector has been growing at a higher rate, as a result this year we could get an unprecedented growth rate of 9.2 per cent which is the result of the positive tax policy being followed by

[Prof. M. Ramadass]

this Government. Moreover, lower and stable rates have been able to ensure compliance on the part of the taxpayers. There is no more tendency on the part of the taxpayers either to evade tax or avoid tax and the degree of tax evasion and avoidance has been coming down and the number of taxpayers in the fold of tax system has also increased. Finally, the tax rates have increased the propensity to save as well as invest as a result of which the investment in the country today is about 33.8 per cent of GDP. These are all positive aspects which we see in the Finance Bill.

More than that this Finance Bill has been prepared in consonance with the Fiscal Responsibility Act. Many of the taxes that we fixed in the Fiscal Responsibility Act, have been complied in the Finance Bill. It is also consistent with the measures of tax reform suggested by the Kelkar Committee. Therefore, on a comprehensive view we can say that this Finance Bill fits well within the system of taxes that we have embarked upon.

One of the important merits of the Finance Bill relates to clause VI which says that in case of disaster relief we used to impose tax, but now the Finance Bill exempts these from tax and this will benefit the persons who have suffered on account of natural calamities. Another merit of this Bill is that the tax on dividend distribution of Money Market Fund and Liquidity Fund has been raised from 12.5 per cent to 25 per cent; on bank deposit the income tax is at the marginal tax rate, therefore the tax structure incentivised investment in Mutual Fund rather than in bank deposit for high networked individuals and companies. This proposal is a move towards a level playing field ground between Money Market Fund for raising deposits and the units.

On the negative side in the Finance Bill I could see that the Banking Cash Transaction Tax may be reviewed by the Finance Minister because of withdrawal of money from the banks is not an income subject to qualifying for

income tax. Moreover, the process is very cumbersome and if anyone wants to avoid tax and take it to black account etc. he can do that even now. It is because if a person has four accounts in four different banks and if he withdraws Rs. 45,000 from each bank in one day, then he could get Rs. 2,00,000 without paying any tax. Therefore, apart from creating inefficiency it also will induce a lot of cumbersome procedure, which may therefore be reviewed.

When we come to customs and excise duties, two important recommendations were given by the Kelkar Committee. One is, the number of slabs have to be reduced to three but we still find a large number of slabs which give a lot of discretion to the officers who are imposing taxes. Therefore, I would request the hon. Finance Minister to still think on innovative lines to reduce the slabs from the existing five or six slabs to three slabs.

The second recommendation of Kelkar Committee is that we must progressively move from specific rates to *ad valorem* duties. But we find, by the proposal in the Finance Bill, that we are moving more towards specific rates rather than *ad valorem* duties. I can give two examples here. Export duty has been imposed on iron ore which concentrates at Rs. 300 per tonne and chromium ores which concentrates at Rs. 2000 per tonne. Coming to dual rates of excise duty on cement, the duty was Rs. 400 per tonne earlier and now, it will be Rs. 350, the retail price is less than Rs. 190 per bag and Rs. 600, if MRP is above Rs. 190 per bag.

With regard to petroleum products, it would be better in the interest of revenue augmentation that the Government goes more towards specific rates rather than *ad valorem* duties although the rate has been reduced which will induce a sense of price moderation. But if you are going for *ad valorem* duties, then revenue fluctuation will be very high whenever international prices increase. Therefore, we should move more towards specific rates and *ad valorem* duties. These are the shortcomings which I find in the

Finance Bill but, having said, I should also include two issues pertaining to my Union Territory which are lingering in our minds and which, of course, have not evoked a positive response from the Finance Minister.

One issue is with regard to the B-II city status to Puducherry. The Ministry of Home Affairs and all others have recommended that Puducherry, with so much of dynamism, should be granted B-II status. But it is still remaining as the 'C' Class city which status is enjoyed by a village in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. A village in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is treated as equivalent to a dynamic city of Puducherry. It is the capital city and I hope that the Ministry of Finance will be able to give an honorary exemption to Puducherry by elevating its status from 'C' to B-II.

Finally, the Government should also think of devolving resources to Puducherry on the basis of devolution of powers suggested by the Twelfth Finance Commission. Right now, the Union Territory of Puducherry is not entitled to transfer of grants or resources from the Finance Commission. This should be done by the Finance Minister.

With these few proposals, I commend the Finance Bill.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (Dhenkanal) : Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak today.

Our Constitution says that we are supposed to be a democratic and socialistic nation. The country is committed to it. People sitting on that part of the House always criticize on India shining. But it is time for us to be honest with ourselves. When we tour our constituencies, we see how the common man, the poor man is completely depleted, suppressed and crushed by the soaring inflation in India today. There is acute shortage of drinking water. People do not get food twice a day and here, we are sitting in this air-conditioned ensconced House. And we are helping in creating a compartmentalized society in India.

Sir, you are a part of the Left, you are our guide and you should be leading the light. But, unfortunately, that is not happening. I would like to know whether this year's Budget or even this Finance Bill on taxation is actually aiming to achieving an end where the benefits go down to the common man.

We talk about eight per cent and nine per cent growth in GDP. Does it reflect in the collection of taxes? I have my doubts. The Finance Minister is supposed to be very able. But if we see in reality, it is during these past three years the inflation has broken the back of the common man of India. On the one hand, it is claimed that our tax collection machinery is supposed to be one of the most cost effective, thereby implying that it is one of the most efficient machineries. On the other hand, the Prime Minister is constantly hammering on administrative reforms. So, this innate differences of opinion between the two top men of the Government shows that nobody actually knows what is happening in this country. Nobody is aware of what is happening. Everybody is floating in thin air. That is why the common man today is suffering.

As a Government, you have not made paying taxes an attractive proposition. The tax payer in this country is treated as a criminal. You have not given him benefits which will make people come forward to pay tax, whether for the individuals or for the corporates. We are levying taxes, duties, cess, etc. on services and on products which eventually boils down that the common men on the streets have to pay for whatever fancy takes this Government. The poor man is simply stumped by inflation and price rise.

This Government claims that they want to remove inspector raj, which is a very good idea. I would like to know how many common people are really affected by the inspector raj. Which inspector visits your home or my home? They do not. So, who were the inspectors visiting? They were visiting the rich, the mighty, and the industrialists. Now, you want to remove that, which was a small check. Howsoever perverted the check might have

[Shri Tathagata Satpathy]

been, it was a small check to ensure that quality is guaranteed to the common man in things like services and products. You are hammering on that to break it down. Instead you are creating a corporate raj. You are helping them to build their own domain. Therefore, you have big industrialists eulogizing the activities of this Government. It is but obvious that they will eulogize this Government. Nobody can doubt it.

Since, you have, at the very beginning told that my time is limited, I would just focus on what is happening in my State, Orissa. We export iron ore. We were mostly exporting fines. It was a good news that the Finance Minister had thought it fit to levy Rs. 300 per tonne on export of iron ore. Had we not allowed export of iron ore to Japan in the fifties and sixties, Japan would have been compelled to set up steel plants in India, whereby you would have had automobile and other ancillary industries coming up in India from the fifties and sixties itself, when people were more open to development.

Today, you have Nandigram or other places coming up. ...*(Interruptions)* You have Nandigram and other instances happening which are burning the fingers of the people everywhere. I am not speaking against any Government or any ideology. I am trying to say that when people are seeing alternatives, the Government is becoming regressive. The Government is not trying to see what alternative plans could be thought of.

There are snide remarks in the market that once this iron ore export tax was levied, people went to Hong Kong, sat there, did deals and came back. Now, we see that the Government is claiming that there will be gradation and on the basis of gradation of iron ore, taxes will be levied. This stinks – I would not say smells – of corruption. The Government should be transparent. They should not get into this kind of murkey deal. When they charge Rs. 300, let them stick to Rs. 300 because exporters earn nothing less than Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 8,000 as profit from a tonne of iron ore.

So you tax them and give 50 per cent to the States. This is the Federal set up. You take 50 per cent. Please be honest to people and be transparent to people. Do not sit in an air-conditioned hall and claim that we are thinking of the 'aam admi'. If you are actually think of the *aam admi*, if you are concerned for the poor, come out openly and spell out your policies and do not kill them with a back hand.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL (Kopergaon) : Sir, I rise to support Bill. I have just four or five suggestions and within five minutes I will try to finish my speech.

The first thing is about SEZ. There is no need to give tax concessions to the SEZ as far as tax concessions are concerned. I will humbly submit that the water resources and power resources should build on their own. The water resources and power resources are built for the farmers. If slowly all the power and water go to the SEZ, then the entire rural India will become dry and will be in the dark.

Secondly, the great Scientist of India, who is honoured internationally, Shri M.S. Swaminathan, suggested that the SEZ should be in the field of agriculture also. I will appeal to the hon. Minister for the same concessions or to give more concessions because agriculture growth is declining and investment is declining. So what is the harm to give SEZ in agriculture? Yale, one of the Universities in America, there is one research paper three months before, which was published in India also. Everything is done under the name of rural people/rural area and farmers. Reservoir, electricity, roads and other constructions are done under the name of rural, but the rural people are becoming poorer and poorer and there is no investment in the rural areas and only urban people and elites are getting the benefits. So how can we change this thing? It is because day-by-day the indirect taxes are growing up, which has gone to 52 per cent and direct taxes has gone up to 48 per cent. This should be reversed.

Thirdly, India's growth is eight to ten per cent. What about agriculture? Without agriculture this growth is concern. So I am suggesting SEZ for agriculture also. In the same area, the Government announced some concessions for agricultural export zone. But there is no export zone as of today and there is no attractive concession to them. I had raised this point earlier also. Everybody is interested in Special Economic Zone. Nobody is interested in Agricultural Export zone. So this should be reversed.

Then I come to captive power plant. There is shortage of power. There is Pune pattern which everybody knows. I would request the hon. Minister that we should encourage the industries, particularly big houses that they should import generators for captive power or any kind of machineries for power production. They should be given a number of tax concessions, but the power should be available to the rural areas, to the farmers in particular because there is a bad situation and it is going from bad to worse. All the villages are still in dark.

Fourthly, the hon. Minister has proposed the income tax on cooperatives. A number of times I personally discussed this matter with the hon. Minister. If he reconsiders it, then we would be happy. But I would request that small and big banks should not be amalgamated because the small borrowers will be the victims of the amalgamation. Everybody knows about the percentage of the agricultural loan by big banks. We have increased within three years two times the agricultural credit. What is the status of agriculture? What is the condition of farmers? There are no cheers to the agriculture and to the farmers in particular.

We are going hundred per cent FDI in the field of Education. The hon. Minister has mentioned about 30 per cent tax on benami donations in education. I think it may be exempted because an Indian industrialist may give a donation to the charitable trust, in education and in other social activities. As we know, FDI is coming to India and maybe some big houses will go for the hawala and the

same money comes without any taxation. So he may reconsider these benami donations. If somebody donates it for social causes, the same may be exempted.

15.00 hrs.

Lastly, I would like to say something about sugar. Last time, we have announced the package on sugar. There is need to improve the package immediately. The international market is declining very badly. Everyday, it is declining. The Indian market is not very attractive. There is uneconomic sugar production as of today. My humble submission and suggestion to the hon. Finance Minister is that the excise duty, for the time being, may be exempted on sugar because sugar is not a very attractive commodity. Because of the policies, it is resulting in poor prices. The prices are crashing. The sugarcane arrears are mounting everyday. If excise duty concession is given to sugarcane, I think that will naturally go to the farmers. There can be, of course, put a condition.

Then, I come to transport subsidy. You have given subsidy for the export of sugar. I think you should reconsider it and an attractive subsidy should be given. Otherwise, there will be difficulty for export.

About price rise, everybody is concerned. I must submit this to the House. What about the prices of agricultural produces? The prices of foodgrains including all the agricultural produces are very low today though the price rise is there. That means, the poor farmers have become the victims. You have to check the price rise. That is also very much a serious concern to farmers.

India was an exporting country and it is slowing becoming an importer. So, we need to give a boost to the agricultural sector. Therefore, I demand SEZ for agriculture. Otherwise, I am afraid, agriculture will become a very difficult area. Of course, growth may be there without agriculture. Sometimes, I think that without agriculture growth, Government may think that the growth rate can be maintained up to eight-ten per cent. But this will be very very dangerous because unemployment will grow.

[Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil]

Finally, I want to say that unemployment is growing everywhere. I want to say about skill development. I would suggest that some professional tax or some tax on cash crops like in Maharashtra may be imposed. There, the Self-Financing Scheme is there. So, skill development of youth is important. Without skill development, we cannot achieve progress. Vocational trades can be merged with the IT profession.

Day before yesterday, there was a news item in the *Economic Times* that in total Asia, there is a market for skill. Skill is wanted. So, in India, SEZ's is coming. What about skill development? What about youth and their employment? Day by day, why are farmers committing suicide? Why are naxalites growing? It is because they do not have the opportunity of employment. Their education has become a waste education. So, skill development must be given importance.

I would request the hon. Minister to consider the five or six suggestions that I have made. Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me time to speak on the Finance Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The time allotted is over. The list that has been given to me is complete.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur) : Sir, I want to seek one clarification on the perquisite tax on the PSU employees. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : If he agrees, I will give one or two minutes. All right, proceed.

SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Sir, at the very outset, I demand immediate withdrawal of the Perquisite Tax Component from the Finance Bill, 2007-08 and he should stop any tax deduction on assumed income.

The employees and executives of all Public of all Public Sector Undertakings are residing in the company's

captive townships in the interest of the company's work. Please end this discriminatory and unjustified taxation on salaried employees.

It is surprising and unprecedented that the Budget for the year 2007-08 has given retrospective effect to the deemed clause from 2002. This is illegal, arbitrary and vindictive in nature.

This is a serious financial burden on the salaried employees who will have to pay up to 23 per cent of total taxable direct income and up to 31 per cent alongwith indirect taxes including perks. So, most of the big industrial houses and multinational corporations are legally allowed huge tax concession, tax holidays and duty drawbacks on one pretext or the other. ...*(Interruptions)*

There is no justification to grant tax exemption on the money earned in stock market while workers and officers, labouring day and night, are being fleeced in this manner. This is an attempt to compensate the loss in revenue by taxing the salaried employees. So, I would request the hon. Minister that he should withdraw the 20 per cent Perquisite Tax. This is my main demand.

I would also request the hon. Finance Minister to look into another suggestion. For the hand-made soap, you have increased the tax to 16 per cent. Please reduce the tax from 16 per cent to two per cent so that the hand-made soap manufacturers will earn their bread.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR (Vadodara) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to put forth my view in brief. At the outset, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Finance Minister towards the fact that the Government servants who are the genuine tax payers are the ones on whom the Government fall back upon in respect of income tax. The Government should put in place some financial provisions for their future so that during their old age they

could have other sources of income also besides the old age pension as during their old age they do not have any other source of livelihood except pension. They spend their earnings all through their young age to fulfill their needs and to look after their wards. Therefore, the hon'ble Finance Minister should increase the rate of interest on the savings they receive after retirement which is very low at present.

Secondly, I would like to state that 50% population of our country is of women. Therefore, a separate fund should be allocated to take care of the health of women and a new policy should be formulated in this respect.

[English]

Poor anemic condition of women is a common phenomenon.

[Translation]

Due to malnutrition approx. 50% women or their foetus die during pregnancy. The mortality rate in this regard is very high in our country. The State Government of Gujarat has started in this regard a new scheme with the name 'chiranjiv'. Under this scheme poor women are also taken care of in the same way as is done in the case of affluent women. The State Government has registered eminent doctors for this purpose. They will be paid Rs. 1700 for each delivery case of poor women. I am of the opinion that there is an earnest need to start a similar scheme in the entire country to reduce the mortality rate of pregnant women and of their newborns.

I am sorry to say that the Congress party raised the slogans of "Congress ka hath, aam admi key sath" during the last Lok Sabha elections just to win the votes. However, the people came to know the reality after the formation of the Government that the Congress party is not with the common man rather it's hand is on the pocket and purses of common man and women and that too with a blade. Now-a-days, people fail to save their money due to price rise. The common man has three basic needs-food, shelter and clothing. It is the duty of the Government to provide

two square meals to the common man. Today not only the commonman but the Congress party itself is bearing the brunt of price rise. Elections held in some States recently has proved it. Prices are increasing all over the country just like wild fire. Lord Vishnu has stated-Vaishnav: Naro Bhuktva Vaishnav: Naro Agni. Pointing to it, I would like to state that we should pay attention that this fire may not engulf the entire country. Therefore, the hon'ble Finance Minister should explain in his reply the steps being taken by the Government to check the price rise.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to conclude while emphasizing on three issues i.e. increasing the interest rate on deposits of senior citizens, allocation of funds for the health of women and checking the price rise.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have already exhausted the list, but still there is pressure. Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul will speak now and thereafter no other hon. Member will be allowed to speak. The Finance Minister will reply.

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL (Buldhana) : Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I will focus on one point and that is Section 80(P) of the Income Tax Act. The contention of the hon. Finance Minister is that cooperative banks are at par with the commercial banks. I would request him to note it that it is not so.

The formation and functioning of the cooperative banks are different from the commercial banks. The cooperative banks are formed in the name of caste, in the name of religion and in the name of Tehsil or District. The common people come together as per the principle of the cooperatives that self-help is made effective by organization or one for all or all for one. That is the motto of the cooperative movement. That is why the shareholders are the owners of the cooperative banks. So, if a person wants any loan then, the borrower must be the member of that particular bank. Then only he can be the borrower of that

[Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul]

particular bank. That is the difference here. In commercial banks the shares of the commercial banks are linked with the stock exchanges, are marketable, but the shares of the cooperative banks are not marketable. The value of the share is ten and is forever ten. That is why, as and when a borrower is the owner of the bank, he shares the profits of the bank. Ultimately, he has the right to claim the dividend.

I will give you one example. I am the Chairman of a cooperative bank, City Cooperative Bank, in Mumbai. I have earned a profit of Rs. 70 lakh and out of which I am paying Rs. 45 lakhs as income tax and the remaining sum of Rs. 25 lakh I have to distribute among the shareholders. It comes to about Rs. 26 lakhs, if I pay only ten per cent. What about the new branches as I have to go for inter-connectivity? It was not elaborated.

So, as the hon. Finance Minister thinks that the commercial banks and the cooperative banks are equal, it is not so. That is my contention. That is why exemption was given from the beginning of this Act under Section 80(P). So, it should continue, that is my contention.

I met the hon. Prime Minister along with the office bearers of the Federation of the Urban Cooperative Banks. Even though, the hon. Prime Minister was definitely convinced and said that the cooperative movement and cooperative banks are the backbone of poor people and common people, unfortunately he has done nothing still. That is why, if the hon. Finance Minister understands that the difference is there and the cooperative banks are working for the common people, then he should have to consider this and whatever was considered in the past, from the beginning of this Act, should continue. That is my contention.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All the speakers, whose names were there in the list, have spoken and three additional speakers have also spoken on the Finance Bill. The list

is complete and I hope everybody is satisfied. Now, the hon. Minister may reply please.

SHRI MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHAIDAMBARAM) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Finance Bill 2007 is before this House. On Monday and today, a number of hon. Members participated in the debate and I express my gratitude to each one of them individually.

As hon. Members know, the Budget discussion ended on a disappointing note in the sense that the Government did not get an opportunity to reply to that debate. Nevertheless, I table the text of my reply before this House. Some parts of that text were reported in the media. The discussion on the Finance Bill quite naturally also embraced larger issues of economic policy, the National Common Minimum Programme, growth, equity, inflation and so on.

While, I shall address some of these issues, I would like to say that the present debate is on the Finance Bill. The Finance Bill is essentially a Bill that concerns the tax laws of the country, such as Income Tax Act, the Excise Act, and the Customs Act.

Therefore, in the first part of my reply, I shall address issues arising out of the provisions of the Finance Bill, issues raised on the floor of this House as well as issues represented to me by hon. Members of Parliament and others. At the end of my reply, hon. Members will find that I have responded to the extent possible to the many suggestions and representations that the Government has received during the last two months including some suggestions made today. The UPA Government is a responsive Government. While we have well-considered and strong views on matters relating to taxation, we are also responsive to criticisms and suggestions. Hence, towards the end of my reply, I shall announce some changes in the proposals originally made in the Finance Bill and announce some reliefs.

Let me begin with Government's policy on taxation,

a matter which Prof. Ramadass referred to. The NCMP says:

"The Government will initiate measures to increase the tax to GDP ratio by undertaking major tax reforms that expand the base of taxpayers, to increase tax compliance and make the tax administration more efficient. Tax rates will be stable and conducive to growth compliance and investment."

I asked hon. Members to judge the Government against this standard. In 1997-98, just before the NDA Government took over, the tax, GDP ratio was 9.1 per cent or even if we exclude the VDIS revenue, it was 8.5 per cent. After the NDA Government took over in 1998-99, it declined to 8.3 per cent. In 2003-04, the last year of the NDA Government, the tax, GDP ratio stood at 9.2 per cent. Thus, in a period of six years, the tax, GDP ratio increased from 8.5 per cent to 9.2 per cent. In the three years of the UPA Government, we have increased the tax, GDP ratio from 9.2 per cent to 11.5 per cent. Of this, the ratio of direct taxes to GDP is 5.6 per cent and it is rising every year. That is good. Suresh Prabhu is not here. The ratio of direct taxes is increased. For 2007-08, I have projected a tax, GDP ratio of 11.8 per cent. I am happy to report that in 2006-07, for the first time in recent history, actual tax collections exceeded both Budget Estimates and Revised Estimates. Gross tax revenue at Rs. 4,71,742 crore exceeded the Budget estimates by Rs. 29,589 crore and exceeded Revised Estimates by Rs. 3,894 crore. We have been able to do this by expanding the base of the taxpayers, more efficient tax administration and motivating taxpayers to comply with tax laws. Besides, we have kept tax rates stable and moderate. The proof of the success of this policy is the increase in the savings rate and the investment rate.

As hon. Members are aware, the savings rate has increased from 29.7 per cent in 2003-04 to 32.4 per cent in 2005-06. The investment rate has increased from 28 per cent in 2003-04 to 33.8 per cent 2005-06. In 2006-07, it should have gone even further, but the figures are not yet

available. The increase in the investment rate is the main reason behind the acceleration of growth in the manufacturing and the services sectors leading to an acceleration in the overall growth of the economy. I assure the hon. Members that the Government will faithfully adhere to the NCMP. It will keep tax rate stable and moderate and create an environment that will be conducive to greater investment and growth.

I am happy that the hon. Members are concerned about tax exemptions. This is the legacy issue. In order to bring the issue to the centre stage, beginning with the budget for 2006-07, I placed before the House for the first time a statement called 'Statement of Revenue Foregone'. This is a universal practice but we started doing it only last year for the first time. It captures the loss of revenue due to various exemptions. However, Sir, you would have noticed that even while some hon. Members pleaded for removal of exemptions, other hon. Members have urged to grant more exemptions or increased the concessions to certain sections of taxpayers. In fact, every criticism of the Finance Bill made inside the House or outside and especially by analysts is centred around one exemption or another. If you remove the overburden of the arguments, the underlying issue is, and why have you removed my exemption, why have you curtailed my exemption, why have you not enhanced my exemption? That is the theme that you hear everyday, day in and day out.

15.21 hrs.

[Mr. SPEAKERS in the Chair]

Sir, I have a duty to raise resources. Given the commitment of the UPA Government to inclusive growth and given the need to finance social sector expenditure, the need for resources is growing every year. For example, Plan expenditure has increased from Rs. 1,22,280 crore in the last year of the NDA Government, 2003-04, to Rs. 2,05,100 crore in the BE for 2007-08. Within Plan expenditure, many key sectors have witnessed a sharp

[Shri P. Chaidambaram]

increase in budgetary support as we enter the fourth year of the UPA Government

Let me give you a few examples. I am comparing the last year of the NDA Government and the fourth year of the UPA Government. Agriculture – Rs. 3,262 crore and now Rs. 8,092 crore; Education – Rs. 7,024 crore and now Rs. 28,672 crore; Rural Development and Land Resources – Rs. 11,320 crore and now Rs. 29,000 crore; Drinking Water – Rs. 2,750 crore and now Rs. 7,560 crore; Road Transport and Highways – Rs. 7,236 crore and now Rs. 14,066 crore. Now, I have to find the money. If this expenditure has to be incurred, I have to find the money.

On the Non Plan side too, the demand for resources has increased to keep pace with the need for expenditure. For example, the allocation for defence has increased from Rs. 65,300 crore in 2003-04 to Rs. 96,000 crore in the BE for 2007-08. Above all, and this will interest all Members of all States, Grants to State and UT Governments have increased tremendously. In 2003-04, the Central Government allocated Rs. 18,369 crore under this Head. In 2007-08, we will provide more than twice the amount, Rs. 38,403 crore.

Hon. Members may kindly note that out of every rupee of tax revenue collected by the Central Government, approximately 30 per cent goes to the States and Union Territories. Just to give an idea of the size of the transfer envelope, in 2003-04, the net resources transferred to States and UTs was Rs. 1,26,623 crore. In 2007-08, this will be Rs. 2,48,844 crore. Every State is benefiting, by the revenues we collect, every State is getting more money. This has almost doubled in four years.

In addition to these resources, the Central Government also makes direct releases under Central Plan, State and UT Plans, and to State District-level Autonomous Bodies and implementing agencies.

Shri Mahtab – I do not find him here now – asked about education cess, and how it is shared with the States. Oh, he is here now.

While Education Cess is not directly shared with the States, the amount collected goes into a non-lapsable account to support the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. As the hon. Members are aware, SSA and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, which are implemented in the States are largely funded by the Central Government. Thus, the States actually received more than 30 per cent share that they would have received if the Education Cess had been collected as a normal tax.

As far as the collections under cess and surcharge are concerned, the figures are as follows. In 2006-07, according to the Revised Estimates, the collection will be Rs. 8,973 crore and in 2007-08, according to the Budget Estimates, it will be Rs. 15,592 crore.

Shri Mahtab also wanted to know how the proposed Export Duty on iron ores will be shared with the States. They will be shared according to the normal formula applicable to the Customs Duties.

Let me now turn to the tax proposals and respond to the various suggestions. The first issue is about the tax brackets under Personal Income Tax. In 1997-98, just before their Government took over, the threshold exemption was Rs. 40,000. When the NDA Government laid down office and the UPA Government took over, the threshold exemption was Rs. 50,000. Thus in a period of six years, the threshold exemption limit was increased by Rs. 10,000. In addition, there was a standard deduction of Rs. 30,000 for salaried tax payers alone. So, for a salaried tax payers, the effective exemption was Rs. 80,000. In 2005-06, we made a major overhaul of Direct Taxes. As against an effective threshold of Rs. 80,000 for salaried tax payers, we increased the threshold to Rs. 1 lakh. Besides, we continued with the exemption of up Rs. 9,600 per year for Transport Allowance, and up to Rs. 15,000 per year for medical reimbursement.

Further more – this is important – the tax brackets were recast radically. You cannot look at only the exemption limit, you must look at the tax brackets. As against the 10 per cent rate for income over Rs. 50,000, the 10 per cent rate now applies for income over Rs. 1 lakh; and as against the 20 per cent rate for income over Rs. 60,000, the 20 per cent rate now applies for over Rs. 1.5 lakh. I can say with confidence that taking into account, the revised tax bracket and the applicable rate, every individual tax payer has benefited under the UPA Government.

Further, the hon. Members may also recall the radical change made in the tax treatment of savings. As against the earlier method of giving tax rebate, which often resulted in the full benefit not accruing to the tax payer, we have introduced Section 80C. Now, the treatment is not by giving a tax rebate but by giving a deduction from income so that the full benefit accrues to the tax payer. Thus every tax payer, in addition to the benefit of the revised tax bracket, and the rate which I mentioned earlier, could also enjoy a full deduction of income up to another Rs. 1 lakh under Section 80C. We continued with this regime in 2006-07. In 2007-08, I have proposed to raise the first tax bracket from Rs.1 lakh to Rs. 1,10,000. That is an increase of 10 per cent. Please remember, in the NDA for six years, the increase was only Rs. 10,000. In fact, this reflects indirectly, the correction in inflation in two years, which amounts to about 9.72 per cent. I believe, I have met the point raised by Shri Sandeep Dikshit. I will bear in mind that we must correct tax brackets to reflect inflation.

When we raised the first tax bracket for the individual, we also raised by the same amount of Rs. 10,000 for the woman assessee and for the senior citizen. The woman assessee gets a relief of Rs. 1,000 per year and a senior citizen gets a relief of Rs. 2,000 per year.

The hon. Members may also note that we have raised the exemption limit for health insurance premium from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000 for individuals and in the case of senior citizens, to Rs. 20,000.

Thus, a senior citizen will get a minimum relief of another Rs. 2,000 per year if he contributes to the health insurance.

Similarly, we have extended the tax exemption on interest on education loan in the case of loans taken by any relative of the assessee. That was not the position earlier. All these concessions, Sir, I submit, must be taken together. When taken together, it would be clear that every tax payer has been given considerable relief in the three Budgets for 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08. Cumulatively, these reliefs, I submit respectfully, are far and excess of the pitiful reliefs given during the period 1998-2004.

Shri Rupchand Pal wanted to know how many individual assessees admit to have an income of more than Rs. 10 lakh per year. In 2003-04, the number was approximately 97,500. In 2005-06, the number is estimated to have increased to approximately 1,40,000, and I believe the number ought to have increased further in 2006-07. Nevertheless, I maintain that the number is still too small. The efforts that the Government is taking to improve tax compliance should motivate more people to declare their true income.

Shri Vijoy Krishna wanted me to impose a tax on dividends. I may point out that there is a tax on dividends except that it is called Dividend Distribution Tax and collected at the point where dividends are distributed. This is a need to an efficient way of collecting the tax. I have also raised the rate of DDT from 12.5 per cent to 15 per cent this year.

Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh and Shri Suresh Prabhu asked me why a limit of Rs 50 lakh per investor has been imposed in respect of capital gains bonds issued under Section 54EC of the Income-tax Act. The total size of the bond is limited by the need to borrow of NHAI and REC. They can only issue bonds for the amount they want to borrow. In 2006-07, the total size as Rs. 9,500 crore. When there was no limit for an investor, the bonds were virtually

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monopolized by big investors who had huge capital gains. As a result, many small investors who came in the later months of the year, could not access these bonds. Hence, we decided to put a limit of Rs. 50 lakh per investor. Rs. 50 lakh is not a small amount. It is not relevant for a poor man. Small investors will benefit up to Rs. 50 lakh while big investors will also benefit up to Rs. 50 lakh. I believe that the change will bring more equity. Shri Suresh Prabhu made some comments. Let me assure him no other restriction has been added to the provision relating to capital gains.

Shri V.P. Singh also wanted me to extend the tax holiday for new hotels to all parts of the country. This is, in fact an plea for enlarging the tax exemption. The hotel industry is a highly profitable industry, and I believe it remains profitable in Rajasthan too, and can afford to pay the taxes. The exemption granted to new hotels in the NCT of Delhi and the adjacent districts is solely because of the Commonwealth Games of 2010. However, I am inclined to separately look into the incentives that could be given to the hotel industry to promote tourism on the Buddhist circuit and other Buddhist destinations which attract large number of tourists from Japan, China and South East Asia.

Shri P.S. Gadhave raised some issues about TDS. TDS is only an advance tax. If there is no tax liability or if there is a reduced tax liability, the tax collected is refunded. Besides, under Section 197, an assessee can apply to the Assessing Officer for issue of a certificate for deduction at a lower rate or a nil rate. Likewise, under Section 197A, no deduction is made—maybe, some people do not know about this—if the assessee furnishes a declaration in writing duly verified that his income does not attract any tax liability. Forms 15G and 15H have been prescribed for this purpose and many assessee already take advantage of these provisions and in their cases, TDS will not apply.

There was a discussion on the statement of revenue

foregone. As I said a little while ago, this is a legacy issue. Tax exemptions have been given over the years and there is resistance, sometimes fierce resistance, to any attempt to prune the tax exemptions. No one wants to give up an exemption that he or she has enjoyed for many years. Every year there are pleas for continuing exemptions beyond the Sunset dates, like Shri Prabhu made an appeal a little while earlier, or enlarging the exemptions. Even during the debate in this House, there were some requests for giving or enlarging exemptions. Nevertheless, I have made an attempt consistent with Government policy to prune some exemptions and these are referred to in paragraphs 171 to 177 and 179 of the Budget Speech. The bulk of the exemptions indeed goes to the corporate sector. However, it must also be remembered that the major tax receipts are under the heads of excise, customs and corporation tax which are also paid by the corporate sector. When we analysed the effective rate of 3,01,736 companies, we found that the effective tax rate was 19.26 per cent as against the scheduled rate, including surcharge, of 33 per cent. I have not yielded to pleas for more exemptions for the corporate sector. It cannot be contended that the corporate sector is burdened with high taxes. It is my intention to review the exemptions periodically and ensure that the corporate sector pays its share of taxes.

Shri Sandeep Dikshit wanted to know about the contribution of the BCTT. As I have said, the BCTT continues to be a valuable tool to track unaccounted moneys and trace their source and destination. I have with me innumerable examples to support my argument, innumerable cases where we have tracked unaccounted money and found the person and taxed him. Further, I have exempted Central and State Governments from the scope of BCTT and have raised the limit for individuals and HUFs from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 50,000. Hon. Members will kindly remember that Rs. 50,000 is the withdrawal limit per day per current account. Savings accounts are exempt. I would like to ask most respectfully how many individuals or HUFs in India withdraw more than Rs. 50,000 per day per

current account. Anyway, I have promised to review BCTT next year when other instruments in place to track unaccounted moneys become effective.

Shri Rupchand Pal asked me why we have not been able to revise the DTAA with Mauritius. This is not only a legacy issue; it is a delicate issue and has political and diplomatic implications. With the assistance of the Ministry of External Affairs, we are addressing the issue and we think, we can find a reasonable solution.

Shri Rupchand Pal also asked me why I have not imposed tax on long-term capital gains. There is a tax on long-term capital gains, on all assets other than listed securities. The rate is 20 per cent with indexation. It is only on listed securities that we have exempted long-term capital gains if the security is held for more than one year. The reason is obvious. So long as the DTAA with Mauritius is in force, no purpose would be served in imposing a tax on long-term capital gains arising out of securities' transactions. This is why we want that treaty to be revised by mutual discussion. It is in order to make up for the loss of revenue that I introduced a Securities Transactions Tax. It is a neat and efficient tax and has brought us reasonable revenues. For example, in 2006-07, the revenues under STT amounted to Rs. 4,648 crore. Because the rate is moderate and assesseees, especially the day-traders have come to accept the tax as a reasonable tax, I expect the revenues under this head to grow in the future too. I increased the rates once in 2006-07. It is not prudent to increase the rates once again this year.

Shri Rupchand Pal wanted to know about the collection of tax arrears. The record of the UPA Government in this respect is impressive. Under direct taxes, as against the collection of Rs. 5,540 crore in 2003-04, the collections in the next three years have been Rs. 7,084 crore, Rs. 8,064 crore and Rs. 12,285 crore.

Similarly, under indirect taxes, as against Rs. 669 crore of arrears collected in 2003-04, the collection of the following three years have been Rs. 2,642 crore, Rs. 3,139

crore and Rs. 3,466 crore. We shall continue to make stronger efforts to collect the tax arrears.

I shall now turn to indirect taxes. Many Members referred to the growth rate in excise duty. This is true. The excise duty collections have not kept pace with the growth in the manufacturing sector. In the last three years, the rates of growth in excise revenues have been 8.1 per cent and 5.9 per cent. I suspect the reasons are both tax evasion and tax exemption. I may add that the actual collections of excise in 2006-07 fell short of the budgeted estimates by only 1.47 per cent. We have actually collected 98.53 per cent of the estimates.

Beginning April 1, 2007, we have introduced mandatory e-payment of excise duty by assesseees who have an annual excise liability of over Rs. 50 lakh. We are also strengthening the DGCEI and increasing auditor assesseees.

Many requests are received for lowering the rate of excise duty on specific goods. Tax exemptions including area-based exemptions have also played a part. Given this scenario, we have set a target growth rate of 10 per cent for 2007-08 over 2006-07 and we shall make every effort to achieve the target.

Shri Sandeep Dikshit referred to drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation systems as well as to pan masala. I have actually reduced the customs duty on drip and sprinkler irrigation systems from 7.5 per cent to five per cent. Besides, there is no excise duty on these systems. On pan masala, against the mean CENVAT rate of 16 per cent, pan masala with tobacco continues to attract an excise duty of 66 per cent. It is only in the case of pan masala not containing tobacco which includes mouth freshners, responding to suggestions, I have reduced the rate to 45 per cent. But this is still three times the mean CENVAT rate.

Shri Harin Pathak, raised the issue of service tax. Service tax was first introduced in 1994-95. It is true that as on date 100 services have been brought under the

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service tax in the last 12 years. Of this, three services were added during the period 1994 to 1996; 12 services were added during 1996 to 1998; 47 services were added during 1998 to 2004; and 44 services were added by the UPA Government. But six services have been compressed into one. There is nothing unusual about 100 services being brought under the tax net. The Services sector accounts for 56 per cent of the GDP. Service taxes are value added taxes just as excise duty is tax on value addition on goods, service tax is a tax on value addition by rendering services. The word 'service' has to be understood in this context. It is used in contra distinction to goods. Although services account for 56 per cent of GDP, service tax contributed only 7.92 per cent of the total tax collection in 2006-07. Service tax revenues will grow in the future.

Further, hon. Members may keep in mind that we are moving towards – by agreement among all the States – a Goods and Services Tax with effect from April 1, 2010. The GST will fall on all goods and services, and I hope that exemptions of any will be very few.

Hon. Members, particularly, Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari may recall that there was no threshold exemption from service taxes until 2004-05. It was the UPA Government which introduced the threshold exemption of Rs. 4 lakh on 1.4.2005. This year, I have increased the threshold exemption to Rs. 8 lakh as a result two lakh service providers have gone out of the taxnet. This is something which service providers have welcomed.

Renting is also an activity that goes into the calculation of GDP. It is a value added service. It is liable to Service Tax. That is the universal practice. All over the world renting is an activity which is subjected to Service Tax. We have introduced Service Tax only in respect of renting of large commercial properties. Small shops and establishments are exempt because of the enhanced threshold exemption of Rs. 8 lakh for the service provider,

that is the landlord in this case. Residential properties are exempt. Exemptions have been granted for properties used for education and religious purposes and properties used for sports and entertainment. Of course, Service Tax would have to be paid in respect of large shopping malls or commercial complexes but the Service Tax paid can be set off as input credit against Service Tax or Excise Duty payable. Therefore, the net liability is very small in Service Tax.

Shri Rupchand Pal wanted to know about total expenditure. Revised Estimates of Plan expenditure in 2006-07 is Rs. 1,72,730 crore. RE of non-Plan expenditure is Rs. 4,08,907 crore. While the final figures will be available only by the end of this month, I may inform that the total expenditure would be very close to the Revised Estimates. He also wanted to know about the number of Income Tax Offices leaving the service prematurely. I may inform that since June 2004, after our Government came – I have no numbers for earlier years, I have not collected it – 103 Group 'A' Officers out of a total number of 4150, have left the service. But we have recruited on an average about 65 Group 'A' Officers every year in the last five years to the Income Tax Department and hence there is no cause for alarm. I may add that about 80 per cent of those who have left service are promotee officers who prefer to leave the service when they are promoted to Group 'A' rather than be subject to transfer to a place outside the zone to which they are originally recruited. This is a very natural phenomenon for promotee officers.

Shri Khagan Das sought some clarifications on allocation to the North-eastern region. The Budget allocation has indeed been increased from Rs. 12,041 crore in 2006-07 to Rs. 14,365 crore in 2007-08. As hon. Members are aware, any amount out of the 10 per cent of the Budget allocation to a Ministry or a Department which remains unspent will go into a non-lapsable account and will be made available to the Ministry of DONER. This is what is being done for 2007-08 too. We have followed the old practice.

Going beyond the Finance Bill, several Members made valuable interventions on the question of inflation. Government admits that there has been a rise in prices, especially in essential commodities. While the WPI is around 6 per cent, the inflation rate in the primary articles group is 12.36 per cent. I understand that a separate discussion is scheduled to take place next week on the issue of inflation. While I shall respond in details during that discussion, let me take this opportunity to briefly list the causes behind the present inflation. I also wish to place the present inflation in context. Broadly speaking, there are five reasons behind the present inflation.

Firstly, the world-wide increase in commodity prices, including crude oil. In particular, metal prices have hardened year and year by about 11 per cent.

Secondly, the supply-demand mis-match in essential articles. It started with sugar, then extended to wheat and then while sugar prices eased the mis-match extended to pulses. The supply-demand mis-match can be attributed to the stagnation in production over the last few years of wheat, paddy and pulses. The only durable answer, I submit with respect, Sir, is to increase the production of wheat, paddy and pulses and in the meantime augment supply through imports wherever possible.

Thirdly, public expenditure has been on the rise and justifiably so in view of the UPA Government's flagship programmes and the NCMP commitment to increase expenditure in the social sector, including education and health. Such expenditure increases demand. We have also increased the procurement price of paddy and wheat substantially in order that our farmers get remunerative prices. These decisions while justified on sound economic grounds, also have an inflationary effect.

Fourthly, the higher rate of growth of GDP has stimulated higher demands of goods and services. The NSSO Survey published yesterday and day before

yesterday gives the picture of rise in consumption. This is reflected in high growth of credit as well as in the fact that many industries are working at near full capacity, for example, cement. As a result, the pricing power has returned to manufacturers and sellers.

Fifthly, capital inflows, namely, FDI, FII, remittances, private equity, external commercial borrowing and export earnings have been increasing the money supply beyond normative levels.

There are three instruments to moderate inflation – fiscal policy, monetary policy and supply side measures. On fiscal policy, hon. Members are aware that we have reduced custom duties and excise duties on a large number of goods of mass consumption. Wheat and pulses are on OGL. They are at zero customs duty. Customs duties on edible oil have sharply cut. Customs duties have also been cut on raw materials used by industries.

On the monetary policy side, the Reserve Bank of India has taken a number of measures to moderate demand and credit growth. The CRR has been increased in six steps from 5 per cent to 6.5 per cent. The risk weights have been increased for several sectors including housing, commercial real estate, capital market and NBFs. In housing loans up to Rs. 20 lakh, the risk weight has been moderated. The RBI is also operating the LAF as well as the market stabilization schemes.

On supply side measures, I understand that the Minister of Agriculture has – while replying to the Demands for Grants for his Ministry – explained measures taken by the Government to augment production and productivity of essential food articles, especially, foodgrains and pulses. As far as Ministry of Finance is concerned, we have not hesitated to provide funds for many of the food articles. Vast amounts of money have also been provided for agriculture and irrigation.

The Budget for 2007-08 has give a new thrust to agriculture. I respectfully request the hon. Members to kindly refer to paragraphs 43 to 64 of my Budget Speech.

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It is our belief that measures taken by the Government will bear fruit in the near future.

I also wish to place the present inflation in context. Average inflation in 2006-07 was 5.4 per cent and peak inflation was 6 per cent. In Government's view, this is still high and requires to be contained below 4.5 per cent. However, I may point out that the average inflation in 1998-99 was 5.9 per cent; in 2000-01, it was 7.2 per cent; and in 2003-04, it was 5.5 per cent. In these years, the peak rate touched 7.3 per cent; 8.8 per cent and 6.9 per cent respectively. I may remind the Members that in the year 2000-01, the inflation was over 6 per cent for 48 weeks and over 8 per cent for 12 of those 48 weeks. Nevertheless, the Government of the day moderated inflation thereafter. I am confident that the current inflation which has been around 6 per cent since January 2007 will be moderated due to a combination of supply side monetary and fiscal measures taken by the Government and the Reserve Bank of India.

I shall, now, deal with the suggestions received from different quarters for changes in the tax proposals. Many hon. Members have also referred to these matters. Firstly, on indirect taxes, the export duty on iron ore was imposed with the twin objective of conserving minerals and raising some revenue. Iron ore fetches very high prices in the world market. Prices rose in 2006-07 by 19 per cent and in April 2007, the prices have risen by another 9.5 per cent. The export duty on iron ore lumps has been welcomed by all sections. Some representations have been received on export duty on iron ore fines especially fines with low FE content which is largely not used by domestic steel industry.

After extensive consultation with all stakeholders, I proposes to reduce the Export Duty on Iron Ore Fine of Fe content 62 per cent and below to Rs. 50 per tonne and on Iron Ore Fine with Fe content above 62 per cent and on Iron lump, Duty will remain at Rs. 300 per MT. The total

export are only 10 million MT of Iron Ore Fine with Fe content less than 62 per cent which we want to go out of the country, the remaining will be conserved within the country. If they are exporting such ores, then they will have to pay an Export Tax.

The prices of Nickel have risen substantially over the last one year and touched Rs. 50,000 US dollars per MT in April, 2007. Nickel is not available within India. It is an important input for the steel industry. hence I propose to reduce Customs Duty on Nickel from 5 per cent to 2 per cent.

N-Paraffin is a basic feedstock for manufacture of chemicals like LAB. Bringing it in line with the other feedstock, I propose to reduce the Customs Duty of N-Paraffin from 10 per cent to 7.5 per cent. Refrigerated Motor Vehicle will be required for transportation of perishable agricultural products. I, therefore, propose to reduce Customs Duty of such vehicle from 10 per cent to 0 per cent; the Excise Duty on CVD from 16 per cent to 8 per cent.

I had reduced the Customs Duty of cutting and polishing of diamonds from 5 per cent to 3 per cent. The Gems and Jewellery industry has represented that the Duty should be at 0 per cent in line with other countries. The Ministry of Commerce has supported this proposal. Accordingly, the Duty will be reduced to 0 per cent. However, if we find that the decision is adversely affecting the import of uncut diamonds or adversely affecting employment in cutting and polishing industry, we shall immediately review the decision. It is our intention to preserve, nurture and expand the cutting and polishing industry in India.

Soyabari is a nutrition food supplement. Ready to eat packaged food is also becoming popular. These two items alone attract 8 per cent Excise Duty. All other food mixes have been exempted from Excise Duty. hence I propose to exempt Soyabari and Ready to Eat packaged food from Excise Duty.

In the Budget speech I have proposed to exempt Excise Duty on biscuits whose retail prices does not exceed Rs. 50 per kg. In response to representations, I propose to exempt biscuits whose retail price does not exceed Rs. 100 per kg.

I had exempted water purification devices based on specific membrane technology from Excise Duty. BARC has requested that this exemption should be extended to water purification equipment based on polysulphone membrane based, on the ground that this technology is also equally effective. I propose to accept the suggestion and exempt such equipment from Excise Duty.

Cement prices continue to be very high and are causing hardships to consumers. The cement industry, I am sorry to say, did not respond positively to the dual Excise Duty regime. Hence the Government reduced the Import Duty to 0 per cent removing CVD as well. The dual specific rates of Duty have not brought the desired result; hence there is no point in continuing with the same. Therefore, after careful consideration, it has been decided to replace the dual rates of cement. The concessional specific Duty of Rs. 350 per MT for cement sold in retail at not more than Rs. 190 per bag will continue. There are some cement industries in Andhra Pradesh and in Tamil Nadu which are selling at less than Rs. 190 and they will continue to enjoy the concessional rate. In respect of cement sold at a price more than Rs. 190 per bag, instead of the specific rate we are introducing an *ad valorem* rate of Duty of 12 per cent of the retail sales price which marked at the back. Hon. Members are aware that the *ad valorem* levy is a normal way of levying excise Duty, as has been pointed out by Prof. Ramadass. The result will be that the concessions granted to cement sold at Rs. 190 or less per bag will continue; for cement sold at a higher price the *ad valorem* rate will apply. There will be an effective reduction of up to Rs. 7 per bag on Excise Duty liability. It is my expectation that the cement industry will respond positively to the packages announced now and

reduce the price of cement. That industry, like any other industry, owes an obligation to the larger interest of the society.

16.00 hrs.

Hon. Members are aware that I proposed an increase in the excise duty on beedis which was last revised in 2001. The increase was Rs. 4 per thousand for non-machine-made beedis. In response to a representation received from the industry and a number of hon. Members, I propose to cut this by one half. Accordingly, the increase will be from Rs. 7 to Rs. 9 per thousand for non-machine-made beedis and exemption from excise duty for unbranded beedis upto 20 lakh beedis will continue. On machine-made beedis also, the increase will now be from Rs. 22 to Rs. 26 per thousand as against the original budget proposal of Rs. 29 per thousand.

Zip fasteners are an important input in textile and leather garments. Zip fasteners come into the country at zero customs duty under various export promotion schemes. Domestic producers and some hon. Members have represented against the excise duty of 16 per cent. Accepting these representations, I propose to reduce the excise duty from 16 per cent to eight per cent.

Hon. Members are aware that I proposed to levy customs duty, CVD and additional customs duty on import of aircraft excluding imports by Government and scheduled airlines. The Ministry of Civil Aviation has made a strong representation in favour of exemption for aircraft import for training purposes by flying clubs and institutes and for non-scheduled point-to-point and non-scheduled charter operators under conditions of registration to be specified and recommended by that Ministry. Since civil aviation is a nascent and growing industry, it has been decided to accept this request and exempt these categories also from duties.

I now turn to direct taxes. In the Finance Bill, I have restricted the pass through status to venture capital funds

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making investments in eight sectors. There has been a request that this concession should be extended to infrastructure sectors as well. Accordingly, the concession will be extended to investments made by venture capital funds in the infrastructural facilities listed in the explanation to section 80 (I) (a)(4) (i). Representations have been received regarding clause 10 of the Finance Bill which amend section 17 of the Income Tax Act. Shri Rupchand Pal and another hon. Member today made a reference to this in their speeches and hoped that I would respond favourably. I am responding favourably. I intend to give relief but I want you to know the history of section 17 because that is very important to understand what I am saying.

Since 1987-88, rent free or concessional rent accommodation was taxed at ten per cent of salary or the fair market rent whichever was less minus the rent actually paid. This provision has been there for twenty years. In 2001-02, the concept of fair market rent was dropped and the value of the concessional accommodation was taken as 7.5 per cent or ten per cent of the salary depending upon population minus the actual rent paid. Nobody complained even then and quite rightly because that is the practice followed universally and that is the practice followed for the last twenty years. This provision was challenged in various High Courts. The High Courts upheld the provision. Some employees appealed to the Supreme Court. Pending the appeal, Sir, in financial year 2005-06, not this year but two years ago, the value of the concessional accommodation was revised to 15 per cent or 20 per cent, as the case may be, depending upon the population. I take responsibility for that change. There was no complaint against that proposal either and Parliament approved that proposal. In a judgement recently delivered, the Supreme Court has upheld the validity of the provision. However, the Supreme Court has ruled that, in the absence of a deeming provision in the procedure of assessment, the fact of a concession would have to be

proved in each case before the rate of 15 per cent or 20 per cent is applied to that case. They upheld the provision but said that this is the procedure that you have to follow. The Supreme Court decision is not adverse to the Government. In fact, it indicates a way out by inserting a deeming provision.

If the judgement were to be applied in each case it would mean enormous inconvenience to the assessee and long drawn out proceedings. Hence, it was decided to insert a deeming provision through clause 10 of the Finance Bill, which is what we are doing. The amendment proposed in the Finance Bill, I submit, is, therefore, perfectly in order. However, I have received a number of representations complaining about the 20 per cent rate and the 15 per cent rate which I introduced in 2005-06. Being responsive to suggestions and in order to give relief, I have reviewed the rate to be applied for putting a value in concessional accommodation, and I have decided that the rates shall be reduced from 20 per cent to 15 per cent if the population is above 25 lakhs; to 10 per cent if the population is between 10 and 25 lakhs; and to 7.5 per cent if the population is below 10 lakhs. Every employee will get substantial relief. I also propose to give retrospective effect to the reduction, from the financial year 2005, which is the year when the 20 per cent rate was introduced. Nobody would have any retrospective liability.

Sir, representations have been received against taxing ESOPS as a fringe benefit. Worldwide ESOPS are subject to tax. I have a whole list of countries which tax ESOPS. What we have done is no different, except that we have levied the tax from the employer who may by agreement with the employee or by making a provision in the scheme recover the tax from the employee. Hence, the tax will stay. However, in response to representations, I propose to give some relief. Every year the market value of ESOPS to the purpose of taxation will be reckoned on the date of vesting of the option and not the date of allotment of transfer of shares. The period of holding of

ESOPS shall also be reckoned from the date of such allotment of transfer.

Some official amendments are also being moved to give effect to certain Budget announcements, such as the new and nascent industrial policy, tax neutral status for amalgamation and demerger of cooperative banks and extending the tax benefit under Section 80 (c) of the Income Tax Act for investment in NABARD Rural Bonds.

Today, Shri Suresh Prabhu raised three issues. First was about Section 12 (A) of the Income Tax Act. The present provision requires that you should file your application before expiry of one year from the creation of the Trust and also gives the CIT the power to condone the delay. In practice what we found is that Trusts file applications very belatedly and ask for condonation for several years. Clause 8 of the Finance Bill proposes to withdraw the power of condonation. But we have said that you may file the application at any time you like after the formation of the Trust, but the exemption, of course, will be available only from the date of your application. However, we have given three months' time, from 28th February, for people to file applications for the past years. The new provision comes into force only from the 1st of June. There is enough time for people to do that. I would request you to advise whoever you wish to advise to apply for condonation. Even now there is enough time to take care of past years.

There was a question about refunds. We have given more refunds in 2006-07. CIT refund is Rs. 29,085 crore; PIT refund is Rs. 8,196 crore; and the total refund is Rs. 37,281 crore. There were some issues about Section 80 (P). We have not done anything to section 80 (P) in this Finance Bill. It was done two years ago. The point is that the total number of cooperative banks are 1,11,745. Of these, 1,09,476 are not covered by Section 80 (P). They still remain exempt. Only 2,269 cooperative institutions are covered, not the whole lot. Out of the 2,269 cooperative institutions all over the country, only 1,746 make any

profit. Please read the Budget speech. I have now extended section 36 (I) (VIII) benefit to them. Therefore, the levy of income tax on profit earned by a small number of cooperative institutions is to bring some accounting discipline, to bring some regulatory discipline to cooperative institutions. As you know, in many States — I do not wish to name the States — this had, in the last so many years, given rise to so many scandals and so many scams.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : What is the difficulty in exempting the entire cooperative movement? ..(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHAIMDAMBARAM : Sir, out of 1,11,745, exemption is given to 1,09,476.

Finally, there was some question about the MSP. in 1998-99, MSP for wheat was Rs. 550, by 2003-04, it increased to Rs. 620, and by 2007-08, we have increased it to Rs. 850. We have given Rs. 230 more per quintal for wheat in the fourth year of our Government. For paddy, for common variety, it went from Rs. 440 in 1998-99 to Rs. 550 and now it has gone to Rs. 620. For Grade-A, it went from Rs. 470 to Rs. 580 and now it has gone to Rs. 650. So, we have given better remunerative prices to wheat and paddy in the four years of the UPA Government.

Sir, with these words, I commend the Finance Bill and I would request that the same may be passed.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That the Bill to give effect to the financial proposal of the Central Government for the financial year 2007-2008, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : Now the House will take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 3 Amendment of
Section 2**

Amendment made:

Page 5, after line 38, insert-

'(g) in clause (42A), with effect from the 1st day of April, 2008,-

(i) in Explanation 1, in clause (i), after sub-clause (ha), insert-

"(hb) in the case of a capital asset, being any specified security or sweat equity shares allotted or transferred, directly or indirectly, by the employer free of cost or at concessional rate to his employees (including former employee or employees), the period shall be reckoned from the date of allotment or transfer of such specified security or sweat equity shares;"

(ii) after Explanation 2, insert-

'Explanation 3.-For the propose of this clause, the expressions "specified security" and sweat equity shares" shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Explanation to clause (d) of subsection (1) of section 115WB;'. (2)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER; The question is;

"That clause 3, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 3, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 4 and 5 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 6 Amendment of
Section 10**

Amendments made;

Page 7, line 33, omit "or". (3)

Page 7, after line 35, insert-

"(H) developing or operating and maintaining or developing, operating and maintaining any infrastructure facility as defined in the explanation to clause (i) of sub-section (4) of section 80-IA; or". (4)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 6, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 6, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 7 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 8 Amendment of
Section 12A**

Amendment made:

Page 8, line 18, for "for the", substitute "from the". (5)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER; The question is;

"That clause 8, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 8, as amended, was added to the Bill

Clause 9 was added ti the Bill..

Motion Re: Suspension of Rule 80(i)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 6 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved,"

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 6 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved,"

The motion was adopted.

**New Clause 9A Amendment of
Section 13**

Amendment made:

Page 8, after line 24, insert-

"9A. In section 13 of the Income-tax Act, in sub-section (1), in clause (d), for sub-clause (iii), the following sub-clause shall be substituted and shall be deemed to have been substitute with effect from the 1st day of April, 1999, namely:-

"(iii) any shares in a company, other than-

(A) shares in a public sector company;

(B) shares prescribed as a form or mode of investment under clause (xii) of sub-section (5)

of section 11, are held by the trust or institution after the 30th day of November, 1983:". (6)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new clause 9A be added to the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 9A was added to the Bill.

**Clause 10 Amendment of
Section 17**

Amendments made:

Page 9, after line 27, insert-

Explanation 3.- For the purposes of this sub-clause, "salary" includes the pay, allowances, bonus or commission payable monthly or otherwise or any monetary payment by whatever name called, from one or more employers, as the case may be, but does not include the following, namely:-

- (a) dearness allowance or dearness pay unless it enters into the computation of superannuation or retirement benefits of the employee concerned;
- (b) employer's contribution to the provident fund account of the employee;
- (c) allowances which are exempted from the payment of tax;
- (d) value of the perquisites specified in this clause;
- (e) any payment or expenditure specifically excluded under the proviso to this clause;" (7)

Page 9, for lines 28 to 41, substitute-

'(ii) in Explanation 1 as so inserted, for clause (a), the following clause shall be substituted and shall be deemed to have been substituted with effect from the 1st day of April, 2006, namely:-

"(a) in a case where an unfurnished accommodation is provided by any employer other than the Central Government or any State Government and-

- (i) the accommodation is owned by the employer, the value of the accommodation determined at the specified rate in respect of the period during which the said accommodation was occupied by the assessee during the previous year exceeds the rent recoverable from, or payable by, the assessee;
- (ii) the accommodation is taken on lease or rent by the employer, the value of the accommodation being the actual amount of lease rental paid or payable by the employer or fifteen per cent. of salary, whichever is lower, in respect of the period during which the said accommodation was occupied by the assessee during the previous year, exceeds the rent recoverable from, or payable by, the assessee;"
- (iii) after Explanation 3 as so inserted, the following Explanation shall be inserted and shall be deemed to have been inserted with effect from the 1st day of April, 2006, namely:-

"Explanation 4.-For the purposes of this sub-clause, "specified rate" shall be-

- (i) fifteen per cent. of salary in cities having population exceeding twenty-five lakhs as per 2001 census;
- (ii) ten per cent. of salary in cities having population exceeding ten lakhs but not exceeding twenty-five lakhs as per 2001 census; and
- (iii) seven and one-half per cent. of salary in any other place."

(8)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 10, of amended, stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 10, as amended was added to the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : Then, whatever relief has been given, that will go.

(Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 11 stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 11 was added to the Bill.

Clause 12 Amendment of Section 36

Amendments made:

"Page 10, lines 24 and 25, for "the business of providing long-term finance in India for industrial or agricultural development or development of infrastructure facility", substitute "the business of providing long-term finance for industrial or agricultural development or development of infrastructure facility in India or construction or purchase of houses in India for residential purposes". (9)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 12 amended, stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 12, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 13 was added to the Bill.

Motion for suspension of Rule 80 (I)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I beg to move :

"That this House do suspend clause (I) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No.10 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR SPEAKER : The question is :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) or rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No.10 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause	Insertion of New
13A	Section 44DB

Amendment made:

Page 11, after line 35, insert-

'13A. After section 44DA of the Income-tax Act, the following sections shall be inserted with effect from the 1st day of April, 2008, namely:-

'44DB. (1) The deduction under section 32, section 35D, section 35DD or section 35DDA shall, in a case where business reorganization of a co-operative bank has taken place during the financial year, be allowed in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(2) The amount of deduction allowable to the predecessor co-operative bank under section 32, section

35D, section 35DD or section 35DDA shall be determined in accordance with the formula-

$$A + \frac{B}{C}$$

where A = the amount of deduction allowable to the predecessor co-operative bank if the business reorganizations had not taken place;

B = the number of days comprised in the period beginning with the 1st day of the financial year and ending on the day immediately preceding the date of business reorganisation; and

C = the total number of days in the financial year in which the business reorganisation has taken place.

(3) The amount of deduction allowable to the successor co-operative bank under section 32, section 35D, section 35DD or section 35DDA shall be determined in accordance with the formula-

$$A + \frac{B}{C}$$

where A = the amount of deduction allowable to the predecessor co-operative bank if the business reorganisation had not taken place;

B = the number of days comprised in the period beginning with the date of business reorganisation and ending on the last day of the financial year; and

C = the total number of days in the financial year in which the business reorganisation has taken place.

(4) The provisions of section 35D, section 35DD or section 35DDA shall, in a case where an

undertaking of the predecessor co-operative bank entitled to the deduction under the said section is transferred before the expiry of the period specified therein to a successor co-operative bank on account of business reorganisation, apply to the successor co-operative bank in the financial years subsequent to the year of business reorganisation as they would have applied to the predecessor co-operative bank, as if the business reorganisation had not taken place.

(5) For the purposes of this section,-

(a) "amalgamated co-operative bank" means-

(i) a co-operative bank with which one or more amalgamating co-operative banks merge; or

(ii) a co-operative bank formed as a result of merger of two or more amalgamating co-operative banks;

(b) "amalgamating co-operative bank" means-

(i) a co-operative bank which merges with another co-operative bank; or

(ii) every co-operative bank merging to form a new co-operative bank;

(c) "amalgamation" means the merger of an amalgamating co-operative bank or banks with an amalgamated co-operative bank, in such manner that-

(i) all the assets and liabilities of the amalgamating co-operative bank or banks immediately before the merger (other than the assets transferred, by sale or distribution on winding up, to the amalgamated co-operative bank) become the assets and liabilities of the amalgamated co-operative bank;

(ii) the members holding seventy-five per cent. or more voting rights in the amalgamating co-operative bank become members of the amalgamated co-operative bank; and

(iii) the shareholders holding seventy-five per cent. or more in value of the shares in the amalgamating co-operative bank (other than the shares held by the amalgamated co-operative bank or its nominee or its subsidiary, immediately before the merger) become shareholders of the amalgamated co-operative bank;

(d) "business reorganisation" means the reorganisation of business involving the amalgamation or demerger of a co-operative bank;

(e) "co-operative bank" shall have the meaning assigned to it in clause (cc) of section 5 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

(f) "demerger" means the transfer by a demerged co-operative bank of one or more of its undertakings to any resulting co-operative bank, in such manner that-

(i) all the assets and liabilities of the undertaking or undertakings immediately before the transfer become the assets and liabilities of the resulting co-operative bank;

(ii) the assets and the liabilities are transferred to the resulting co-operative bank at values (other than change in the value of assets consequent to their revaluation) appearing in its books of account immediately before the transfer;

(iii) the resulting co-operative bank issues, in consideration of the transfer, its membership to the members of the demerged co-operative bank on a proportionate basis;

(iv) the shareholders holding seventy-five per cent. or more in value of the shares in the demerged co-operative bank (other than shares already held by the resulting bank or its nominee or its subsidiary immediately before the transfer), become shareholders of the resulting co-operative bank, otherwise than as a result of the

acquisition of the assets of the demerged co-operative bank or any undertaking thereof by the resulting co-operative bank;

(v) the transfer of the undertaking is on a going concern basis; and

(vi) the transfer is in accordance with the conditions specified by the Central Government, by notification in the Official Gazette, having regard to the necessity to ensure that the transfer is for genuine business purposes; or

(g) "demerged co-operative bank" means the co-operative bank whose undertaking is transferred, pursuant to a demerger, to a resulting bank.

(h) "predecessor co-operative bank" means the amalgamating co-operative bank or the demerged co-operative bank, as the case may be;

(i) "successor co-operative bank" means the amalgamated co-operative bank or the resulting bank, as the case may be;

(j) "resulting co-operative bank" means-

(i) one or more co-operative banks to which the undertaking of the demerged co-operative bank is transferred in a demerger; or

(ii) any co-operative bank formed as a result of demerger. (10)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new clause 13A be added to the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New clause 13A was added to the Bill.

Motion for Suspension of Rule 80 (I)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I beg to move :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No.11 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No.11 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 13B Amendment of Section 47

Amendment made:

Page 11, after line 35, insert:-

"13B. In section 47 of the Income-tax Act, after clause (vic), the following shall be inserted with effect from the 1st day of April, 2008, namely:-

'(vica) any transfer in a business reorganisation, of a capital asset by the predecessor co-operative bank to the successor co-operative bank;

(vicb) any transfer by a shareholder, in a business reorganisation, of a capital asset being a share or shares held by him in the predecessor co-operative bank if the transfer is made in consideration of the allotment to him of any share or shares in the successor co-operative bank.

Explanation. - For the purposes of clauses (vica) and

(vica), the expressions "business reorganisation", "predecessor co-operative bank" and "successor co-operative bank" shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in section 44DB;". (11)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new clause 13B be added to the Bill,"

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 13B was added to the Bill.

**Clause 14 Amendment of
Section 49**

Amendment made:

Page 11, for lines 36 to 41, substitute-

'14. In section 49 of the Income-tax Act, with effect from the 1st day of April, 2008,-

(i) in sub-section (1), in clause (iii), in sub-clause (e), for the word, brackets, figures and letters "clause (vica)", the words, brackets, figures and letters "clause (vica) or clause (vica) or clause (vicb)" shall be substituted;

(ii) after sub-section (2AA), the following sub-section shall be inserted, namely:-

“(2AB) Where the capital gain arises from the transfer of specified security or sweat equity shares, the cost of acquisition of such security or shares shall be the fair market value which has been taken into account while computing the value of fringe benefits under clause (ba) of sub-section (1) of section 115WC.”;

(iii) after sub-section (2D) and before the Explanation, the following sub-section shall be inserted, namely:-

“(2E) The provisions of sub-section (2), sub-section (2C) and sub-section (2D) shall, as far as may be, also apply in relation to business reorganisation of a co-operative bank as referred to in section 44DB.”; (12)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 14, *as amended*, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 14, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 15 to 17 were added to the Bill.

Motion for Suspension of Rule 80 (I)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No.13 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No.13 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

**New Clause 17A Insertion of New
Section 72 AB**

Amendment made:

Page 12, after line 37, insert:-

"17A. After section 72AA of the Income-tax Act, the following section shall be inserted with effect from the 1st day April, 2008, namely:-

'72AB. (1) The assessee, being a successor co-operative bank, shall, in a case where the amalgamation has taken place during the previous year, be allowed to set off the accumulated loss and the unabsorbed depreciation, if any, of the predecessor co-operative bank as if the amalgamation had not taken place, and all the other provisions of this Act relating to set off and carry forward of loss and allowance for depreciation shall apply accordingly.

(2) The provisions of this section shall apply if-

(a) the predecessor co-operative bank-

(i) has been engaged in the business of banking for three or more years; and

(ii) has held at least three-fourths of the book value of fixed assets as on the date of the business reorganisation, continuously for two years prior to the date of business reorganisation;

(b) the successor co-operative bank-

(i) holds at least three-fourths of the book value of fixed assets of the predecessor co-operative bank acquired through business reorganisation, continuously for a minimum period of five years immediately succeeding the date of business reorganisation;

(ii) continues the business of the predecessor co-operative bank for a minimum period of five years from the date of business reorganisation; and

(iii) fulfils such other conditions as may be prescribed to ensure the revival of the business of the predecessor co-operative bank or to ensure

that the business reorganisation is for genuine business purpose.

(3) The amount of set-off of the accumulated loss and unabsorbed depreciation, if any, allowable to the assessee being a resulting co-operative bank shall be,-

(i) the accumulated loss or unabsorbed depreciation of the demerged co-operative bank if the whole of the amount of such loss or unabsorbed depreciation is directly relatable to the undertakings transferred to the resulting co-operative bank; or

(ii) the amount which bears the same proportion to the accumulated loss or unabsorbed depreciation of the demerged co-operative bank as the assets of the undertaking transferred to the resulting co-operative bank bears to the assets of the demerged co-operative bank if such accumulated loss or unabsorbed depreciation is not directly relatable to the undertakings transferred to the resulting co-operative bank.

(4) The Central Government may, for the purposes of this section, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify such other conditions as it considers necessary, other than those prescribed under sub-clause (iii) of clause (b) of sub-section (2), to ensure that the business reorganisation is for genuine business purposes.

(5) The period commencing from the beginning of the previous year and ending on the date immediately preceding the date of business reorganisation, and the period commencing from the date of such business reorganisation and ending with the previous year shall be deemed to be two different previous years for the purposes of set off and carry forward of loss and allowance for depreciation.

- (6) In a case where the conditions specified in sub-section (2) or notified under sub-section (4) are not complied with, the set off of accumulated loss or unabsorbed depreciation allowed in any previous year to the successor co-operative bank shall be deemed to be the income of the successor co-operative bank chargeable to tax for the year in which the conditions are not complied with.

- (7) For the purposes of this section,-

(a) "accumulated loss" means so much of loss of the amalgamating co-operative bank or the demerged co-operative bank, as the case may be, under the head "Profits and gains of business or profession" (not being a loss sustained in a speculation business) which such amalgamating co-operative bank or the demerged co-operative bank, would have been entitled to carry forward and set-off under the provisions of section 72 as if the business reorganisation had not taken place;

(b) "unabsorbed depreciation" means so much of the allowance for depreciation of the amalgamating co-operative bank or the demerged co-operative bank, as the case may be, which remains to be allowed and which would have been allowed to such bank as if the business reorganisation had not taken place;

(c) the expressions "amalgamated co-operative bank", "amalgamating co-operative bank", "amalgamation", "business reorganisation", "co-operative bank", "demerged cooperative bank", "demerger", "predecessor co-operative bank", "successor co-operative bank" and "resulting cooperative bank" shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in section 44DB.

(13)

MR SPEAKER The question is:

"That new clause 17A be added to the Bill,"

The motion was adopted.

New clause 17A was added to the Bill.

Motion for Suspension of Rule 80 (I)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I beg to move :

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 8 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 14 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 8 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 14 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 17B Amendment of Section 80A

Amendment made:

Page 12 after line 37, insert-

17B. In section 80A of the Income-tax Act, in sub-section (3),-

(i) after the word, figures and letters "section 80-IB", the words, figures and letters "or section 80-IC" shall be inserted and shall be deemed to have been inserted with effect from the 1st day of April, 2004;

(ii) after the words, figures and letters "or section 80-IC" as so inserted, the words, figures and letters "or section 80-ID or section 80-IE" shall be inserted with effect from the 1st day of April, 2008.'. (14)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new clause 17B be added to the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New clause 17B was added to the Bill.

**Clause 18 Amendment of
Section 80 AC**

Amendment made:

Page 12, line 39, for the words, figures and letters "or section 80-ID", substitute the words, figures and letters "or section 80-ID or section 80-IE". (15)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 18, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

That clause 18, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

Motion Re: Suspension of Rupee 80 (I)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 16 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 16 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

**New Clause 18A Amendment of
Section 80C**

Amendment made:

Page 12, after 39, insert—

'18A. In section 80C of the Income-tax Act, in sub-section (2), after clause (xx), the following clause shall be inserted with effect from the 1st day of April, 2008, namely—

(xxii) as subscription to such bonds issued by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify in this behalf."'. (16)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new clause 18A be added to the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New clause 18A was added to the Bill.

Clauses 19 and 20 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 21 Amendment of
Section 80E**

Amendment made:

Page 13, for lines 5 and 6, substitute—

'(ii) in sub-section (3).—

(A) in clause (a), for the words "notified by the Central Government", the words "approved by the prescribed authority" shall be substituted;

(B) after clause (d), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:—

'(e) "relative", in relation to an individual, means the spouse and children of that individual.' (17)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 21, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 21, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 22 and 23 were added to the Bill.

Motion Re: Suspension of Rule 80 (I)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 18 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 18 to the Finance

Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 23A Amendment of Section 80-IC

Amendment made:

Page 14, after line 3, insert—

23A. In section 80-IC of the Income-tax Act, in sub-section (2), with effect from the 1st day of April, 2008,—

(i) in clause (a), in sub-clause (i), for the figures, letters and words "1st day of April, 2012", the figures, letters and words "1st day of April, 2007" shall be substituted;

(ii) in clause (b), in sub-clause (i), for the figures, letters and words "1st day of April, 2012", the figures, letters and words "1st day of April, 2007" shall be substituted.' (18)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new clause 23A be added of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New clause 23A was added to the Bill.

Clause 24 was added to the Bill.

Motion Re: Suspension of Rule 80 (I)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application

to the Government amendment No. 19 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 19 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

**New Clause 24A Insertion of new
Section 80-IE**

Amendment made:

Page 14, after line 50, insert—

"24A. After section 80-ID as so inserted in the Income-tax Act, the following section shall be inserted with effect from the 1st day of April, 2008, namely:-

"80-IE. (1) Where the gross total income of an assessee includes any profits and gains derived by an undertaking, to which this section applies, from any business referred to in sub-section (2), there shall be allowed, in computing the total income of the assessee, a deduction of an amount equal to hundred per cent of profits and gains derived from such business for ten consecutive assessment years commencing with the initial assessment year.

(2) This section applies to any undertaking which has during the period beginning on the 1st day of April, 2007 and ending before the 1st day of April, 2017, begun or begins, in any of the North-Eastern States,-

(i) to manufacture or produce any eligible article or thing;

(ii) to undertake substantial expansion to manufacture or produce any eligible article or thing;

(iii) to carry on any eligible business.

(3) This section applies to any undertaking which fulfils all the following conditions, namely:-

(i) it is not formed by splitting up, or the reconstruction, of a business already in existence;

Provided that this condition shall not apply in respect of an undertaking which is formed as a result of the re-establishment, reconstruction or revival by the assessee of the business of any such undertaking as referred to in section 33B, in the circumstances and within the period specified in the said section;

(ii) it is not formed by the transfer to a new business of machinery or plant previously used for any purpose.

Explanation.- The provisions of Explanations 1 and 2 to sub-section (3) of section 80-IA shall apply for the purposes of clause (ii) of this sub-section as they apply for the purposes of clause (ii) of that sub-section.

(4) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other provision of this Act, in computing the total income of the assessee, no deduction shall be allowed under any other section contained in Chapter VIA or in section 10A or section 10AA or section 10B or section 10BA, in relation to the profits and gains of the undertaking,

(5) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, no deduction shall be allowed to any undertaking under this section, where the total period of deduction inclusive of the period of deduction under this section, or under section 80-IC or under the second proviso to sub-section (4) of section 80-IB or under section 10C, as the case may be, exceeds ten assessment years.

(6) The provisions contained in sub-section (5) and sub-sections (7) to (12) of section 80-IA shall, so far as may be, apply to the eligible undertaking under this section.

(7) For the purposes of this section,-

(i) "initial assessment year" means the assessment year relevant to the previous year in which the undertaking begins to manufacture or produce articles or things, or completes substantial expansion;

(ii) "North-Eastern States" means the State of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura;

(iii) "substantial expansion" means increase in the investment in the plant and machinery by at least twenty-five per cent. of the book value of plant and machinery (before taking depreciation in any year), as on the first day of the previous year in which the substantial expansion is undertaken;

(iv) "eligible article or thing" means the article or thing other than the following:-

(a) goods falling under Chapter 24 of the First Schedule to the Central Excise Tariff Act, 1985 which pertains to tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes;

(b) pan masala as covered under Chapter 21 of the First Schedule to the Central Excise Tariff Act, 1985;

(c) plastic carry bags of less than 20 microns as specified by the Ministry of Environment and Forests vide notification number S.O. 705(E), dated the 2nd September, 1999 and S.O. 698(E), dated the 17th June, 2003; and

(d) goods falling under Chapter 27 of the First Schedule to the Central Excise Tariff Act, 1985, produced by petroleum oil or gas refineries;

(v) "eligible business" means the business of,-

(a) hotel (not below two star category);

(b) adventure and leisure sports including ropeways;

(c) providing medical and health services in the nature of nursing home with a minimum capacity of twenty-five beds;

(d) running an old-age home;

(e) operating vocational training institute for hotel management, catering and food craft, entrepreneurship development, nursing and para-medical, civil aviation related training, fashion designing and industrial training;

(f) running information technology related training center;

(g) manufacturing of information technology hardware; and

(h) bio-technology.'.' (19)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new clause 24A be added of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New clause 24A was added to the Bill.

Clause 25 to 30 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 31 Amendment of
Section 115 WC**

Amendment made:

Page 16, for line 6. to 11, substitute—

'(ba) the fair market value of the specified security or

sweat equity shares referred to in clause (d) of subsection (1) of section 115WB, on the date on which the option vests with the employee as reduced by the amount actually paid by, or recovered from, the employee in respect of such security or shares.

Explanation.— For the purposes of this clause,–

- (i) “fair market value” means the value determined in accordance with the method as may be prescribed by the Board;
- (ii) “option” means a right but not an obligation granted to an employee to apply for the specified security or sweat equity shares at a predetermined price.’. (20)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

“That clause 31, as amended, stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 31, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 32 Amendment of Section 115 WJ

Amendment made:

Page 16, for lines 48 to 52, substitute—

“(3) Where an assessee, being a company, has failed to pay the advance tax payable by him on or before the due date for any instalment or where the advance tax paid by him is less than the amount payable by the due date, he shall be liable to pay simple interest calculated at the rate of-

- (i) one per cent. per month, for three months on an amount by which the advance tax paid on or before the 15th June of the financial year falls short of fifteen per cent of the advance tax payable;

- (ii) one per cent. per month, for three months on an amount by which the advance tax paid on or before the 15th September of the financial year falls short of forty-five per cent. of the advance tax payable;

- (iii) one per cent. per month, for three months on an amount by which the advance tax paid on or before the 15th December of the financial year falls short of seventy-five per cent. of the advance tax payable; and

- (iv) one per cent. on an amount by which the advance tax paid on or before the 15th March of the financial year falls short of the hundred per cent. of the advance tax payable;

(4) Where an assessee, being a person other than a company, has failed to pay the advance tax payable by him on or before the due date for any instalment or where the advance tax paid by him is less than the amount payable by the due date, he shall be liable to pay simple interest calculated at the rate of-

- (i) one per cent. per month, for three months on an amount by which the advance tax paid on or before the 15th September of the financial year falls short of fifteen per cent. of the advance tax payable;

- (ii) one per cent. per month, for three months on an amount by which the advance tax paid on or before the 15th December of the financial year falls short of sixty per cent. of the advance tax payable; and

- (iii) one per cent. on an amount by which the advance tax paid on or before the 15th March of the financial year falls short of hundred per cent. of the advance tax payable;

(5) Where an assessee has failed to pay the advance tax payable by him during a financial year or where the advance tax paid by him is less than ninety per cent.

of the tax assessed under section 115WE or section 115WF of section 115WG, the assessee shall be liable to pay simple interest at the rate of one per cent. per month, for every month or part of a month comprised in the period from the 1st day of April next following such financial year to the date of assessment of tax under section 115WE or section 115WF or section 115WG." (21)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 32, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 32 as amended, was added to the Bill.

Motion Re: Suspension of Rule 80 (I)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend clause (I) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 22 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 22 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

**New Clause 32A Insertion of new
Section 115 WKA**

Amendment made:

Insertion Page 16 after line 52, insert—

of New Section 115WKA '32A. After section 115WK of the Income Tax Act, the following section shall be inserted, namely:-

Recovery of fringe benefit tax by the employer from the employee "115WKA. Notwithstanding anything contained in any agreement or scheme under which any specified security or sweat equity shares referred in clause (d) of sub-section (1) of section 115WB has been allotted or transferred, directly or indirectly, by the employer on or after the 1st day of April, 2007, it shall be lawful for the employer to vary the agreement or scheme under which such specified security or sweat equity shares has been allotted or transferred so as to recover from the employee the fringe benefit tax to the extent to which such employer is liable to pay the fringe benefit tax in relation to the value of fringe benefits provided to the employee and determined under clause (ba) of sub-section (1) of section 115WCX." (22)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new Clause 32A be added of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 33 to 35 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 36 Insertion of new
Section 139C
and 139D**

Amendment made:

Page 17, lines 22, for "audited reports", substitute "reports of audit". (23)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 36, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 36, amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 37 to 53 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 54 Amendment of
Section 845C**

Amendment made:

Page 21, for line 46 and 47, substitute "(4) An assessee shall, on the date on which he makes an application under sub-section (1) to the Settlement Commission, also intimate the Assessing Officer in the prescribed manner of having made such application to the said Commission." (24)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 54, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 54, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 55 Amendment of
Section 245D**

Amendment made:

Page 23, lines 20 and 21, for "nine months", substitute "twelve months". (25)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 55, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 55, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 56 to 66 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 67 Amendment of
Section 271**

Amendment made:

Page 26, line 14, for "and claims", substitute "and he claims". (26)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 67, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 67, amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 68 was added to the Bill.

**Clause 69 Insertion of New
Section 292C**

Page 27, line 7, for "course of a search", substitute "course of a search under section 132". (27)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 69, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 69, amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 70 to 75 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 76 Amendment of
Section 22C**

Amendment made:

Page 29, for lines 13 and 14, substitute "(4) An assessee shall, on the date on which he makes an application

under sub-section (1) to the Settlement Commission, also intimate the Assessing Officer in the prescribed manner of having made such application to the said Commission." (28)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 76, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 76, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 77 Amendment of
Section 22D**

Amendment made:

Page 30, line 36, for "nine months", substitute "twelve months". (29)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 77, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 77, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 78 to 83 were added to the Bill.

**Clause 84 Insertion of New
Section 42D**

Amendment made

Page 32, line 18, for "course of a search", substitute "course of a search under section 37A". (30)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 84, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 84, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 85 Amendment of
Section 2**

Amendment made:

Page 32, line 33, for "sub-section (1) or sub-section (3) of section 14" substitute "sub-section (1) or sub-section (2) of section 14". (31)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 85, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 85, as amended, was added to the Bill.

**Clause 86 Substitution of
new Section for
Section 14**

Amendment made:

Page 26, for lines 37 to 47, substitute—

Valuation 14.(1) For the purposes of the Customs Tariff Act, 1975, or any other of goods, other law for the time being in force, the value of the imported goods and export goods shall be the transaction value of such goods, that is to say, the price actually paid or payable for the goods when sold for export to India for delivery at the time and place of importation, or as the case may be, for export from India for delivery at the time and place of exportation, where the buyer and seller of the goods are not related and price is the sole consideration for the sale subject to such other conditions as may be specified in the rules made in this behalf:

Provided that such transaction value in the case of imported goods shall include, in addition to the price

as aforesaid, any amount paid or payable for cost and services, including commissions and brokerage, engineering, design work, royalties and licence fees, costs of transportation to the place of importation, insurance, loading, unloading and handling charges to the extent and in the manner specified in the rules made in this behalf:

Provided further that the rules made in this behalf may provide for,-

(i) the circumstances in which the buyer and the seller shall be deemed to be related;

(ii) the manner of determination of value in respect of good when there is no sale, or the buyer and the seller are related, or price is not the sole consideration for the sale or in any other case:

(iii) the manner of acceptance or rejection of value declared by the importer or exporter, as the case may be, where the proper officer has reason to doubt the truth or accuracy of such value, and determination of value for the purposes of this section:

Provided also that such price shall be calculated with reference to the rate of exchange as in force on the date on which a bill of entry is presented under section 46, or a shipping bill of export, as the case may be, is presented under section 50." (32)

Page 32, omit line 53. (33)

Page 33, omit lines 1 and 2. (34)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is

"That clause 86, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 86, as amended was added to the Bill.

Clauses 87 to 103 were added to the Bill.

Clause 104 Amendment of Section 159

Amendment made:

Page 36, line 48, for "clauses", substitute "clause". (35)

Page 37, omit lines 2 and 3. (36)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That clause 104, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 104, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 105 to 106 were added to the Bill.

Motion Re: Suspension of Rule 80(i)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 37 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That this House do suspend clause (i) of rule 80 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in so far as it requires that an amendment shall be within the scope of the Bill and relevant to the subject matter of the clause to which it relates, in its application to the Government amendment No. 37 to the Finance Bill, 2007 and that this amendment may be allowed to be moved."

The motion was adopted.

**New Clause 106A Non-reversal of
CENVAT Credit**

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : Sir,
I beg to move:

Amendment made:

Page 52 for lines 20 to 45, *substitute:—*

Page 37, after line 16, *insert—*

Rates of income-tax

*106A. After section 5A of the Central Excise Act, the following section shall be inserted, namely:—

"5B. Where an assessee has paid duty of excise on a final product and has been allowed credit of the duty or tax or cess paid on inputs, capital goods and input services used in making of the said product, but subsequently the process of making the said product is held by the court as not chargeable to excise duty, the Central Government may, by notification, order for non-reversal of such credit allowed to the assessee subject to such conditions as may be specified in the said notification:

Provided that the order for non-reversal of credit shall not apply where an assessee has preferred a claim for refund of excise duty paid by him:

Provided further that the Central Government may also specify in the notification referred to above for non-reversal of credit, if any, taken by the buyer of the said product.";

(37)

(Shri P. Chidambaram)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That new Clause 106A be added of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

New Clause 106A was added to the Bill.

Clauses 107 to 134 were added to the Bill.

First Schedule

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Malhotra, are you moving your amendment?

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) (a) where the total income of the individual who is not a Central Government employee does Not exceed Rs. 1,50,000 | Nil; |
| (b) where the total income of the individual who is not a Central Government Employee does Not exceed Rs. 1,80,000 | Nil; |
| (2) where total income exceeds Rs. 1,50,000 in case of individuals Other than Central Government Employees or Rs. 1,80,000 Case of Central Government Employees) but does not exceed Rs. 2,00,000 | 10 per cent of the amount by which the total income exceeds Rs. 1,50,000 in case (in the of individuals other than Central Government Employees or Rs. 1,80,000 (in the case of Central Government Employees); |
| (3) where the total income exceeds Rs. 2,00,000 but does not exceed Rs. 3,00,000 | Rs. 5,000 in case of individuals other than Central Government Employees or Rs. 2,000 (in the case of Central Government Employees) plus 20 per cent of the amount by which the total income exceeds Rs. 2,00,000; |

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| (4) where the total income exceeds Rs. 3,00,000 | Rs. 25,000 in case of individuals other than Central Government employees or Rs. 22,000 (in the case of Central Government Employees) plus 30 per cent of the amount by which the total income exceeds Rs. 3,00,000. | (2) where the total income exceeds Rs. 2,50,000 but does not exceed Rs. 3,00,000 | 10 per cent of the amount by which the total income exceeds Rs. 2,50,000; |
| | | (3) where the total income exceeds Rs. 3,00,000 | Rs. 5,000 plus 20 per cent of the amount by which the total income exceeds Rs. 3,00,000. (1) |

(II) In the case of every individual, being a woman resident of India, and below the age of sixty years at any time during the previous year:--

Rates of Income-tax

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) where the total income does not exceed Rs. 2,00,000 | Nil; |
| (2) where the total income exceeds Rs. 2,00,000 but does not exceed Rs. 2,25,000 | 10 per cent of the amount by which the total income exceeds Rs. 2,00,000; |
| (3) where the total income exceeds Rs. 2,25,000 but does not exceed Rs. 3,00,000 | Rs. 2,500 plus 20 per cent of the amount by which the total income exceeds Rs. 2,25,000. |
| (4) where the total income exceeds Rs. 3,00,000 | Rs. 17,500 plus 30 per cent of the amount by which The total income exceeds Rs. 3,00,000 |

(III) In the case of every individual, being a resident who is of the age of sixty years or more at any time during the previous year --

Rates of Income-tax

- | | |
|---|------|
| (1) where the total income does not exceed Rs. 2,50,000 | Nil; |
|---|------|

MR. SPEAKER : Do you want to say something? Please be brief.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : Sir, the hon'ble Finance Minister has mentioned about income tax exemptions in the first schedule. Everybody is saying that he has given enough relief. However, I feel that commonman, Government employees, women and senior citizens have been betrayed. That is why, I have moved this amendment. Exemption limit of Rs. 1,00,000 has been increased to Rs. 1,10,000 and besides service tax, education cess has also been imposed. Inflation is rising day by day...(Interruptions)

I would like to speak in brief. My amendment is that the exemption limit should be increased from Rs. 1,00,000 to Rs. 1,50,000. Hon'ble Finance Minister has mentioned that earlier on the annual income of upto Rs. 50,000, the standard deduction was of Rs. 30,000 and the interest upto the amount of Rs. 12,000 was exempted from tax. However, in the present scenario, the imposition of education cess etc. has even worsened the condition of government employees. Therefore, the exemption limit for the Government and other employees should be Rs. 1,50,000. In the case of women employees, it should be increased to Rs. 2,00,000 and thereafter the rate of income tax should be 10%, I have mentioned this separately in the amendment. The exemption limit for senior citizens should be Rs. 2,50,000 and the old persons should be treated as senior citizens from the age of 60 years as they get retired from their jobs at the age of 60 years. The Government has increased the exemption

[Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra]

limit by Rs. 10,000 which gives a benefit of Rs. 1000. The relief of Rs. 1000 is also for every billionaire and trillionaire who is paying crores of rupees as tax. This budget has really been made for the affluent class only. Why a relief of Rs. 1000 has been given to the poor? Why it has been given to those also who are paying Rs. 20 crore or Rs. 50 crore as income tax? Instead of it, it would have been of much relief if it was given to the government employees, the senior citizens and the poor people.

Secondly, I would like to mention a point raised by Shri Mani Shankar Aiyarji in his speech. I would like to talk about the billionaires. A short while ago, the non'ble Finance Minister has very emphatically stated that the growth rate has reached to 9.92%.

[English]

I quote:

"So, when you talk of a 9.2 per cent growth rate, it becomes a statistical abstraction: 0.2 per cent of our people are growing at 9.92 per cent per annum. But there is a very large number, I do not know how many, whose growth rate is perhaps less than 0.2 per cent. But certainly, the number of those who are at the lower end of the growth sector is very much larger than those who are at the higher end. ..."

Sir, then he goes on and says:

"Yet what happens when you have the Budget? As an absolute ritual every Finance Minister
(Interruptions)

This was the speech he made. ... (Interruptions) I know that you also spoke on the television and said that he did something very wrong. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet takes a decision and a Cabinet Minister goes and says this. What does he say? He said

"... As an absolute ritual, every Finance Minister (my colleague Chidambaram is no exception) will devote

the first four or five pages of his Budget speech to the bulk ..." ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : It does not relate to this amendment.

(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, I have moved my amendment. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You can speak only on your amendment.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : The amendment that I have moved is about this. This is the amendment I have moved. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You do not have to come to this support. He can look after everybody.

(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : He said:

"... Every Finance Minister will devote the first four of five pages of his budget speech to the bulk of India and there will then be several pages including whole of part B, which deals perhaps with one or two per cent of our population. ..." ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : It has nothing to do with the Finance Bill.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : This budget favours only one or two per cent of our population...
(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I will put the question now.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Aiyar Sahib has mentioned about the hon'ble Prime Minister also...
(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : That is not relevant to this amendment.

(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, it is very important. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You can refer to it in any other debate and not in this debate.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, I have already moved a privilege motion. I will come to you. But that type of Finance Minister.

[Translation]

He has spoken against the Finance Minister a cabinet Minister, is that all right or what Shri Chidambaramji has stated is correct. Why the Prime Minister is still retaining him in his cabinet?... (Interruptions)

[English]

Sir, it has cost us from not hosting the Asian Games. ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : I allowed you to speak at length on the amendment you moved.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, I am saying that the speeches of Shri Aiyarji and hon'ble Finance Minister are diametrically opposite. Which one of them is correct

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I know what you are saying. But this is not the occasion to raise it now.

(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, who is right?

Let the Prime Minister tell us as to whether Mr. Aiyar is right or Mr. Chidambaram is right.

MR. SPEAKER : Let me put the question.

(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, I am moving my Amendment and let me speak. I am saying another thing now.

MR. SPEAKER : Already, please speak.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Goyal, you please sit down.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, the amendments I have moved, alongwith them I have stated that Jaish-E-Mohammad.... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You are straying from the point.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Jaise-E-Mohammad has... (Interruptions) He has just mentioned that... (Interruptions)

[English]

Jaish-e-Mohammad has invested their money in Indian market... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I do not know about the Jaise-e-Mohammad. Do they pay taxes?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You have made your intention very clear and let me do my duty.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, he had already mentioned it

[Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra]

[English]

[Translation]

The Finance Minister has mentioned that Jaish-E-Mohammad has invested in our shares real estate and budget.

[English]

Let the Finance Minister come out and tell us.
...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

In this amendment I would like to state that he has deceived the poor and has given wrong information about the Indian economy.

[English]

So, I am moving this amendment.

MR. SPEAKER : You are pressing this amendment strongly!

I shall now put amendment No. 1 moved by Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra to the vote of the House.

The amendment was put and negatived.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, all of our amendments have been rejected and we feel that this is an injustice to the poor people. So, in protest of this we walk out of the house.

16.42 hrs.

(At this stage Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra and some other Members left the House)

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You leave the home peacefully.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That the First Schedule stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

The First Schedule was added to the Bill.

The Second Schedule, The Third Schedule, The Fourth Schedule, The Fifth

Schedule and The Sixth Schedule were added to the Bill

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : The Minister may now move that the Bill, as amended, be passed.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

16.43 hrs.

[English]

CABLE TELEVISION NETWORKS (REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL, 2006

MR. SPEAKER : Now, the House shall take up Item No. 11 — Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmuni.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, Item No. 11....

MR. SPEAKER : Item No. 11 is not related to you. It is related to Mr. Dasmuni. Do you want some more work?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND
MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
(SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : Chidambaramji, your
Finance Bill is passed.

MR. SPEAKER : Have some sympathy for the
Chair!

(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, I beg to
move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Cable Television
Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, be taken into
consideration."

Sir, as you know, in your own wisdom, and we
congratulate you for that, you had introduced in the Lok
Sabha Secretariat the Channel of Sansad. Now, the existing
Act, which we have in our possession, gives a mandatory
direction to the Cable Network to carry the DD Lok Sabha
Channel and the DD Rajya Sabha Channel. Now, only DD
Rajya Sabha Channel exists and no DD Lok Sabha Channel
exists. DD Lok Sabha Channel has been converted into
Sansad Channel.

So, we have to amend the Section 8 of the Act to
facilitate the non-prime band channel, to transmit the
proceedings of the Lok Sabha. This is a limited object of
this Bill, and I hope, the House would accept it and pass
it so that the wisdom that you have shown to carry this
Channel in the Lok Sabha Secretariat, it gets into the Act
for the cable operators.

That is all I can submit.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you.

Motion moved.

"That the Bill further to amend the Cable Television
Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, be taken into
consideration".

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore): Mr. Speaker,
Sir, there is nothing to oppose in the Cable Television
Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill. But, there are two
points in my mind. I would like to say that nobody
should be in dilemma regarding this Bill, since the bill has
already been laid on the table now. For a few days, I have
been thinking as to what the rules and regulations and
the body are which govern the Lok Sabha TV. Where the
budget for this comes from and the manner in which it is
being regulated? No mention regarding this has ever been
made in the Lok Sabha. I am not criticizing this Channel
in any way but it appears to me that no Member sitting
in the House is aware as to how this channel is being
operated.

Since you have moved this Bill in the Parliament and
viewed it in a different perspective, so I would like to say
that as we are aware about DD-I and DD-II, similarly, it would
be better if the Members of Lok Sabha are familiarized with
the functioning of this channel also. Everything will become
open to all and if it is working 24 hours a day then it will
also become clear whether there is any need to run this
channel round the clock or not? Occasionally old debates
of Lok Sabha and some other good quality programmes
are aired on this channel in which information is given
about Lok Sabha which increases the knowledge of the
people Lok Sabha. If we look at this aspect of the channel
then it is very good but as we see the other 24 hour
channels, sometimes insignificant programmes are aired
on those channels also. There is no room for selectivity.
We should also keep this thing in mind whether its timings
could be rescheduled when the House is not in session?
It will be better if you apprise the House of this. I have
realised only one thing that I have gone through all the
rules framed under Cable TV Regulation Act incidentally
after this amendment Bill has been moved. Only then I
could understand that if the rules framed for cable
operators as to what types of programmes should be
aired and what types of them should not be aired are
adhered to, then all the channels will have to be banned

[Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan]

...(Interruptions). Kindly refer to Rule No. 6. A programme code has been framed for the Cable Operators which reads as:

[English]

"No programme should be carried in the Cable Service which offends against good taste or decency".

[Translation]

There are several other conditions in the rules also as nothing should be aired against a friendly country. It explains the definition of decency and indecency also. It also explains as to what denigrates women. There have been some mention regarding women also. If the channel operators go through all this and stick to the rules, and if Ekta Kapoor's serial are scanned, then it appears to me that all the serials will have to be banned...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Lok Sabha Channel will run. It does not violate any rule.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : Sir, I believe that if a woman is shown scantily dressed it will constitute a case of indecency. But there may be indecency in our thoughts also. We see in these serials as to how a female character is shown putting on precious ornaments round the clock just to make a show off and hatching a conspiracy to let down another women. All these things look over loathsome and indecent. Hence, it appears to me that rules should be changed as the cable operators are helpless in this matter. You will impose restrictions, fines on them. You have also made provisions in the rules for two years imprisonment for them.

Thereafter, there are some provisions regarding advertisement. The cable operators are violating the rules by showing advertisement captions in the base. Why have you framed such rules? Sometimes it appears as to why such voluminous rules have been framed? Presently a point is under consideration that a State Committee should be constituted to monitor them. Though you have framed several rules but the different States pass different orders.

I have come to know that the Government of West Bengal has said that it will close all astrology channels and will constitute a Committee in this regard. I would like to say that it is alright if they are not interested in knowing their future but before this we should pay our attention towards our present situation which is being spoilt. The Government have done a good job by imposing a ban of FTV. Mr. Speaker, Sir, that day you stated that as the channel had apologized, we should not raise that issue, so I did not raise that issue. Every person wants to put forward his point in his own ways. In this Bill also it has been mentioned to exploit National Emblem. But why is all this happening? It is not only the issue of insult of one National Flag by Mandira Bedi, rather it is happening in general. The method of functioning of present days TV channels are no longer hidden to the public. It is a matter of pride to play for the country, but sportsman spirit, is totally missing. We have started believing and indulging in showing off only. Before that, there was a talk that Mandira Bedi will take part in the game, will give commentary and that the fashion designs of her saris will be different which will come to market and advertisements to this effect kept coming. I wanted to raise this act showing the mentality on the very same day. It is not only about dishonouring our national flag, but it's all about our mentality, which needs to be changed.

Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, today we discuss about the legislature, the judiciary and the executive, but along with it media has its own responsibility which publicises and propagates and for which rules have been framed. The episode of Shilpa Shetty was being continuously shown on news channels the other day at every 15 minutes interval. Children were not to that programme and they did not know what had happened there, but channels were showing the same thing repeatedly at every 15 minutes. We can find many such instances. Horror show starts late at night on channels, will they telecast them 24 hours at a stretch?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would not like to give any lengthy speech, but will speak on this issue sometime later. At present, I will be limited to speak on this bill, I would like

to tell Shri Dasmunshiji that so many laws for cable network has been framed but what is their use? If we look at these rules then no channel will be able to telecast its programme. Rules 1-2-3-4-5 have been serially enshrined under the bill, but I don't think that any cable channel will be able to telecast programmes. Complying with these rules. These rules should be reviewed or other methods of controlling these channels should be deliberated upon. I think it would be better if complete information about the Lok Sabha TV is given to all Hon'ble Members, so that they can give their suggestions.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : May I take the liberty? As you know, all of us in this House had been thinking of it and ultimately, we decided about this Lok Sabha Channel. Hon. Leaders may recall, I believe, that at least two meetings were held if not more to discuss its structure. I am thankful to all for their kind encouragement given to having this channel.

Secondly, so far we have formed an Advisory Committee, as you are aware. I am thankful to hon. Leaders. Some of the Members did participate in that meeting. Maybe it should be held more frequently. I am accepting that.

Thirdly, a very pertinent point has been raised here. Why should this channel be a 24-hour channel? It has been made a 24-hour channel temporarily because no cable operator will otherwise show the channel for a certain number of hours as they would not like to interrupt the service. Hence, we have been requesting the hon. Minister to make it mandatory rather than reduce it to 8-hour or 10 hour channel. If this is done, then it is applicable to them and they cannot take the plea of interrupted transmission. This is one of the reasons for doing it. I am thankful to the hon. Minister for moving it, and for his generous support for it.

As far as the structure, rules, regulations, functioning, etc. are concerned, I shall wholeheartedly welcome your suggestions for the same. I will also see that the Secretariat

makes a proper study for it. We will also consult all the hon. Leaders. It would be done in whatever way you all suggest it to be done. There is nothing to hide, and there is nothing to suppress from anybody. All the success that has been achieved so far is because of the kind support of all sections of the House. So many hon. Leaders and hon. Ministers have been attending its meetings, and I am thankful to all of them. Mistakes may be there, and certainly it is open to correction with your kind suggestions. We shall welcome all the suggestions from you.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : Sir, thank you very much. Can there not be an Act for this too?

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, I have no objection to it at all. I am not the owner, and nobody is the owner of it. The Parliament of India is the owner of this channel. Thank you very much for your suggestion. We will discuss it very soon, but I thank you for your suggestion.

Next speaker is Shri K.S. Rao.

SHRI K.S. RAO (Eluru): Thank you very much, Sir. I am very happy that you have given me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on this Bill. I am of the opinion that the Lok Sabha channel has now become popular to the extent that even the villagers can see it. It is of common knowledge that cable TVs are more popular than national TVs in the villages, urban areas, smaller towns, etc. Naturally, this regulation will definitely make more number of people in this country to see the proceedings of Lok Sabha, and also the programmes offered by the Lok Sabha channel.

Sir, you have done a good thing by allowing the live transmission of the activities from the Lok Sabha. We were of the opinion that it will regulate the behaviour of the Members of Parliament to a certain extent. Though no substantial improvement is seen in the last couple of years after starting the channel was started, but I am very optimistic that over a period of time they will realize that people are watching our behaviour over the TV. People can always accept good discussion, and criticism and fault-

[Shri K.S. Rao]

finding of the ruling party, but it should not be in by wasting the time of the House, which is very valuable and which costs the public a lot of their money. Therefore, this Bill will make it mandatory even for the private operators to re-transmit it. I am of the opinion that by doing this it will reach more number of people and more number of people will be able to understand about all that is being done in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Secondly, some of the programmes that we are approving here – like the National Insurance Programme for the poor people in the villages – are not getting enough publicity. The Finance Minister has introduced this in his last Budget, but it has not reached as many people as it should really have. This Bill that we are bringing in the House, and the kind of facilities that we are planning to give them. This would help them to avail those facilities, and better their lives.

Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan belongs to BJP, but she has also supported this Bill. I am very happy about it. She also suggested some points for improvement of this channel. I am also of the opinion that the contents of the Lok Sabha channel must be improved, and it must be competitive as compared with other channels. People must feel like seeing the Lok Sabha TV channel. They should not think that it is a routine thing, and that it is not so important to watch it. Therefore, while conveying about all that is happening in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, it must also be presented in a manner that attracts the attention of the people of this country.

Similarly, the time of transmission also must be suitable to the people of this country. Now, the channel is being run on 24-hour basis, but the programmes must be shown in a manner that suits the people in the villages as well as the poor people of this country.

17.00 hrs.

It is mentioned that while doing it there should not be any alteration. Clause 2 says the channels referred in sub-

section 1 shall be transmitted without any deletion or alteration of any programme. That is very important. If there were to be any change, that leads to a lot of complications and problems later. So, there should not be any deletion or alteration in the programmes that have come up.

In this context, I wish to mention a few words about the stand taken by our hon. Minister on the earlier occasions. When it was found that some programmes were detrimental to our culture, he immediately acted on it and banned the channels like AXN for Men's World programme after 11 in the night and also Yoko Height Increase Device of 2005. The Minister should take severe action on those channels who broadcast obscene pictures, derogatory programmes about the women. Ads which encourage consumption of liquor, tobacco and other objectionable things also should be banned. If action were to be taken on those channels immediately without loss of time, others will realize that if they were to go against the regulation and rules provided in the Act, they will be punished very severely. While he gave an opportunity to them to rectify earlier by exonerating them by taking apologies from, in future it should not be so. Punishment must be deterrent so that others will not repeat the same things.

I do not want to take much time of the House. While there is no precensorship on these programmes and self regulation is there, it is for them to regulate themselves. Otherwise, penalties will be levied in a huge way. That must go to their minds. With these words, I support this Bill and I support the time in which it is brought. I want the hon. Minister to make the channels more popular with the right content.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, I support this amendment Bill. It is after all a simple amendment for inserting Section 8 through which the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Television Channels may get compulsory re-transmission. These two agencies are working independent of Doordarshan. There is already a provision in the statute making it compulsory for all Doordarshan programmes to be re-transmitted. There is no difficulty. We wanted statutory backing. For that purpose,

this amendment is brought. So, the question of support is not the problem.

In Parliament, we function in many ways. We function by Committees and we function by assembling in the Lok Sabha Chamber and taking business. This is another form of functioning in the media, in the television. So, that also must have some regulation. We must frame rules for this particular functioning of this House. As I said, it is one form of functioning of this House. Here, we are functioning under the Rules of Procedure we have framed under the provisions of the Constitution. We have the overall statutory backing. So, we function on that principle. This is another form of functioning.

I fully appreciate. It is only proper and just that we have entered into the visual media. It is quite correct. We are now a part and parcel of the modern tendencies and modern development. Previously, Parliament did not have such a function. We were functioning in a separate way. Now we have entered into the visual media also appropriately at the appropriate time. Our purpose is to educate the people about how we function, the way in which we function, and the rules by which we are functioning. So, it must also be a model visual education. So, it must be run as a model thing.

TV nowadays has become a part of daily life. It is being misused for which I would like to request the hon. Members to make regulation, to put some control over cable media operators also. They are doing much mischief. They are showing certain programmes which are very injurious to public health and also to public opinion.

So, we must have some regulations to control the media. We must have some regulations for the cable operators. It is not connected with this amending Bill and it has to be taken up separately by bringing in an amendment regulating all the cable operators. It will be the proper way of doing things. As food adulteration is a criminal act, so is the adulteration in public life. The can adulterate public life. Nobody is exempted from seeing the visual media. It is high time for us to have some criminal provisions to see that the private cable operators do not

adulterate the public life. Taking adulterated food is highly injurious and so also is the misuse of cable operators. It is a dangerous aspect of human life and it must be controlled. As we have Acts to control food adulteration, we must also have an Act to control cable operators doing mischief and showing wrong publicity and making our public life highly adulterated. The Government is not the proper authority to take decisions in public life. Newspapers, nowadays, are not creating public opinion but television is creating the public opinion. That public opinion to some extent will be injurious. So, I request the hon. Minister to consider those aspects and bring in some regulation so that the public opinion is not adulterated. Television can do much mischief which we cannot even imagine. This is our experience in life.

Talking about Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha TV channel, we should be careful. We should have separate regulations to control this channel. We should make it a moral visual media so far as public life in India is concerned. We have a duty and I hope that the Minister will consider all these aspects. The hon. Speaker may also consider the aspect of bringing in some rules so that it functions in a proper way. This channel must be there for 24 hours but under some control. For that purpose we must frame some rules. Some experts will have to come in and this must be done in a proper way. I support the Bill.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU (Rajapur):
Sir, I welcome this Bill because for long time there was a thinking that we did not have our own channel unlike US where there is C-Span which works almost round the clock and keeps telecasting various programmes pertaining to the functioning of Senate and the House. So, I think this is something which is very welcome. I would like to make a few points.

I would like to know from the Minister, do you have the technology to ensure that what we make as a law can be enforced so that all the cable operators who are not showing it, for example, you will be able to track them and will be able to punish them because even today there are so many channels which are functioning, which are owned

[Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu]

by Doordarshan, I am sure there is flouting of it with impunity. So, I would like to know whether that technology is available.

I would now like to make a few suggestions. Firstly, whether it should be a 24-hours channel or not, I am sure is a question which you will be able to address. My point is, if at all it is going to be a 24-hours channel then there are various possibilities. It should be a Members' channel. There are 545 Members in this House. We can be used to actually take part in its programmes on an on-going basis. To decide what should be the content of these programmes, in addition to the professionals who will actually be involved, you can form subject-wise advisory committees of the Members of Parliament themselves. Some of us have got specific interests, we will be able to guide the content of the programme and we will be able to work on it. So, it will truly become the Members' channel.

Secondly, positive contributions of Members of Parliament should also be highlighted. Nowadays, I think this is something which will really be helpful.

MR. SPEAKER: It is very important.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Thirdly, the rules and responsibility of Members of Parliament vis-à-vis other functionaries in the Government whether it is a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and whether it is a corporator. There is a lot of confusion. I think this channel can be used with a very imaginative programme for all the people of the country to know that this is what the Members of Parliament do and what they cannot do. Therefore, the Members of Parliament can be put in the right perspective and the expectation of them can also be properly decided. We can telecast the proceedings of the Standing Committees of Parliament as well as the Consultative Committees.

MR. SPEAKER : There is consensus on this. You try to persuade them.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Sir, I know that. But I am just suggesting if it is possible. More

importantly the proceedings of the public Accounts Committee of Parliament can be telecast which is, in fact, the most important arm to exercise control over the Executive.

As regards MPLAD Scheme, there are so many good things which several Members of Parliament have done in their constituencies but only bad things get highlighted. So, can we not pick and choose some of the good things that the Members of Parliament have done in their own Constituencies and they can be highlighted? So, there should be some specific programme.

MR. SPEAKER : Some of them have been shown.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : In addition to that, some Members of Parliament have gone beyond MPLAD and have done something in their constituencies. I have also created Parivartan Kendras in which I involve people and there are 115 of those. Can we not highlight them and talk about them? Let there be a sort of healthy competition among the Members of Parliament. People want to have the channel for 24 hours and a number of channels which go beyond Parliament. But all of us are thinking that first of all we must have, at least, 150 days of Parliament so that we can actually have more time to debate on issues. If that happens, this problem will be solved partially. But even then we will have 200 days when there is no Parliament. In that period, some of these ideas can be used. Moreover, we can think of re-telecasting of something which has been discussed in Parliament because Lok Sabha functions normally from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. but many people are working during that time. So, if we can tweak the time and re-telecast it and actually show it to people.

MR. SPEAKER : Probably, that is being shown. I thank you for your suggestion. There is always scope for improvement.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Sir, you can make some of the Advisory Committees of the Members of Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: There is already one.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (Dhenkanal): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha channels being independent and getting permission to uplink from December 2005 has been a good step and this Bill is welcomed by everybody in this House.

Sir, as all of us are aware, most of us, the legislators, are viewed as walky-talky Rs. 2 crore. Due to the MPLAD fund, people are limiting us to that particular aspect of our responsibility. But it is very necessary that countrymen judge us, watch us and see how we perform. We are not iconoclastic and that we are not bourgeois. We are not people who are compartmentalized within this House and that we are actually expressing the opinions and the feelings that the common man expresses or feels. So, while welcoming this amendment which is obvious all of us welcome it, I would like to tell the hon. Minister and his Ministry that in this modern era, we must take care of not to become moral police. We have to give a lot of freedom to the media to ensure that a healthy growth of the media takes place in this country.

As you know, Gandhiji was probably the only person in this country who knew the very pulse of the Indians. He knew, as a race, we are an extremely disobedient race. Therefore, his major thrust and his major programme was on civil disobedience. He knew how to use our.... quirkiness, weakness or our strength, whatever you call it to achieve the glorious height to which he could take this country.

Let us be aware that while we pass this Bill, let there be no loopholes. I would like to request the hon. Minister to thoroughly check the provisions of the Bill in order that there are no loopholes which would allow this characteristics of ours of being disobedient that we do such a thing which will neutralize the good work done and result eventually in depriving the people of this country from seeing how this august House functions, how the hon. Speaker quietens us and how many times he has to remind the hon. Members of the House about how to behave in the House since the entire country is watching

us. Whether we demean ourselves or rise above our pettyselves whatever we are doing has to be constantly told to and seen by the people of this country so that they learn to view the legislators in a different light.

SHRI TAPIR GAO (Arunachal East): Sir, first of all I would like to seek your permission for speaking from here.

MR. SPEAKER : I want all of you to come forward. But it should be in a manner that is appropriate.

SHRI TAPIR GAO : Sir, first of all, I rise to support this Bill. There is a need for the people of the country to see as to whom they are sending to Parliament. Through these channels of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha the people at large are now able to identify us easily even in the streets, at the Railway Stations and at the airports. People tell us that they have seen me in the Lok Sabha TV channel. I have got a few points to make on this Bill.

Sir, in keeping with the requirements of the Cable Television Network Regulations Act, 1995 inter-Ministerial Committees have been constituted to monitor the functioning of the cable operators. What kind of functions are these Committees performing to control the activities of the private TV channels? Earlier, when television first came to India it was termed as the 'idiot box' but with passage of time it has not remained an idiot box any more. Television is being watched not only by children of all ages, but also by elderly people. Television is a medium now through which we get information and it has an influence in the minds of the children. Therefore, the programmes shown on TV have to be censored. I would like to say that the role of the inter-Ministerial Committee was to control the functioning of the cable operators and take care of the nature of concerns that are being expressed by the hon. Members here today.

Sir, I have got a few suggestions to make. I have been a regular participant in the Lok Sabha channel. On last Saturday I had been invited to attend a programme on the channel. A gentleman from Kolkata called up to ask as to why the Chambers of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha

[Shri Tapir Gao]

are mostly empty. My reply was that it was their duty to see as to whom they are sending as Members to the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. This shows that the citizens of our country have become more aware by watching these dedicated channels. We have to give more importance to these channels in order that we are able to compete better with the private operators.

Sir, another suggestion that I would like to make is that if the channels could show some films on Saturdays and Sundays. It should not be those of vulgar nature, but films that has a patriotic character.

MR. SPEAKER : Award winning films are already being shown.

SHRI TAPIR GAO : Those films should be telecast on these dedicated channels either on Saturday or on Sunday.

MR. SPEAKER : I am thankful to the hon. Minister for Information and Broadcasting for making those films available.

SHRI TAPIR GAO : Sir, we have three Sessions, namely, the Budget, the Monsoon and the winter Sessions. During the inter-Sessions the channels may think of telecasting the proceedings of the State Assemblies through recorded cassettes so that the people also can know better about what policies and programmes are being pursued by the State Governments.

Sir, with these few words, keeping in view the limitation of time, I conclude my speech.

MR. SPEAKER : I am not piloting the Bill but you know that I am somehow involved in this Bill. As regards the State Assemblies, I have requested all the hon. Speakers of the State Assemblies if they can send the footage because we cannot keep the cameras in all the Assemblies but we can happily show that here. One honourable Speaker of a State has also expressed his willingness to do that and therefore,

the Lok Sabha TV is very keen to show those proceedings also if we can get the footage.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki) : This legislation is of a very vital importance in the sense that this will enable the people to watch how we, the elected representatives of the people, perform in the Lok Sabha.

MR. SPEAKER : If I may interrupt, it is believed that the purpose of having a channel is to show our Members' conduct. That is not so. It is in recognition of the constitutional right of the people of this country as to what is happening in the highest elected forum. It is conceding their right to know. This is the main objective. We have got the Visitors Gallery of 500 people although we did not mention it. Now the entire country will seem to be the Visitors Gallery.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE : This is what I was actually referring to. This is a vast country and everybody cannot afford to come to the Visitors Gallery and see the proceedings of the House. In a democratic set-up, it is the right of the people to know it and with modern technology, we can make it readily available and that is being done. So, I welcome this step.

Several suggestions were made by other Members also. I would request that, whenever there is spare time, along with award winning films and patriotic songs, we can also show clips from international conferences on very serious subjects. If proceedings of other forums may be made available to us, that will help the general public. I would request that the content of the programmes should be made more serious and more beneficial to the Members and the general public. This is all that I want to say.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR (Bareilly) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, though it does not require any special mention but I have stood up to speak because I wrote to the hon'ble Minister atleast three-four times that it is not shown in our area. When telecast was started, then it was on 64, 65 numbers which had no use. You have brought this bill, but unfortunately,

operators or multi-service operators are running it according to their own wishes and they do lot of discrepancies. If district administration is of their Government or is known to them, then they can do any number of discrepancies and no one bothers to pay attention towards them. District officers have been made incharge for its monitoring. Now-a-days an election campaign is going on in Uttar Pradesh, where a few channels are indulging in such a propaganda that it seems they are keeping aside all rules for electioneering. Complete two months of campaigning took place over there and it was such a campaign that I do not think it worth-mentioning. I am thankful to the hon'ble speaker with whose blessings and efforts we have started a new arrangement. As said earlier that no act and rules will be made, a lot of recruitment and other works have taken place. I would like to say that transparency should remain in it and people should realize that such a channel can also be there. Alongwith it, I would like to say one more thing that no decisions have been made as yet about the Rajya Sabha channel. Why this has not happened.....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You need not discuss this here. You know the history of it.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR : I mean to say that there should have been uniformity in this regard. I do not have anything else to state about it.

I come from the Bareilly constituency. There a multi service operator is carrying out his operations violating all the rules. I urge the Government that inspections may be carried out at a few places and action be taken. Nothing will improve until the guilty is punished. The Government have done a good things by banning the FTV.

Lastly, I have a complaint against the Lok Sabha channel that they visited my constituency six months back, got a complete film made but the film has yet not been shown even after six months.....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : It is very long.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR : I request that if they visit any constituency to make films then the people of that area develop an interest and they wish that there should be some scheduling for showing the same. It has been told that this channel is a 24 hours channel. My friends stated that Member of Parliament Local Area Development fund has got a bad name, but people should also come to know about the good works done from this fund and such works can be got done through this. It should also be understood as to how our Member of Parliament works, and how he deals with the people. Since I normally watch television, it appears to me that there are many such talks which you get to watch on every channel. I want that people should feel specific about this channel which can enable them to know in a way about their Member of Parliament and even to interact with him. It would be better if they can ask questions as well.

I would like to thank you for the right direction you worked upon. Let Lok Sabha TV Channel get recognition and work properly, Such policies may be chalked out so that we can take this work in the right direction.

*SHRI M. SHIVANNA (Chamrajanagar): Thank you, Sir, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister for having brought an historical Bill. There is nothing wrong in it, if I say it is a very important Bill. I wish to associate myself with my friends and the Hon. Members who have already discussed on this Bill. Ever since television broadcast has been introduced in the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha we the Hon. Members of Parliament are being highly respected by the people, who are watching the business of Participating in the business of the Parliament as representatives of people. It is the matter of great pleasure that the Government takes steps to prepare a documentary on the

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

[Shri M. Shivanna]

MPLAD funds and the spending of Rs. 2 crore. The public shall be privileged to know whether Members of Parliament are utilizing these funds in useful way. That is why I would like to suggest the Government to send a team of Officers to study the developmental work in the constituencies of the Members of Parliament and prepare a tele film on this developmental programmes and display it in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and also National channels. So that it may ensure proper utilization of the MPLADS funds. On the one hand it would be a caution for the members those who are misusing these funds of Rs. 2 crores. On the other hand it will also inspire the Hon. Members to start developmental work in their respective constituencies. Once again I support this Bill on behalf of Janata Dal (S) parliamentary party. I congratulate the Hon. Minister and also express my sincere thanks to Hon. Speaker for giving me an opportunity to participate in this discussion. With this I conclude.

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you. The amendment which has been moved by the Minister is a welcome one. The major purpose of amending Section (8) is to make this channel from a non-prime one to prime one. This is the major aspect of this Bill. It is a very welcome step.

My only concern before the House is this. Relating to the functioning of this House a message is going out that the whole country is in the Visitors' Gallery. In the Parliament, not necessarily only in our country, in other democracies also, the Chair repeatedly says: "This will not go on record." When the Chair rules that something will not go on record, during those times, say 100 or 200 years back, it meant that it was not to be printed. The print media should not disclose that or print that in future. All deliberations of the House are the property of the House. I would like the Minister and the House to consider this.

Some utterances are being made and very rightly so that this will not go on record and it is being recorded and it is being telecast. So the electronic media is actually

portraying everything that is on record and which is supposed to be not on record...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The idea is that nobody should do something which has to be deleted.

SHRI B. MAHTAB : Sir, I think, some thinking has to be made in this regard...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : But Shri Mahtab, please excuse if I may interrupt you. Those who come and watch us from little higher physical positions are also hearing those.

SHRI B. MAHTAB : Sir, I would humbly submit here that the print media is being debarred to print it whereas electronic media by taking it from the Lok Sabha television or other electronic media goes on repeating those incidents either in the well or whatever is being deliberated. So some restrictions are necessary and some amendment in the rules has become necessary ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let us hope the technology will come to deal with that situation.

SHRI B. MAHTAB : I just wanted to draw the attention of the hon. Minister.

Secondly, I will come to the MSO about which Shri Santosh Gangwar has mentioned. We have deliberated it five or six years back as to how to ensure the Act, especially the cable television operator or the server who is providing that, there is competition in different cities and different towns between MSO. But, at the same time, the client or the persons who have taken cables are being exploited. The Act is to be enforced by whom? It is to be enforced by the District Magistrate and by the Sub-Divisional Magistrates. I do not know whether the Ministry is monitoring it. How many such cases have actually been registered? Has some MSO operators been convicted till date after such a long time? I only hope that this Bill, after being enacted, the law will be enforced and all MSOs and cable television operators will abide by it.

SHRI KIREN RIJU (Arunachal West) : I rise to support the important (Amendment) Bill brought by the hon. Minister.

Sir, I have one important suggestion to make. Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan has mentioned about the 24-hour telecast. I feel that when the Session is on, it can be telecast on 24-hour basis, but when the Session is not there, it can be curtailed to some limitation. That is one important aspect.

Another is the quality of the Lok Sabha Television channel. I rise here to congratulate the entire team of the Lok Sabha Television Channel that within a very short time has come up with such a brilliant team work and quality. Sir, my congratulation goes to you and to the hon. Minister also because you are pioneering the whole thing and the House is supporting. The Manner in which all the news reporters are working is absolutely professional and I congratulate the whole team.

Sir, on this occasion I want to make a remark on the recent decision of the hon. Minister to ban some of the channels. I rise here to support completely the stand taken by the hon. Minister. We believe in the freedom of the media, but that does not mean that the media will go on showing as if there is no law governing them. So, the hon. Minister, we are with you and those obscene telecasting in the television is affecting the moral of our society.

So, I stand here to support the Bill.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : Sir, I also support the Bill. But for this opportunity I might not have got an opportunity to bring this aspect to the notice of the House. There was once in television channel information which was received by somebody under Right to Information Act (RTI).

On that basis, a programme was shown as if some Members of Parliament were not fully present in the House for the whole Session, for the whole number of days as if that was a fault. It was also insinuating the Members who were attending the Committees as if attendance in Committees are not important.

This channel, I would submit, may not be able to

take the proceedings of the Committees because the deliberations of the Committees are not supposed to be made public. But the work in the Committees, which are also very important, especially the Standing Committees which are very important, are also to get light in some way or the other.

MR. SPEAKER : Please persuade the hon. Chairmen of the Committees. I will be very happy to do it. They have not agreed so far. Many times, I tried.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : I feel that there is some impression that Committees are not important. The Committees are very important. The work done in some Committees are so good that it actually reflects the will of the House, then it comes to the House and it is supported by us.

With these words, I conclude.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : Sir, I am thankful to all the hon. Members who took part in the discussion on this Bill.

It is a very small amendment having very wider impact on the country. If the House could pass this Bill today and transmit it to the Rajya Sabha, it would be good.

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on behalf of my Ministry for your wisdom in having an independent channel of Lok Sabha free from the domain of Prasar Bharati. All the parties stood by you. I was also present on all the occasions whenever you called the meeting. In a short spell of time, the kind of team work done in this channel deserves wholehearted appreciation of entire Parliament. They have done a wonderful thing. If they get encouragement, they will produce better productions for the Parliament channel. I can say this on my behalf and on behalf of my Ministry and Government.

Besides the proceedings of Parliament, I have myself watched the way they presented the *Satyagraha* clippings of Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru's speeches in

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

Parliament and a few of the comments made in public as also his journey, Tryst with Destiny speech, etc. It was a wonderful document. I assure you and the Channel, Sir, that whenever the channel needs all the archival materials of Prasar Bharat, Films Division, we shall support it and we shall support it totally and fully.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I think that Independent India's pride is our democratic functioning. In democratic functioning, one of the very important milestones is this Parliament. Therefore, the Parliament cannot be ignored, under-estimated. They present Parliament's views and expressions objectively. The way the channel is doing the work is really a commendable thing. Cutting across all party lines, we appreciate it.

In regard to the suggestion of the Members for a future framework of running the channel, I would submit that you were kind enough to have accepted the suggestions in the past. You have said today that you would do it in future. I will not deal with those aspects. Whenever such meetings are called, we will attend. I feel you will give appropriate guidance. If you feel about appropriate legislation, code of conduct and guidelines, we shall stand by you. Whatever manner you feel it required, we do stand by you.

Today, the limited objective is to give direction to the cable operators because the cable operators, under the law, are not bound in any manner whatsoever to carry the Lok Sabha channel. The law says that DD Lok Sabha is to be uplinked. DD Rajya Sabha is on. There is no problem. But we have taken out DD Lok Sabha because a new, independent channel of Lok Sabha, the Sansad Channel, has been introduced. That will come within the legal parameter of the direction to the cable operators. That is why, if you look at the Bill, we have amended the provision and we said:

"Every cable operator shall re-transmit channels operated by or on behalf of Parliament in the manner

and name as may be specified by the Central Government by notification in the Official Gazette;..."

We used the words "in the manner."

Today, the Lok Sabha TV Channel is called Sansad Channel. Tomorrow, if the other House thinks of a different channel, which is free from the domain of Prasar Bharati, the same Act could give the direction without bringing any amendment for that purpose or in future, if the Lok Sabha thinks of having some other channel in the manner that they feel fit, that could also be covered under this amendment. So, this amendment is not limited to the cable operators for the time being, but there will be no bar on having a new channel or renaming the existing channel. That is why, we made this amendment a little flexible.

Sir, I fully agree with the suggestions made by Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan and many other hon. Members. In 1995, the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act was passed. In those days, the number of channels was very limited. Now, in my Ministry, we are monitoring almost, and taking care of, 340 channels, including Doordarshan channels. As per my information, by early 2008 the number of channels will exceed 400 and by the end of the 11th Plan, going by the boom, we can surpass all the records of Europe and Asia. That is the position now so far as the number of channels is concerned. That is why, the UPA Government took a right decision to come out with a comprehensive legislation on the regulation of content as has been mentioned by Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan. I am doing a lot of homework now, talking to the stakeholders twice, putting the whole thing on the website, inviting their further opinion and in the early part of the next Session, I think I will be able to come to Parliament and introduce that Bill, which would be very media-friendly and upholding the freedom of the Press. There will be direct regulation of the Government or the bureaucracy. It will have a very interesting self-regulating mechanism like the Press Council where the responsibility will be on the stakeholders and we will be playing only a secondary role, not a dominating role. That is the kind of approach we are adopting.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri): At present, the Parliament news is not covered by the media, only the corporate news is covered. That is the position now. You should do something for that also because this is also necessary for the people.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I am coming to it. If the Parliament passes a law saying that all the media in the country will have to cover the speeches made by all hon. Members in Parliament, I think that law would be struck down by the court. Therefore, in a democracy which part of the speech of which MP will be covered by which media, I cannot compel. I can only say that our channel that is, the Lok Sabha Television Channel should be telecast in a non-prime band by cable operators throughout the country. This was lacking in the law and today I have brought an amendment for that:

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I am coming to the monitoring part now. I absolutely agree that after being the Minister in this Ministry, I felt a little hopeless in the sense that in such a huge country with more than one billion population, when the SP and the DM of each district are busy with their local developments, how they can really monitor this. They rely on the complaints made by the viewers, NGOs, social activists, headmasters and principals of schools and colleges. If something goes wrong, on the basis of complaint, they just convey to the cable operators to behave and issue a warning and if something goes beyond their limit, it comes to us. What do we do in that case? We also do not act in a hurry. If we get a complaint, first we get the complaint substantiated by the cassette. If the cassette is not supplied, we collect the cassette. Then, we send it to the Inter-Ministerial Committee consisting of officers from the Ministries Defence, External Affairs, Women and Child Development and Human Resource Development. If they collectively feel that Somethings is done which is totally bad, they recommend the measure and on that measure the Minister has to act. It is not that I do something arbitrarily, not at all.

Sir, I can tell you – I am not talking politics here – that we have issued 75 to 80 Show Cause Notices during

the tenure of the UPA Government and in most of the cases, the matter had been disposed of across the table because we found that broadcasters are very responsible. They are not only apologizing for their mistake, but they are also changing the whole and they are behaving in a proper manner.

Only in two cases, I have to take stern line and two of the foreign channels were issued Show Cause Notices. Of those two foreign channels, one admitted its fault, apologized and we resumed them. But the other did not bother at all about our show cause or warning or whatever it is, so they have to be banned for two months.

I just tell you the kind of things that are going on in this media that the Government is doing too much of moral policing, often I face it. I prefer to be accused as a moral police officer than to be immoral police officer. But the question is that we are not doing any policing in the TV. The law is passed by the Parliament, that what is wrong you scan in this manner and then go ahead. Out of 340 channels, more than 1,20,000 transmissions are there in a year and if at the end of the day, two channels are caught to be doing wrong and doing wrong beyond any limit and they are dealt firmly, the whole nation is being told by the media that moral policing is going on, interference is there. This is not correct.

I am not a judge of obscenity, culture and other things or a wise person to discuss this. One performing stage artist, Shilpa Shetty's, kissing element was confined in our monitor for only 16.5 second. This 16.5 second scene has been repeatedly played in the TV the whole day, making it 120 times, to make it an issue and they say this is TRP. This is a mad race. What do we do? The law does not permit me to interfere. I only appeal to them, in a friendly manner, not to repeat it 100 times for your commercial purpose, to get more viewers and to drag the whole thing to the court. The poor lady is suffering. I am not saying what is right, you should not show and what is wrong, you should show, but the media should be partners, not a fighting, quarrelling group between them. We do not like that.

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

We do not believe that Government should control media, we do not believe Government should control TV, we do not believe Government should interfere into TV, but we do believe certain kinds of arrangements, certain kinds of code, be it in advertisement, be it in content, have to be adhered to in every democratic country, be it Europe or India. Whenever you do anything in India, they will abuse us, but whereas I see the laws of the other parts of the world, then they keep quiet.

India's liberalization does not mean that it is a free and empty ground to destroy any heritage, any law, any culture, any tradition of this country. That we cannot accept and there I object. We have banned showing liquor, we have banned showing cigarettes. Step by step, we are doing and against only two channels, we took stern action. That too, why? Because in school time, parents complained that they have only two rooms. In one room, the parents stay and in the other room, the children study and sleep. They say their exams are going on. We cannot prevent them, because we are middleclass people and we have got only one TV. The children come and sit before the TV, peep in and go and all this rubbish was shown in those times on a particular channel.

Not only principals, the NGOs, the women activists rang me up 100 times. Then we made a process. We asked these channels to come and cooperate. They did not. We issued letters, they did not reply. We appealed them to stop it, they did not bother because they are foreign channels. That is why, I have to act very firmly with the international decision and to ban it.

Now, the banning itself has become a topic that the Government is interfering. Why am I interfering? I would like to inform the House, you take stock of the news channels – I am not talking much before – Just two years before the news channels were registered in the country to show news and current affairs. They used to show news 24 hours a day, right or wrong, whatever it is. Now, for the last two years, you will find that those news channels and current affairs channels are converting their 60 per cent

as entertainment channels in the name of entertainment news and ignoring development and matters of great importance and all these things.

I am having a meeting next month informally with Editors that if you feel the Bollywood shooting should be a part of the news channel, let us define and come with a code. News channels ignore the Parliament; news channels ignore the development of the country; news channels ignore the impact of communal harmony message in a particular part of India. At that time they deduct the time and show something else which is a part of entertainment channel. There are different reasons. Then it is a problem for the country. That is why we are addressing it afresh next month. I am confident they will cooperate. I should tell again, Sir, that Indian print media and Indian television channels at the time of crisis of the nation, at the hour of call of the nation, always stand by the nation. Be it the case of Samjhauta Express blast, be it the case of Bombay serial blasts, be it the case of anything, they are second to none to defend the country and to avoid any kind of massacre in the society. They did exemplary work.

So I have faith in them. I do not like to teach them a lesson type of language; I do not like to interfere with them; I still have a hope. Hopefully when the Bill will come in the next Session, all these suggestions which you said could be accommodated in a manner by which the governance in this country, so far as the broadcasting channels are concerned, would be done absolutely in good faith with the media owners, with the television owners and the Government. The Government should not be a party to use stick every time to them; that is bad for any democratic country. That is how I am preparing the Bill. I claim, Sir, today when the Bill will come, it will be one and the last one in the whole world; the way we are preparing the Bill in this country. That is what I can say.

If you want to get rid of cable, we have to expand the CAS everywhere. The UPA Government is absolutely successful to implement the CAS free from all hindrances in the limited time that we have got by the Court, in

Chennai, in Kolkata, in Delhi and in Mumbai. Our next course is to complete the four metropolitan cities and to spread it to other cities. DTH and CAS can make you free. At the same time, I do not want that cable operators should lose their jobs; lot of workers are there. We are also disciplining them; we are appealing them not to pirate a cassette. It is because piracy of the cassettes of good films is destroying our film industry also. Disastrous effect is coming. I have taken a decision; I have formed a Committee. The Committee's recommendations came to me. Shrimati Shabana Azmi led the committee. We are implementing it by another two months. I am absolutely clear that the atmosphere will be clean and transparent. So far as this particular amendment is concerned, it will be put into effect immediately after passing by the other House, and Lok Sabha channel will get a prominent and dominant role in the cable network. This, Sir, I can convey through you to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, very much. Once again I wish to convey my sincere appreciation of the views that have been expressed, for gratefulness and for the very good suggestion that have come from the hon. Members and also appreciation. We must remember that for only eight months, this channel is functioning. Thank you for your kind encouragement.

The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act 1995, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"The clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1 Short Title and Commencement

Amendment made:

Page 1, line 4,-

for "2006", substitute "2007". (2)

(Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi)

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Enacting Formula

Amendment made:

Page 1, line 1, —

for "Fifty-seventh", substitute "Fifty-eighth". (1)

(Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi)

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That the Enacting Formula, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

The Enacting Formula, as amended, was added to the Bill.

The Long Title was added to the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, the hon. Minister may move that the Bill, as amended, be passed.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I beg to move:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am thankful to everybody and particularly to the hon. Minister for his very positive support throughout.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the House is to be adjourned.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR (Sagar): Sir, take up 'zero hour'.

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR (Vadodara): Sir, new take up zero hour.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Shri B. Mahtab.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Sir, because of large-scale felling of trees, environmental pollution and global warming, large parts of the country are facing heat wave in abnormal figures.

17.57 hrs.

[SHRI VARAKALA RADHAKRISHNAN in the Chair]

In many districts of Orissa, especially Jharsuguda, Angul, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Sundargarh and Bolangir, the temperature has gone beyond 43 degree Celsius during the last seven days, which had taken a toll of at least 36 persons. The Orissa Government has provided only Rs. 10,000 each as ex-gratia from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. As death due to sun-stroke and thunder/lightning is yet to be treated

as natural calamity, the affected families are not getting any relief from the National Calamity Relief Fund.

I would like to draw the attention of the Government that around 230 to 250 persons die because of lightning in Orissa invariably every year as reported in the Government records but are denied any relief from the National Calamity Relief Fund.

It was in 1998, Orissa faced tremendous heat wave and around 2,042 casualties occurred because of sun-stroke. This year also, Orissa is witnessing similar heat wave and because of abnormal rise in temperature, the laymen, working class are falling victims and the Chief Minister's Relief Fund is of a little solace to the bereaved families.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to declare lightning and sun-stroke as natural calamity at the earliest so that adequate *ex-gratia* can be provided to the bereaved families.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will call one by one. Now, Shri K. Francis George.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government has to urgently initiate steps to prevent organ trade especially that of kidneys as cases of cheating of innocent and hapless people by organized gangs are reported everyday.

Sir, I would like to cite the case of Ms. Sophia John, a student of the Kerala school in Delhi, which has been reported in *Malayala Manorama* daily. She was advised to undergo urgent transplant of kidney to save her life. As the kidney of her relative – as per law she can only receive this particular organ from a blood relation – was found not suitable, she and her parents fell for the offer of the so-called kidney mafia, who cheated her.

Her operation was fixed at a hospital at Trichur in Kerala, and this hospital has been given Rs. 1 lakh from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. It was at the intervention of the hon. Chairperson of UPA, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, this much of fund was granted to her, taking pity

on her. Madam Sonia Gandhi intervened and this amount of Rs. 1 lakh for the transplant of kidney was granted from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund.

18.00 hrs.

Now, apparently, it seems that she has lost that and also the other financial help, which she had got from other quarters.

What I would like to request is that the Government should take stringent action because in many cases this is being done by the so-called gangs and racketeers with the connivance of the hospital authorities and certain doctors. This has to be taken very seriously by the Government. Apparently, this hospital has appropriated this fund from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund, which was given to this poor girl.

I would, therefore, request that the Union Government should take action to recover this fund and also should direct the State Government to take action against such mafia gangs operating in the country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, it is 6 o'clock now. If the House agree, we shall extend the time of the House till the 'Zero Hour' business of today is over.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir, the House agrees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, the time of the House is extended till the 'Zero Hour' business of today is over.

SHRI T. K. HAMZA (Manjeri): Hon. Chairman, Sir, Kerala State was having an excellent and full-fledged Public Distribution System when compared with any other State in India. But due to change of policy by the Government of India since April, 2000 by giving more importance to the Targeted Public Distribution System, the Public Distribution System in Kerala is facing a very critical situation for the last five years now.

But due to repeated reduction in the allotment of the Public Distribution System in respect of wheat, kerosene,

and due to stoppage of barley sugar to cardholders other than the BPL people in Kerala, which is a consumer State, is facing the threat of price hike more than any other State.

Now, according to the press reports, the private agencies have been permitted by the Government of India to procure and store as much quantity of wheat as they desire, removing all the stock limits prescribed. In that case, the FCI will not be getting any stock in godowns.

The hon. Minister's attention is also invited to the continuous cut in the allotment of rice and wheat to the State. During the last 27 years, the rice allotted has been cut short from 1,59,641 MT to 68,755 MT, and the wheat allotted has been cut short from 37,000 MT to 11,000 MT.

Sir, if this situation continues, I am afraid, the Public Distribution System would collapse leading to price hike, famine and starvation. Therefore, the hon. Food Minister may kindly consider this problem of Kerala seriously, and the status quo may be maintained in the allotment of wheat and rice.

[Translation]

*SHRI LONAPPAN NAMBADAN (Mukundapuram): The Centre should immediately investigate the circulation of fake currency notes in the country. Though various investigating agencies have information regarding the influx of fake notes from foreign countries, they have not been successful in catching the real culprits. Therefore, the circulation of fake currency goes unchecked. Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala are the States where fake currency is more in circulation. There were newspaper reports that two containers of fake notes had landed in Cochin. But so far no investigation has taken place.

The fake currency racket is now concentrating more on the printing of thousand rupee notes while previously they were engaged in circulating five hundred rupee notes. The fake notes of thousand rupees are produced with such a

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Malayalam.

[Shri Lonappan Nambadan]

precision and expertise that even the technically sound and irreplicable thousand rupee notes that the Reserve Bank of India was printing for the last six years are now being faked. Due to the circulation of fake notes the land price in Kerala has increased ten-fold. Recently, fake currency notes the worth Rs. 20 lakhs printed in Pakistan and routed through Dubai was intercepted in Kozhikode. Several cases of fake currency note circulation have been registered in Kerala. But the origin of these fake notes have not been identified.

Some foreign countries and the under-world are behind this smuggling in and flooding of fake notes in the country to destabilise our economy. I urge upon the Centre to investigate and stop their nefarious activities.

[English]

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR (Vadodara): Sir, thank you for giving me the chance. I want to raise a very important issue of my State Government, that is, about the four laning of Gandhidham-Mundra Road.

Keeping in view the infrastructure, industrial development and the Port Connectivity programme, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has included four laning of Gandhidham-Mundra section in NHDP Phase-III with a target date of completion as December 2009. Looking to the pace of industrial development in this area, it is necessary that the Mundra Port is connected by four-lane highway with the East-West Corridor.

I urge the Government to execute this work as early as possible.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): Sir, I may be allowed to associate with this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can associate.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : I Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Shri Madhu Goud Yaskhi.

It is a State matter. You can only mention. Road accident is a State matter. It is the affairs of Andhra Pradesh State.

SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI : No, it is not a State subject.

Thank you Chairman, Sir. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister for Road Transport, Through you, Sir, to the alarming rise in the road accident deaths in the road accident deaths in the country. If you notice it, everyday hundreds of people are dying due to road accidents in the entire country. Sir, through you, I would like to bring my subject to the notice.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Why so much elaboration? It is because it is a State matter. You mention about the incident regarding the high rate of accidents.

SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI : Sir, I would like to give an incident. For example, you take one State Highway. The news in one of the Telugu newspapers shows, particularly if you take Andhra Pradesh State as an example, that per hour one person, per day 28 and over the last four months' period 3,224 people had died; over 12,000 people had been seriously injured; and over 10,000 people have been affected. The main reason for the increasing accidental deaths is because of the increase in the number of vehicles; and the highway has to be completed. This has to be taken notice of by the Ministry.

The Highway between Hyderabad and Vijayawada and the Highway No.7 between Hyderabad and Nizamabad have to be completed. Some of the highways have to be completed at war footing level and stringent action has to be taken...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Sonowal, you can start. He would not stop it.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL (Dibrugarh) : Respected Chairman, Sir, I rise to raise a very important issue, that is, the merger of BRPL with IOCL in Assam.

Sir, as you know Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited came into existence in 1974. The Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited was the third refinery in the State, which was the fruit of a long-drawn movement of the people of Assam under the leadership of All-Assam Students' Union in the mid sixties.

It is on the 5th of December, 1969, the then Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi announced in the Parliament about the decision of setting up of a refinery-cum-petrochemicals complex in Assam. Sir, the objectives behind setting up of Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited at Dhaligaon were many, namely: (i) to connect this under-developed part of the State with the rest of the country through industrial activities, (ii) to pave way for creating an industrial cluster in this part of the State through the downstream ancillary industries based on the refinery and petrochemicals products of BRPL, (iii) to generate direct and indirect employment for poor unemployed people of the region and (iv) thus help develop the overall and ever all discriminated, deprived, neglected, and backward as well as poor Bodo tribals, Rajabanshis and other ethnic people of the Lower Assam through industrialization.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. What is your demand?

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL : Sir, Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited is going through a lot of(Interruptions) I am coming down to the points.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your demand?

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL : My main point is to have the total merger of BRPL and IOCL as demanded by the Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemicals Employees' Union and also North-East MPs Forum and all such important like minded organizations, to protect the interests of the BRPL. That is the only option left but the entire process, after taking a lot of decisions at different levels, has been delayed due to some vested interests, the group which is lobbying against the merger. That is why, it is my humble submission, through you, to the Government,

particularly to the concerned Minister that as per their decision they should immediately convert the decision into action and implement like they have promised and protect the interests of Bongaigaon Refinery. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN (Adoor): Sir, the Kollam-Virudunagar metre gauge railway line has been in existence for the last 104 years. It is one of the oldest railway lines in India. This commercially important railway line connecting Kerala and Tamil Nadu is having a length of 94 kilometres. The work of conversion of this metre gauge line into broad gauge line was taken up in the year 1999. Out of the 94 kilometres, 84 kilometres come within the State of Kerala, that is, Kollam-Punalur—44 kilometres and Punalur-Schencottah — 50 kilometres. The work in Tamil Nadu area is almost completed while that in Kerala remains incomplete. It is very unfortunate that even after seven years, the progress of work between Kollam-Punalur is very slow and no work has started between Punalur and Schencottah.

Now, the line between Kollam and Punalur is closed with effect from 1st May, 2007. In this connection, I would like to bring to the immediate attention of the Government that thousands of people from different walks of life are travelling on this route. Because of the closing of the railway line between Kollam and Punalur, these passengers are suffering very much. So, it is submitted that considering the difficulties of the public, the Government may issue a strict direction to the Railways to complete the work of gauge conversion within six months positively and also resume the rail service on the route.

SHRI KIREN RIJU (Arunachal West): Sir, at the outset, I want to make it very clear that I have full respect for the Indian Defence personnel and the Indian Army. They have been doing very good service for the nation. But there is a very important aspect of civil-military relationship. Recently in Arunachal Pradesh, there was a bomb-blast in which two Army personnel were killed. After that, the whole Army went to the village, took out all the villagers, queued them, tied their hands and everything and made

[Shri Kiren Rijju]

them work without food, without drink and without anything, and kept them for two days.

There is a heavy resentment across the State because of those atrocities committed by Indian Army personnel led by....* I strongly demand that the Government of India, Ministry of Defence must take action against those Army personnel who have committed error against the civilians. The State Government is coming out with a strong statement. Here today, I want to request through you, Sir, that such Army officers must be punished.

SHRI TAPIR GAO : Sir, I am also associating with him.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Okay.

[Translation]

**SHRI P. MOHAN (Madurai) : Tuticorin port town in the Southern part of Tamil Nadu is traditionally important a port that has provided cultural and trade links down the centuries. People from the Southern districts of Tamil Nadu have been carrying goods and vegetables even on a daily basis to Colombo from the Tuticorin port. Passenger traffic and goods movement between the Indian mainland and the island nation have always been there. It is the second largest port in Tamil Nadu. But there is no regular ferry service between Colombo and Tuticorin. One of the great freedom fighters from Tamil Nadu V.O. Chidambaram established a Navigation Company operating shipping service between Colombo and Tuticorin. As early as in 1905 he started this shipping company operating passenger ferry service to the annoyance of Britishers. For this patriotic move he received overwhelming support from the public that they preferred to travel by Swadeshi Shipping Company of VOC ignoring the economical service offered by the Britishers. So, the Britishers punished him under anti-State activities with two jail sentences of twenty years

*Not recorded.

**English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

each to be put in prisons of archipelago. Considering the need of the people, and considering the cultural and economic ties it could build up and also in commemoration of the great freedom fighter VOC a daily ferry service must be operated between Tuticorin and Colombo to carry passengers and goods to revive the past glory. This will also promote tourism.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri P.C. Thomas, you have give notices on two issues. You can speak only on one issue. You may choose between the two subjects - need to set up a new Railway zone in South India or need to ban the non-recognised nursing colleges in the country.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : Sir, I will speak about the need to ban the non-recognised nursing colleges.

Sir, there are a number of nursing schools in India, but it is a sorry affair that a lot of fraud is being played by many managements that are conducting these nursing schools. We have respect for the better schools as good service is being done by them, but recently the Karnataka High Court has held that about 190 nursing schools have no recognition and that they are being conducted without any recognition. If that has been found by a court, then I am sure that many more may be there, which have escaped the attention of the court and many more may be there in other States also. Therefore, it is a matter to be viewed very seriously by the Government of India. I think that due recognition of the India Nursing Council is also a must. But the nursing schools are being conducted without all these.

Recently, there have been some instances in some colleges where the students were told that there is recognition for the colleges, but at the time of exams they were told that they would have to go to another school to write the exams. Actually, everything was being done on the basis of another college. The students had taken loans from banks, and they suffered because they had

taken loan on account of the first college, but the certificate shows the name of another college towards the end of the course. Therefore, a lot of fraud is being done, and consequently difficulties are being faced by the students and parents also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want to ban those non-recognised schools?

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Sir, my only request is that the Government of India should take a very serious view of this matter, and enquire into the matter. An enquiry should be conducted into the working of these schools, and due action taken in this regard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The following Members of Parliament are associated with the matter raised by Shri P.C. Thomas, namely, Shri K. Francis George; Shri T.K. Hamza; Dr. K.S. Manoj; Shri P. Karunakaran; Shri Lonappan Nambadan; Shri P. Rajendren; Shrimati P. Sathidevi; and Shri Chengara Surendran.

[Translation]

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun): Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to bring an important matter to the notice of the Union Government. In the Bundelkhand area of Uttar Pradesh, there is severe shortage of water. The public of that area are desperate for every single drop of water as during the last three years there has been lesser rainfall. Hence, the water level of that area has gone down considerably. The houses, with private hand pumps are without water for the one and a half months and the handpumps installed by the Government are also without water, for the last one month.

Mr. Chairman, Sir presently people are suffering badly due to lack of drinking water. Livestock is dying without water. Through you, I demand the Union Government to call a meeting through the concerned Minister to provide funds to Uttar Pradesh so that the problem of water could be sorted out over there and no untoward incident takes place. Farmers are also committing suicides over there. If water is not made available, people may also start dying.

Hence, the arrangement of drinking water should be made over there at the earliest.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Member is Shri M. Shivanna. Please be brief.

[Translation]

*SHRI M. SHIVANNA (Chamrajanagar): Sir, today I would like to rise an important issue about continuing of train superintendent services in Karnataka Express, Sampark Kranti Express and Goa Express trains. Train superintendent services were introduced by Railways to ensure passenger facilities in all trains. But, for the last two years these services are being withdrawn in Karnataka Express train, Sampark kranti Express train and Goa Express train. Due to this, rail passengers are facing lot of problems. Many a times though passengers having valid reserved tickets could not get their reserved berths in train. Those berths are occupied by some unauthorized passengers, and emergency medical facilities are not available. Cleanliness is not maintained properly. In order to ensure all these facilities and to make train journey comfortable and convenient, it is very much necessary to continue the services of train superintendents in running trains. Therefore I urge upon the Government to take immediate steps to continue the services of train superintendents.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Virendra Kumar. This is clearly a State matter. You raise it, but in one sentence.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR (Sagar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this matter is concerned with the Central Government itself, as a refinery of Bharat Petroleum is being constructed there and State Government does not set up refineries. It is Union Government that set up refineries.

Sir, many irregularities are being committed by the Bina refinery being set up by Bharat-Petroleum in Sagar

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

[Shri Virendra Kumar]

district of Madhya Pradesh and norms of quality are being overlooked there. Bina refinery is being set up on a vast area for the safety of which only 22 security guards are deployed. About two months back a labourer had been killed in the refinery area. On 11th November, 2006 I had raised this matter that a labourer got killed there when a wall caved in, but officials of the refinery provided wrong information and didn't learn a lesson from that incident and as a result the use of sub-standard materials continued unabated. Recently on 1st May we celebrated labour day. Exactly two days before the labour day, on 29th April at the Bina refinery there was a recurrence of wall crashing and a women labourer got killed there and three women labourers were seriously injured. In the absence of not even a single hospital in the Bina refinery area, they could not be treated there. Therefore, they were sent to the district hospital.

When I visited the site of accident I found out that the accident recurred due to use of sub-standard material. Clean drinking water is not available for the labourers. The same water which being used in the construction of the refinery is supplied to the labourers for drinking. Till date water tanks have not been installed there. Not even a single shed has been created for the protection of labourers from the scorching heat. Minimum wage rates are not being provided to the labourers. The management talks of giving each labourer Rs. 99 per day while actually

only Rs. 60 per day is being paid to the labourers. Facilities of medical treatment are not available there. About 2200 labourers are working there, however a provision has been made for one doctor only who visits the refinery only for three hours in the morning and evening. Registration of the labourers working there has not been done. Owing to this reason, the labourers are being exploited. Therefore my request to the Union Government is to conduct an enquiry into the above mentioned incident by a central team and strict action may be taken against the officials found guilty. The family members of the labourers killed in the accident should be given two lakhs each of the labourers who got injured should be given 50 thousand as Financial assistance and proper arrangements should be made in order to prevent the recurrence of irregularities in the construction of refinery in the coming days and there should be proper arrangements for the safety of the labourers.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House now stands adjourned to meet again tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

18.22 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven
of the clock on Friday, May 4, 2007/
Vaisakha 14, 1929 (Saka)*

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